

members of this Chamber to insert in the Bill. It is varied a little in the form received from the Assembly and for that reason I propose to ask members to agree to a slight alteration. The clause which I proposed was taken from the New Jersey Act. I can give hon. members two concrete cases to show the necessity for the amendment. The Minister knows of one of the cases. Boys were released on probation from the Children's Court and obtained employment. One of the owners of a car which had been stolen was probably very aggrieved because the car was much damaged. This individual, however, went to the employer of one of these children and pointed out what the boy had done with the result that one of the boys concerned lost his position. In the second case, a girl was released on probation and secured employment. Some busybody informed her employer about her trouble and she lost her position. Within the last few days the State Children Department received a letter from the mother of this girl asking whether a child who had once fallen was not to be given some chance in a Christian country. It was intended that the clause should prevent malicious injury to children on probation. The Assembly's amendment does not quite meet the case, and in the circumstances I move an amendment—

That in line 6 of the Assembly's amendment the words "be admissible" be struck out and "be maliciously disclosed to any person nor be admitted" be inserted.

Amendment on the Assembly's amendment put and passed; the Assembly's amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported with a modification to the Assembly's amendment and the report adopted.

House adjourned at 8.55 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 20th October, 1921.

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Us: Stamp, 3s.	1367
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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 m., and read prayers.

BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

1. Stamp.
 2. Auctioneers.
 3. Constitution Act Amendment.
- Transmitted to the Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1921-22.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Vote—Legislative Council, £975:

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [4.36]: My attitude towards the Budget is one of sincere sympathy with the Premier, in that he has had to submit a forecast so serious to the State. We are faced with a deficit of over half a million on the year. It is also very serious in view of the fact that the State demands many urgent works which, under existing conditions, it would be difficult to carry out. I am afraid some of the ill-effect will be passed on to the district I represent, inasmuch as I understand that the Vote passed by the House for extending and widening the Busselton jetty is likely to be jettisoned.

The Minister for Works: It is entirely your own fault.

Mr. PICKERING: It is not! The conditions imposed by the Minister were entirely opposed to the spirit in which the Vote was passed.

The Minister for Works: I say it is entirely your own fault that you have lost that Vote.

Mr. PICKERING: I deny that. The files show that any extension of the jetty without widening was opposed by the department. I regret very much that it has been found necessary to withhold the money passed by this House.

The Minister for Works: If you had not interfered the work would have been in progress now.

Mr. PICKERING: I regret that such an occasion should have arisen, and I regret it also for other constituencies; because if it is found necessary to cut out expenditure in one electorate, presumably the same necessity will apply to other electorates. On the Address-in-reply I said that if we were to recover our financial position in the near future, it would be incumbent upon the State to make large sacrifices, that we would have to go in for increased taxation, drastic retrenchment, and the cutting out of non-essential public works. The Leader of the Opposition, the other evening, said that the only possible remedy for our financial troubles would be found to lie in unimproved land values taxation. In a restricted sense that particular form of taxation obtains to-day. To increase it to any appreciable degree would be to impose a hardship on the prim-

ary industries. As a primary producer, I am anxious that no undue imposition should be placed on primary industries, to which, it is generally agreed, every encouragement should be given. This tax could easily be passed on. The contention is that if such a tax were to be imposed it would force into occupation city blocks on which buildings would be erected to compete with the existing large emporiums. But in view of the increased cost of building, it is highly improbable that any attempt would be made in that direction. In view of the exceedingly high cost of material and of production, it is improbable that any other result would accrue from the introduction of such a tax than the passing of it on to those already bearing the great burden of taxation. The Premier, in dealing with last year's deficit, attributed it almost entirely to State trading concerns and public utilities. He implied that he had in mind the introduction of a measure which would make possible the sale of the State trading concerns. Two veins of thought are active amongst us at the present time. One is the socialisation of industries, and the other the maintenance of private enterprise. For the moment those in favour of the maintenance of private enterprise are in the ascendant.

Hon. T. Walker: It will not be for long.

Mr. PICKERING: We have in Russia a very striking example of the socialisation of industries, and recently we have had in our midst two gentlemen lecturing on the position in Russia to-day. Even the one who was the more ardent advocate of the system of Government appertaining to Russia admits that the great weakness of the position lies in the lack of industrial development. There must be a good deal of truth in that. I am inclined to believe, from the expression of opinion which has lately been given to us by the man who had such a vivid experience in Russia, that he was not so likely to be induced to accept the alluring statement made by the other gentleman.

Hon. T. Walker: Did you hear the other gentleman?

Mr. Munsie: Did you go to Professor Goode's lectures?

Mr. PICKERING: I read them.

Mr. Munsie: I do not know where you did so.

Mr. PICKERING: They have been reported in practically every paper. I believe that the feeling in Australia to-day is opposed to that particular phase now appertaining to Russia. On the whole we can say that the community of Western Australia is strongly opposed to State enterprises.

Hon. T. Walker: So much the worse for the community.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like to refer to some of our State enterprises.

Mr. Marshall: Give us the railways first.

Mr. PICKERING: I am dealing with State trading concerns for the moment. The failure of our State enterprises is in a large measure due to their mismanagement, and to

the lack of control that the management has over the enterprise concerned. In my opinion the State enterprises have been adopting unfair tactics in dealing with outside business. Quite recently my attention was drawn to the fact that Bolton's carriage works at Fremantle were asked by the authorities in charge of the State Implement Works to supply specification for tip drays. They were also asked what they would cost. A price was given by Bolton's for one dray, or for six or more. The next thing of which Bolton's became cognisant was the fact that the State Implement Works were turning out a large number of these tip drays on their specifications, and charging a sum of £45 each.

The Minister for Works: I do not believe that is true.

Mr. PICKERING: Bolton's have stated that the same drays in large numbers could have been turned out at £36. They were also asked for a quotation for a spring cart to carry 15 cwt. This too was manufactured by the State Implement Works and sold, I understand, by them at £35, but could have been turned out by Bolton's at £26. The clients of the I.A.B. are more or less obliged to deal with the State Implement Works. If they are compelled to pay these exceedingly heavy charges, heavy in comparison with what obtains outside, the State Implement Works are being bolstered up to the detriment of outside competitors.

The Minister for Works: That is a statement you cannot prove.

Mr. O'Loughlen: To the detriment of the farmers perhaps, but not to the detriment of outside competitors.

Mr. Munsie: If the State Implement Works were abolished Bolton's would be charging 10 per cent. more.

Mr. PICKERING: Bolton's turn out a wagon that they have been selling, I understand, at £100. The State Implement Works also turned out a wagon, but this was not as suitable as that turned out by Bolton's. A client of the I.A.B. who wants to buy a wagon is told he must buy that which is turned out by the State Implement Works at £126. If that system is adopted it is easy to understand why we are killing outside enterprise.

The Minister for Works: The boot is on the other foot.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How can they charge £20 more than the other man can make it for? The outside competitor has the advantage if that is the case.

Mr. PICKERING: In what way?

Mr. O'Loughlen: The State Implement Works are charging 25 per cent. more than the private firm.

Mr. PICKERING: The trouble is that the client of the I.A.B. is obliged to deal with the State Implement Works, which are making the higher charge. If the State Implement Works are conducting their business on these lines it cannot be difficult for them to continue operations.

Mr. O'Loghlen: If they are doing that it is wrong.

Mr. PICKERING: The State Implement Works make alterations to drays at a cost of £28, but Bolton's, I understand, are prepared to quote for the same work at £14. These particulars have been given fairly publicly, so I do not think I am breaking any confidence. There is this unfair competition with outside business. If it is desired by the State to establish people in business, it is not fair in addition to the many advantages which appertain to State enterprises, to place this handicap upon outside undertakings that I have referred to. Then there is the question of spare parts. I understand the State Implement Works are turning out these parts. Yesterday I saw a part which appeared to belong to a drill, bearing a number. This was turned out by the State Implement Works and was a copy of a spare part which belonged to Massey-Harris's implements. The charge made by the State Implement Works for this spare part was 10s., but I understand that Massey-Harris & Co. can turn out the same article at 4s. 6d.

Hon. T. Walker: We want some evidence of these statements.

Mr. PICKERING: I have seen the part itself.

Mr. Willcock: They must have a new mould.

Mr. PICKERING: It is not right for the State to infringe patents belonging to other firms.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The Works could be prosecuted.

Mr. PICKERING: I have been told that this is what has happened.

Hon. T. Walker: Why come here with all that tittle-tattle. Let us have some evidence.

Mr. PICKERING: The hon. member has reported many things that he has merely heard.

Hon. T. Walker: I always give my authority for what I say.

Mr. PICKERING: The evidence was produced to me. It was produced by a responsible member of the community and I accept the evidence as true.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The agents for the State Implement Works will be giving you a vote of thanks.

Mr. PICKERING: It does not matter to me if no one passes a vote of thanks. I say what I think is right. We have been informed that there is this competition by the State Implement Works. I am also informed that because of competition by the State Implement Works in the matter of cast-iron pipes, a certain business in the city has had to close down.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They are not making any.

Mr. PICKERING: They have made them. The firm of Hoskins, I have been assured, turned out pipes 25 per cent. cheaper than those made by the State Implement Works, which in turn were 25 per cent. less efficient.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Who told you that?

Mr. PICKERING: The firm of Hoskins & Co.

The Minister for Works: De Bernales!

Hon. W. C. Angwin: How is it that you condemn the State Implement Works since the Westralian Farmers lost their commission?

Mr. Teesdale: Is that a fact?

Hon. T. Walker: It is.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was all right up to this year.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PICKERING: I have said in this Chamber on previous occasions that so long as members of the Country Party were pledged to support the State Implement Works as a State trading concern, I would not oppose any other State trading concern in the State. I have adhered to that. The farmers, however, have arrived at the conclusion that the State Implement Works are not the benefit to them that they are alleged to be.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The farmers have?

Mr. PICKERING: Yes. They are prepared to make a sacrifice in the interests of the State by giving up that particular State trading concern which is alleged to benefit them.

Mr. Munsie: Are you sure it is the farmers, or is it the Chamber of Manufactures saying this?

Mr. PICKERING: Whilst the firm of Hoskins & Co. was engaged in manufacturing these pipes there were special inspectors deputed to conduct a most thorough investigation and inspection of the pipes to see that there were no flaws in them, and they were also tested by pressure and in other ways. The same practice is not followed at the State works.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The man who told you that is a liar. I have been there and seen the inspection by an inspector of the water supply.

The Minister for Works: All that took place in your time. The firm of Hoskins have never made pipes since I have been in charge of this State trading concern.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They have not made any pipes since my time.

Mr. PICKERING: Evidently there is some dissension between the present and the past administration of this particular State enterprise. Furthermore, the firm of Monteath's has been struggling hard at Subiaco to establish its industry, which is of considerable value to the State.

The Minister for Works: Go on!

Mr. PICKERING: They have been trying to fulfil the requirements of the Works Department, but unfortunately the business has not been passed on to them. I regret that Monteath's are closing down and transferring their business to the East.

The Minister for Works: That is an absolute lie.

Mr. PICKERING: I ask for a withdrawal of that statement. I do not know if it is being attributed to me.

The Minister for Works: I say that the statement that Monteath's are closing down because orders have been given to the State Implement Works is a lie. Monteath's have been kept going in the manufacture of six-inch pipes and larger. The State Implement Works have not made six-inch pipes for nearly a year.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The hon. member should get some better information than that.

The Minister for Works: He had better read his brief again.

Mr. PICKERING: It will be within the memory of hon. members that I moved for a select committee to inquire into the Wyndham Meat Works.

The Minister for Works: Oh, yes!

Mr. PICKERING: I regret that the Minister in charge of those works is not present.

The Minister for Works: I know enough about them.

Mr. PICKERING: It will also be remembered that there was an unholy alliance in this Chamber on that occasion.

The CHAIRMAN: What has that to do with the Estimates?

Mr. PICKERING: It has to do with the Wyndham Meat Works. They are part of the State trading concerns. The object I had was defeated at that time. Members will also recollect that a motion was introduced in another place and carried, in spite of the alliance which existed in this Chamber. The select committee is now making its investigations, and I am glad of it. The committee will doubtless do a lot in the way of finding out the true position.

Mr. Teesdale: A lot of money wasted.

Mr. O'Loughlin: When you find out something, what then?

Mr. PICKERING: That will be the time for us to consider our position. I am anxious in introducing these subjects to assist the Government if I can.

Hon. T. Walker: Oh!

Mr. PICKERING: My desire is to have some saving effected, and to relieve this country of the burden of debt under which it is struggling to-day. I contend that one of the ways by which the Government can adjust the financial position is by realising as soon as possible on the State trading concerns.

The Minister for Works: On the whole lot?

Hon. T. Walker: Realise on the railways, the I.A.B., the Agricultural Bank and others?

Mr. PICKERING: I am dealing with the State trading concerns.

Hon. T. Walker: They are all State trading concerns.

Mr. PICKERING: I understood in the past the Minister for Works to be one of the strongest advocates in this House for the scrapping of the State trading concerns.

The Minister for Works: Not scrapping them; selling them, yes. I would sell them to-day.

Mr. PICKERING: In reply to a question I asked a few days ago with regard to a re-

turn dealing with the Wyndham Meat Works, we have been supplied with the return which gives us the cost to the 30th June, 1921. This is put down as £729,758 in connection with buildings, plant, water supply etc., while the jetty which has been transferred to the Harbour and Light Department cost £85,868, and with the interest paid up to the 30th June last—no sinking fund has been provided—amounting to £201,479 we get a total of over a million pounds which the works have cost up to date. The report also shows that the general manager receives a salary of £1,500, the accountant £450, sales and general clerk £322, stores clerk £322, accounts clerk £286, typist £192, another typist £156, and live stock manager £698. All these officials are in Perth. Now we turn to Wyndham.

Mr. Mann: They are all temporary officers.

Mr. PICKERING: I understand all these people are under an agreement for some years and that it is impossible to get rid of them. At Wyndham we find there is a works manager who has quarters and who receives £775 per annum, an assistant works manager £450, acting accounts officer £341, typist and clerk £325, shipping clerk £344, wages and costs clerk £351, general clerk £182, and chief engineer £600, making a total of £7,298 to run works which are standing still. Owing to the stock of frozen beef remaining in the store it has not been possible to completely lay up the works. If entirely laid up the cost would include interest £75,000 and insurance £3,500. So that no matter what happens we are faced with the position that we have to pay £78,500 per annum interest and insurance. The caretaking and the maintenance of the works and other expenses will run into another £5,000 per annum. Then there is a marginal note in the report referring to £82,500 which covers other charges I have mentioned. The working account is given as £71,166 and interest £65,288, a total of £136,454. The return which has been laid on the table is worthy of perusal by every hon. member. It it does not disclose a serious position of affairs I am at a loss to understand what does.

Mr. Marshall: Vestey's have closed down.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: All the meat works are in the same position just now.

Mr. PICKERING: That does not make any difference so far as we are concerned. The Legislative Council realising the seriousness of the position has appointed a select committee who will report to that Chamber and advise what should be done with the meat works. I hope that the recommendation of the select committee will be in the direction of disposing of the works on the best terms and as soon as possible.

Mr. Marshall: Whom have you in view as a buyer?

Mr. PICKERING: The attitude of this House is opposed to the sale of the works. Members here would prefer to continue to run them at enormous expense and disregard of what may happen. I asked a question in regard to the staff a few nights ago, and was informed that it was absolutely necessary to

keep the staff employed. Seeing that I got the return placed on the Table on the 8th October, it is fair to assume that reductions have been made in the staff. The member for Murchison (Mr. Marshall) interjected that Vestey's had not closed down.

Mr. Marshall: I said they had closed down.

Mr. PICKERING: They have closed down for an indefinite period, and I am quite sure that the whole of the staff has been wiped out.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are you quite sure, or is that merely your opinion?

Mr. PICKERING: That is my opinion based on my knowledge of business matters.

Mr. Teesdale: Would you be surprised to know that very extensive alterations and additions are being made there?

Mr. PICKERING: We know that the Wyndham works will require the expenditure of another £200,000 before they can carry on the business for which they were built. It has been admitted that the cold storage is inadequate and that the expenditure of the amount I have mentioned must be put in hand. We must seriously consider the position of the State trading concerns which have run us into something like £2,000,000. Those concerns, while they are closed down, and whilst not operating, are adding to the costs for which the State is responsible and which will have to be met. It would be wise to cut our loss as soon as possible, even though we lost up to 30 or 40 per cent. of the original value of the works.

The Minister for Works: Would you close all?

Mr. PICKERING: Yes. I believe if all these works were sold it would be better for the State. A principle is involved. Is the country in favour of the maintenance of State trading concerns or is it not?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Yes.

Mr. PICKERING: The indications are to the contrary.

Hon. T. Walker: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Not one of your candidates at the election advocated the abolition of these works.

Mr. PICKERING: If we are to remedy the position we must take drastic steps. It is for the House to decide what is to be done and the matter should receive the earliest possible attention. There is another aspect to which I should like to draw attention and that is the enormous cost to the State of the current we are supplying from the East Perth power house. We find that a contract was entered into with the Perth City Council and with the Fremantle Council which involves the State in a permanent loss for 50 years. I am at a loss to understand how anyone could have entered into a contract for such a long period. We are told that it is impossible to reduce the cost of current while the price of Collie coal goes on increasing. The smalls, which I under-

stand are used at the power house, were originally supplied at 4s. 6d. per ton. Now the cost is three times that amount.

Mr. Teesdale called attention to the state of the House.

Quorum formed.

Mr. PICKERING: I was referring to the contract made for the supply of current for 50 years.

Mr. Mann: You must admit that Perth was entitled to some consideration because of the concession they had.

Mr. PICKERING: Are the Government entitled to enter into a contract for 50 years at a figure which cannot possibly be readjusted?

Mr. O'Loughlen: You voted for the extension of the pastoral leases away into the future.

Mr. PICKERING: I was not here when that motion was submitted. If we had loyal minded citizens, the Perth City Council and the Fremantle Council would repudiate that agreement with the Government and assist to put it on a different basis.

Hon. T. Walker: That is Bolshevism.

Mr. PICKERING: The present agreement enables them to get current and make a profit out of the State.

Mr. Mann interjected.

Mr. PICKERING: It is admitted that the Perth City Council did not keep their birthright. I am sorry that the Government were so misguided as to enable the Perth City Council to take current from them under these conditions.

The Minister for Works: I am sorry that you are making an attack upon a member of your own party.

Mr. PICKERING: I am sure that that particular member of our party is quite capable of defending himself.

The Minister for Mines: Hear, hear! That is correct on this subject in particular.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We could raise the price of fertilisers and make up for three times this amount.

Mr. PICKERING: If the hon. member could raise anything, the reflex of which would be detrimental to the farmers, I am quite sure he would do it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You can always raise a discussion.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask hon. members to refrain from these interjections.

Mr. PICKERING: We know that a select committee has been appointed by the Upper House to inquire into the operations of the State Steamship Service, as one of the items for investigation.

The Minister for Works: That again is a matter concerning one of your own party.

Mr. PICKERING: I am not dealing with individuals but principles. I do not care what an individual may have done. I am not looking at it from that standpoint. I

do not believe in these principles and I am within my rights in opposing them. I regret that this seems to hurt some hon. members who are present.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not if you tell the truth about them.

Mr. PICKERING: I am stating what is true. I challenge any hon. member to repudiate the accuracy of my statement that the Legislative Council has appointed a select committee to carry out this investigation. Is that a fact or not? Hon. members know very well that it is a fact, and that is as far as I have gone in my statement. The State Steamship Service, in my opinion, should be disposed of. The time is most opportune for the State to adopt that course. We have few or no vessels in that service about which we can write home. If we were to give private companies an opportunity to operate along the North-West coast, the people there would get a more adequate service.

Mr. Angelo: At a cost.

Hon. T. Walker: Does the member for Gascoyne agree with that statement?

Mr. Angelo: Certainly not.

Mr. PICKERING: I am sorry the member for Gascoyne has already spoken, because I did not tell him that I intended to discuss this aspect. As I am dealing with every other aspect, however, I could not fairly leave out the trading concern in which the member for Gascoyne is interested.

Mr. Angelo: I do not consider the State Steamship Service a trading concern, but a public developmental utility.

Hon. T. Walker: The service is the equivalent of the railways in the other parts of the State.

Mr. Angelo: That is the position.

Mr. PICKERING: The member for Gascoyne regards the State Steamship Service as he does railways which operate in other parts of the State and in other parts of Australia. I give the hon. member credit for his convictions on that point, but I have been informed by many people who live in the North-West that they were better served by the private companies than by the State Steamship Service.

Mr. Mullany: What about the Busselton butter factory?

Mr. PICKERING: Regarding the Busselton butter factory, attempts have been made to thrust it upon us. I can give hon. members my assurance that I am doing all that is possible to secure the capital so that we can purchase the factory.

The Minister for Mines: You have waited a long time for that. You wait till it is well established before you move in that direction.

Mr. PICKERING: Some of the other trading concerns have been waiting a long time, too, and they are well established.

Hon. T. Walker: Why do not the Westralian Farmers Ltd. want to get a monopoly of them?

Mr. PICKERING: They may.

Hon. T. Walker: You know that it is so.

Mr. PICKERING: The people at Busselton are not in a position to buy the butter factory, but they are anxious to do so.

The Minister for Works: It is quite easy.

Mr. PICKERING: The Minister for Works, as a member of the Government, is in the position to get money easily, but we are not in the same position.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are the richest man in the Country Party.

Mr. PICKERING: I am not speaking individually. Although I am prepared to do my share when the time arrives, I am not prepared to run the butter factory on my own. The time appears to be opportune for the Government to dispose of the State Steamship Service, and I hope the Government will seriously consider this position. While I advocate the disposal of the State trading concerns, I do not wish to see them thrown away. If the Government are sincere in the protestations of their desire to get rid of the State trading concerns, the time is opportune to endeavour to do so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Were you at that conference yesterday?

Mr. PICKERING: Which conference?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The one about State trading concerns.

Mr. PICKERING: The hon. member can bet that if there is any conference, I will be there. He can take that for granted. While advocating that the trading concerns should be got rid of, I do not propose that they should be scrapped. I propose that they should be sold as soon as a reasonable offer is received.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear! I agree with you.

Mr. PICKERING: I regret that the Minister for Works does not let me finish what I intended to say.

The Minister for Works: You gave me a shock.

Mr. PICKERING: The Minister should be used to shocks by now. I am extremely grateful for the returns that the Premier has been pleased to place before us. The returns enable us to get a pretty fair idea of the State finances. What I regret is that these returns indicate that in most cases we have to look for deficiencies. There are deficits, falling off in trade and falling off in every way shown where we would wish operations to be successful. To any honest individual—and I think we are all honest men in this Chamber—it must be a matter of gravest concern having regard to the returns of the nature the Premier has placed before us. I view with alarm the serious position confronting this State. There is forecasted increased expenditure in every way and I regret to say, from a perusal of the Estimates, that I do not see that drastic cutting down in the different departments that I had hoped to see. I believe Ministers have done as much as they think can possibly be done but, in the face of the present position which is so serious, when the need for economy is so

pressing, I think something more should have been done, particularly in the cutting down of the increases to officers receiving higher salaries. I cannot understand why increases have been given to those who are already in receipt of fairly reasonable emoluments. I do not want to see the under-paid section of the community cut down, because I recognise that no decent man can live reasonably well unless he has a reasonably high salary to-day. When we see the higher paid men receiving increases of £50—

Mr. Teesdale: And still in court.

Mr. PICKERING: And still going ahead, it should be a matter for grave concern for the people of this State. I do trust Ministers will take what I say in the spirit in which I make these remarks. We should do our utmost to economise in these days.

The Minister for Works: This matter is not in our hands; we have not that much control over the civil service to-day.

Mr. PICKERING: That is a feature that distresses me very much. The Leader of the Opposition illustrated this point when he spoke on the Budget. He said that members of Parliament had little or no control over the finances and I believe, with my increasing experience as a member of Parliament, that there is a great deal of truth in that statement. The deficit is mounting up.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Have you finished with the State trading concerns?

Mr. PICKERING: For the time being.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You should not pick the eyes out to suit yourself.

Mr. PICKERING: I have discussed those—

Mr. O'Loughlen: You should tackle the others and be fair.

Mr. PICKERING: Does the hon. member want me to deal with the sawmills?

Mr. O'Loughlen: What about the brickworks and the quarries and so on?

Mr. PICKERING: It is not a question to my mind whether these trading concerns are paying or not. It is a matter of principle. I say that the action of the State, in undertaking enterprises that can very well be controlled by private people, is inimical to the best interests of the community. It will drive private enterprise from this State when it is wanted.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Oh, wake up!

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why do people tell lies about the concerns?

Mr. PICKERING: If we want that prosperity and growth which can only follow from successful business management, we must realise that it is not the province of the State to enter into these trading concerns, but to govern. This is where we have gone wrong during the past few years. My object is not to sacrifice these particular State trading concerns but to lay down a principle that we should act upon and get rid of them at the earliest possible moment and so save increasing the deficit of the State.

Mr. Munsie: Would you dispose of the railways as well?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We will not vote for the extension of any more railways if you throw out these State trading concerns.

Mr. PICKERING: The railways are State utilities.

Hon. T. Walker: It is a trading concern under State management.

Mr. PICKERING: It is a policy laid down not only in Western Australia, but in every State and the Commonwealth as well, that the railways shall be State-owned. That is the policy we are committed to.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is State ownership.

Mr. PICKERING: The same policy applies to the General Post Office which is in a sense a trading concern, but it is a public utility.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The State Implement Works constitute a public utility.

Mr. PICKERING: They are not; there is an essential difference between a State trading concern and a State utility.

Hon. T. Walker: That is due to your lack of logic.

Mr. PICKERING: It is because of the past policy regarding the State concerns, that we shall have to get rid of them.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Westralian Farmers are not going to get the implement works handed over to them on credit.

Mr. Latham: They do not want them on credit.

The Minister for Works: They wanted them and did not want to pay a single penny.

Mr. PICKERING: In looking over the various returns, and particularly No. 3, it would appear that it is not contemplated that there will be any expenditure in connection with State trading concerns so far as extra additions are concerned. I take that as an augury that it is the intention of the Government to introduce a measure to enable them to dispose of these concerns. The deficit forecasted for 1921-22 is £571,728. If we add that amount, as mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition, to the sum the Government expect to receive on account of the increased licensing fees, we shall have a deficit very much the same as that experienced during the last few years. It appears to me like the recurring decimals. What are we to do regarding the deficit? We go on funding it and the interest accumulates. It will accumulate until, I am afraid, we shall be submerged by the volume of the deficit. Something will have to be done. It is no good members sitting in their places and taking the position lying down. When the "West Australian" draws attention to the condition of affairs in this Chamber and the few members who take an interest in this debate—a debate which is the most vital during the course of the session—it does not tend to impress upon the people of the State the fact that members are considering the serious financial position that confronts them.

Hon. T. Walker: Look around on your own side now. One, two, three members in their places.

Mr. PICKERING: I have not made this a personal matter; I have never done so. I cannot see behind me, but I am content to put up with any contumely which may arise. The position of Western Australia financially is common to the world practically. Pretty well every part of the world is in difficulty and trouble, especially financially. What do we find from history is the best way of getting out of these financial difficulties?

The Minister for Works: Repudiate your debts?

Mr. PICKERING: No; we find that the country prepared to face the position with courage is the one that emerges successfully. The one that is prepared to adopt the tactics or attitude of Great Britain is the one that is most likely to get out of the morass of difficulty which environs the people to-day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What attitude is that?

Mr. PICKERING: To right the position by drawing on its revenue only—

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is a long way from being right.

Mr. PICKERING: By paying as much as possible out of revenue and refraining from touching borrowed money. I do not say it is possible for us to go to that extreme length in Western Australia to-day, but it should be one of the axioms which guide the Government to live as far as possible within the revenue. If we do that, there is some hope that we shall be able to get down this ever-increasing deficit. Until the people wake up to the fact that they must be courageous in these matters, they will never get out of their difficulties. It is the easiest thing possible to go on borrowing.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It is not too easy.

Mr. PICKERING: Perhaps it is not quite easy at present but, seeing that we have the alluring temptation of a new market, I fear there will be another effort to float new loans at an early date.

Hon. T. Walker: An absolute necessity in Western Australia; the country cannot be developed without borrowed money.

Mr. PICKERING: We have the example of Queensland, and we have heard members here express gratification at the success of the flotation of the Queensland loan in America.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Hear, hear! A salutary lesson.

Mr. PICKERING: I regret it, and I hope Western Australia will not be compelled to seek foreign markets for loans.

Mr. Munsie: I applaud them for not being dictated to.

Mr. Teesdale: You ought to be ashamed of yourself to say it.

Mr. Corboy: Those who prevented Queensland from getting money in London should be ashamed.

Mr. Teesdale: The country which has protected you for 50 or 60 years and never charged you a farthing for it!

Mr. Munsie: But they refused to lend it.

Mr. Teesdale: Rotten ingratitude!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. PICKERING: I promise to detain the Committee for only a few minutes longer if members will contain themselves. They will have an opportunity to hold the floor and can then do what they like.

The CHAIRMAN: I am here to see that other hon. members contain themselves.

Mr. PICKERING: It is not easy to continue a discourse when one is assailed by all sorts of interjections quite foreign to the subject. I think members might show me a little consideration, seeing that what I am out to do is, if possible, to suggest means by which the State may get out of its financial difficulties.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You do not always show us consideration.

Mr. PICKERING: I think that I can claim that I always show consideration to other members quite as much as anyone else, and it is only fair that they should give me an opportunity to state my views.

Mr. Munsie: We are not hindering you very much.

Mr. PICKERING: We must not continue on that easy course of borrowing, without taking care that the money borrowed is properly expended in the best interests of the State. There is only one direction in which it should be spent, and that is in the development of the country and its resources. We should continue our system of immigration so long as it is on the lines of bringing to the State people sound in health and in mind and, as far as possible, sound in pocket, and settling them on our vacant spaces. This would be spending money to the advantage of the country and in its best interests. I would advocate and support anything of that nature, but when it comes to investing money in State enterprise, or anything of that kind, I shall be up against it every time. The money which has been devoted to the establishment of State enterprises could well have been devoted to the purpose of settling our vacant spaces. I would support any measure to throw open the country to settlement, and I want to see settlement prosecuted on sound and prosperous lines. I speak with some knowledge of the difficulties that confront settlers in this country. When I started on the land I began with virgin forest. Mr. Paterson, then manager of the Agricultural Bank, went down to see my property and he expressed himself as being appalled at the task that confronted me.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That timber area should never have been let under conditional purchase conditions.

Mr. PICKERING: While others fell by the wayside—

Mr. Teesdale: Oh, oh!

Mr. PICKERING: The hon. member can look at the map and see the deserted blocks. I stuck to my holding and worked it to the best of my ability. With such experience, and knowing the hardships and difficulties confronting the new settlers, I say that anything which can be done to ameliorate their conditions and give facilities for comfort and pleasure, which truly belong to them, should be done. The women of the country deserve our most serious consideration. I have all along fought the fight for the women.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are you the only one?

Mr. Teesdale: Why, you voted against them sitting in this House.

Mr. PICKERING: That was a different proposition. The women in the country have to work very hard to keep things going, and everything that can be done to alleviate their conditions and make their lives more happy and contented should be done.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Have you done any more for the women than other members have done?

Mr. PICKERING: No, but I claim to have done my share. If the hon. member asks whether I did my utmost to keep women out of this House, my reply is that I did, but beyond

that I have done my best to help them in every way.

Mrs. Cowan: Has the member for Forrest done his best?

Mr. O'Loughlen: I voted to permit you to come here, and I do not know whether I acted wisely or not.

Mr. PICKERING: I have endeavoured to show my desire that the finances of the State should be adjusted as speedily as possible. I have suggested that the only ways by which we can accomplish this are by taxation, retrenchment and entering into only such works as are likely to be remunerative to the State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The sawmills are remunerative; they returned £30,000.

Mr. PICKERING: And the Government should get rid of the State enterprises as soon as possible. I think these are tangible suggestions which the Government might very well consider.

Hon. T. Walker: They are as old as Adam.

Mr. PICKERING: The line for the Government to pursue is that of developing the country and settling suitable immigrants in our rural areas. A reflection was cast on the Country Party by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) because they did not deal with the subject of the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board. As a member for the South-West, I would like to mention that the advantages of the I.A.B. have never pertained to my particular electorate.

Mr. A. Thomson: They should.

Mr. PICKERING: The advantages of the I.A.B. should have been extended to the South-West as well as to other parts of the State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I did not say anything about the Country Party. I said the member for Katanning had not dealt with them.

Mr. PICKERING: If I have stated anything inaccurate regarding the member for North-East Fremantle, I withdraw it. I understood him to say that members of the Country Party had not dealt with these matters. I regret that the same attitude has been adopted by the Agricultural Bank and that it has been with the utmost difficulty that settlers in the South-West have secured the assistance they needed, so much so that a great portion of the business that has fallen to my lot since I have had the honour to represent the district of Sussex has comprised matters dealing with the Agricultural Bank. I contend that if there is one portion of the State more than another which needs the assistance of the Agricultural Bank, it is the South-West. It is the eldorado which the Premier contemplates developing. I wish him every success in the undertaking. I realise the difficulties which confront him, one of which will be the financing of the settlers. So surely as we open up the South-West, so surely must we be faced with obligations in the way of assisting the people who are to be settled there.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: How much money has been sunk there already?

Mr. PICKERING: I do not know, but I do not believe the money sunk in the South-West would be anything like equal to the amount sunk in the drier areas of this State and on some of the sandplain areas which will never be of much benefit to the State. The probability is that, if the accounts of the Agricultural Bank were

investigated, it would be found that those of the South-West, pro rata, were as financial as the great majority in the wheat areas. I have no desire to make invidious comparisons, but the member for North Perth (Mr. MacCallum Smith), who takes every opportunity to belittle any remarks I make in this House, caused me to do so. I am aware that the staffs engaged by the Agricultural Bank and the I.A.B. are huge and they are increasing day by day, which, in a measure, is due to the activities under the soldier settlement scheme. I understand it is the desire of the Premier that payment should be made to the settlers on their farms. This will mean the employment of a large body of inspectors. I believe there are already 70 inspectors engaged under the scheme. These figures have been given to me on reasonably good authority and I believe this is one of the factors accountable for the high cost of running the Department of Agriculture. If we adopt the scheme of taking the money to the settler on his holding, there must be more inspections to see that the work is carried out and to make the payments. I have not had much experience of the Agricultural Bank, but I believe it will be, and has been, of very great benefit to the State. If there have been losses in the South-West, they have been more than compensated for by the development which has taken place. I am unaware of the disadvantageous comparison mentioned by the member for North Perth, and I do not accept it without confirmation. I commend to the Government the desirability of extending the operations of the Agricultural Bank to the South-West on a more liberal basis, seeing that the difficulties which confront settlers there are greater and more costly. I also recommend the Government to consider the extension of the I.A.B. to the South-West, that is conceding it is the intention of the Government to maintain the I.A.B. It is in my opinion an invidious distinction that settlers in one particular area should have these advantages to the exclusion of settlers in other areas.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We do not want an extension of the I.A.B.; it should be wound up altogether to save money.

Mr. PICKERING: If so, no injustice would be done to the people of my electorate, because they have not enjoyed the advantages of the I.A.B. I do not wish to be selfish. If the I.A.B. has carried out good work it should be allowed to continue that work. If the I.A.B. could be amalgamated with the Agricultural Bank, and a saving in administration effected, it would be worthy of consideration by the Minister. I do not like to conclude without making some reference to the trip members are about to make to the South-West. It was my privilege to be one of the party who made a trip through the wheat areas, and I was grateful indeed to the Premier for affording us that opportunity. It was a great enlightenment to me and has helped me considerably in the discussions which have taken place in this Chamber. I believe that that trip resulted in savings to the State in many ways. After it, hon. members when speaking on certain subjects connected with the wheat areas knew about what they were speaking. Now there is a trip about to be made to the South-West. In this connection I regret certain questions asked in this Chamber, questions which

I consider might well have been omitted. I asked no such questions when the trip through the wheat areas was proposed. In my opinion, members are not desirous of visiting the South-West except with the object of gaining first-hand knowledge of its possibilities.

The Minister for Works: It will broaden their views.

Mr. PICKERING: I agree with the Minister for Works. So far as lies within my power, I have co-operated with various road boards and municipalities in my electorate to see that arrangements shall be made to have motor cars available, in order that members of this Assembly may see as much as possible of the district. Everything that can be done by the people of the South-West towards that end will be done with the greatest pleasure. I can assure members, however, that if they think my electors are going to spread themselves out in arranging banquets and smoke socials, they are very much mistaken. What my electors intend to do is to afford hon. members every available means of gaining a knowledge of the work which lies in front of them, namely the promotion of the development of the South-West.

Mr. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [5-48]: It was not my intention to speak on the Estimates generally. I have not sufficient vanity to believe that I can give the Government any information that would be of material advantage to them. However, after listening to the speech of the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson), and in view of the questions which that hon. member asked in this Chamber yesterday, I feel it incumbent upon me to make a few observations. Possibly I am egotistical in saying that I believe the development of the South-West will prove to be the solution of this State's financial problem. I regret to learn that this year's deficit is likely to amount to some £560,000, and that at the close of the current financial year the accumulated deficit will be something over five millions sterling. I was returned to Parliament with a special mandate from my electors to endeavour to arrest the deficit, if it is possible to do so. However, after listening to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition on these Estimates, I came to the conclusion that I do not possess sufficient knowledge of finance to be able to afford members of this Committee or the people of Western Australia a solution of the financial problem. Still, I believe there are many points connected with the Estimates which should receive the particular attention of the Committee. One point is the suggestion of the member for Katanning that there should be a reduction of 10 per cent. in Parliamentary salaries. I do not agree with that suggestion, unless the reduction applies right through the Estimates. Some portions of the Estimates could, I consider, very well be done without. The worst sinking fund we have is our Public Service. At present the Public Service seems to be outside the control of Parliament. I do not know whether the reason is that members representing metropolitan constituencies are afraid of offending some of their political supporters, or whether party politics hold such sway in Western Australia that either side is afraid to move in the direction of reform

of the Public Service; but the fact remains that no such action is even attempted. In my opinion, there was an opportunity of effecting some decent reforms when the Public Service strike occurred. That was the time when the Government of the day had the ball at their feet and should have kicked it. They should have said to the public servants, "You have gone out on strike, and broken your regulations, and thus you forfeit the privileges which you have enjoyed." And then the Government should have proceeded to reconstruct the entire Public Service. However, I do not propose to cry over spilt milk. I have no wish to be vindictive, but in the past, when I was an out-and-out supporter of Labour, as I remained for a considerable period, eventually taking up that independent attitude which I intend to maintain, in those days of the past I discovered that the men employed in Government offices were the bitterest opponents of Labour policy. Now, it seems to me that the one solution of our financial problem is, more population. We can place thousands of settlers in the South-West, more especially in its extreme portion. I was indeed pleased to hear the Premier's declaration the other evening that he intended to place 1,000 settlers on the coast between Bunbury and Fremantle. But to that end railway facilities are necessary. Members say that we have too many miles of railway relatively to our population. There are certain railways which may have been warranted at the time they were constructed, but which to-day are practically useless, and certainly not serving the best interests of the country. Within the next week or two members of this Chamber and of another place, and probably other visitors, will have an opportunity of seeing the fringe, but the fringe only, of the great South-West; and in view of that trip I urge on this Committee the advisableness, having regard to the present high cost of rails, of pulling up the rails now locked up in such lines as the Port Hedland-Marble Bar, with a view to their being utilised in the building of a section of railway in the South-West. That course would enable 1,000 settlers to be placed on south-western land. Anyone who knows the timber possibilities and the settlement possibilities of the South-West will, I am sure, agree with that statement. Never in the history of Western Australia has there been such a demand for our timbers. Now the timber industry and land settlement must go hand in hand. There is employment in the South-West for 1,000 timber workers to-morrow; and they would be followed by 1,000 settlers on the land, who would rear families. Another solution of our financial difficulties seems to lie in the direction of taxation. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that some scientific basis of taxation should be arrived at. I am prepared to guarantee that 75 per cent. of the members of this Chamber pledged themselves to the electors to support a tax on unimproved land. I know that on every platform from which I spoke I declared myself in favour of such taxation. I fail to understand why some private member, having regard to the failure of the Government to move in this direction, has not taken the necessary steps.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A private member cannot do that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Then why has not a motion of want of confidence in the Government been moved? Some members on the other side of the Chamber seem to be very unruly, and I ask those members why some action is not being taken to force the Government to impose either a tax on the unimproved value of land or a tax on unimproved land? The speech of the member for Katanning the other evening—and I am glad the hon. member is now in the Chamber—proved to my mind that the Country Party are not sincere regarding the development of the South-West. At all events, when the deputy Leader of the Country Party, whether for fame or for advertisement or from some other motive, asks such questions as he put yesterday, as to why the Government, having regard to the State's financial stress, were proposing a trip to the South-West, and so forth, that fact in itself proves conclusively to my mind that the people of the South-West cannot expect much from the Country Party, or perhaps I should say, from the deputy Leader of the Country Party.

Mr. A. Thomson: I know a good deal about the South-West.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know that any member of the Country Party sitting in this Chamber raised any objection when the excursion to the wheat areas was proposed, or inquired as to the probable cost. I am extremely surprised at and disappointed with the member for Katanning. Now I would suggest what I consider to be a very fair tax. We are continually crying out for immigrants, for more population. Therefore I propose a tax on bachelors. I consider that every unmarried man of more than 25 years of age should pay at least £5 per annum by way of bachelor tax. As a bachelor grows older, the amount of the tax would rise. Any bachelors in this Assembly should pay double tax. How can we expect this country to rise from its present condition of financial stagnation unless we get more population? The born Australian is, in my opinion, far preferable to any immigrant. While we have equal pay for the two sexes, we shall find the young lady refusing to get married so long as she can have a cushy job in an office and receive a fair wage, or possible a little more than a fair wage by reason of her goods looks. Such a young lady would consider that with a good job she was better off than she would be married and rearing a young family.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Do you propose to tax old maids as well?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No. I would not tax any lady over the age of 40.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: They never arrive at that age.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I would tax a bachelor up to the age of 55. He is not much good after he has qualified for the old age pension. One thing I am very pleased about is that Mr. Lane-Poole is going. This evening's paper states that that gentleman has decided to leave his job, and is now going on long service leave. Mr. S. L. Kessell, I see, has been appointed acting Conservator. I hope this acting Conservator business is not going to become a permanent affair again. I trust that the Government will promptly call applications from practical men having a thorough knowledge of our forests, and

that the best of the applicants will be appointed Conservator. In that case, I feel perfectly sure, an era of prosperity will set in for the South-West. I would sooner fill the position with a Western Australian than with an outsider. I believe that the men we have here are better than any obtainable from outside. An outsider might come here with a vast deal of theoretical knowledge, but without any knowledge of the conditions obtaining in our forests. A practical Conservator will know where the best timber is, and will probably listen to reason. However, I trust that the next Conservator of Forests will not be clothed with the same extensive powers as Mr. Lane-Poole has enjoyed. I believe it will be possible to arrest the financial drift in respect of the forests if the Minister will but reconsider the whole question.

Mr. O'Loughlin: Have you seen the regulations he tabled yesterday?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, I have not had an opportunity to read them. I trust they are not too drastic. However, there is an avenue of revenue there. Within two or three or four miles of the railway £2 per load is being paid for sleepers, and anything up to 15s. is being paid for cutting. We have thousands of acres of forests in which millions of sleepers can be cut. The Minister should reconsider the whole question and agree to allow a certain proportion of the timber to be exported. Our forests are degenerating. There is in them timber which in a few years will not be worth cutting. The Minister should take it out of the hands of the Conservator. In this regard I trust the Government will select a local practical man for the position of Conservator. I do not favour the reduction of the Education Vote. Nor do I wish to embarrass the Government, but I trust they will endeavour to make ends meet.

Mr. O'Loughlin: How do you feel on the question of the new liquor licenses?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is a matter I wish to touch upon. I can speak with authority on that question. The liquor trade is taxed far more than any other trade anywhere. I do not see any heavy taxes imposed on those who make up soda and milks at 1½d. and charge 6d. for them, nor on those who charge 8d. for a cup of tea and a scone. But the liquor trade suffers every time. The member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) suggested that all Votes should be cut down 10 per cent. He could not have been sincere in that. I am fighting for improved educational facilities in outlying districts. The very life of Western Australia depends upon education, and therefore I could never agree to that vote being reduced; rather would I see it increased. But there are other votes which should be cut down, notably that on which the public service depends. The member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) has pointed out what takes place in the public service. Young boys enter the service and remain there until they die. Nobody is ever sacked. The departments are like hives of bees. What all the clerks are doing, I cannot say. If one remarks about the employees in a department he is told, "Oh, you ought to go round to the Works Department. There you will see dozens of men doing nothing at all." And at the Works Department one is advised to go along to the Department of Mines if he wishes to see a large

number of men with plenty of time on their hands. We require a repeal Act. Under the system of party politics members are all afraid of to-morrow. They say, "If we do so and so the public service, or this or that section of the community, will turn against us and support the cursed Labour Party." That is the position exactly.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The public servants will not vote for the Labour Party.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Then why are you all afraid of them? Why did not the past Government, why do not the present Government, bring in some repeal measure? The Government have to depend on metropolitan members for their majority, and metropolitan members say "We will not support you if you attack our electors." And so the Government agree that they must let this thing go on a bit longer, and the old familiar drift continues. Apparently there is no solution of this problem.

The Minister for Mines: Yes, there is. Make the Government everlasting.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But first put out the present Government.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: One solution would be found in a reduced Parliament. If we had in this Chamber not 50, but 20, members or even 10, it would be a distinct improvement.

The Minister for Works: Would not six be better?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, or even three. Personally I do not care whether I am here or not. Better than a House of 50 members would be one of 20 members elected irrespective of party and appointing their own Government. That would be a vast improvement. Then if members did not approve of a certain Bill or of a certain vote in the Estimates they would not hesitate to say so and throw out the obnoxious measure.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We do that now.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not see it done. Only last night the Deputy Leader of the Country Party practically moved a motion of want of confidence in the Government. Yet nothing was done; he still sits in support of the Government. If the Government were to be turned out to-morrow the result would be merely another coalition. The Labour Party would not be in the coalition. They do not agree with any other party. They do not agree with me even. Apparently I have forced myself upon them. The Country party could not continue if they were to disagree with the Premier. Personally I do not disagree with him. I am anxious to support him tooth and nail. I am disappointed in that he has not tackled the public service problem, although I am pleased that he has vigorously tackled the question of the settlement of the South-West. In that will be found the real solution of all our problems.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have my support there.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, I know it. The hon. member is one of the best friends the South-West has. I also pay a tribute to the Leader of the Opposition as being the brainiest and best man in the House—and I do not wish to cast reflections on any other member. The Leader of the Opposition is fair in all his criticism, and frankly willing to assist the Government in every way. When you all come to my electorate the week after next we will endeavour to prove

to all of you the possibilities of the South-West and, incidentally, to extend to you all the warmest hospitality.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [6.11]: The member for Sussex referred to the Busselton district as if that district had been robbed. That district has not been robbed. If the hon. member had not interfered, the work on the jetty would have been in progress now. The facts are these: The late Hon. Frank Wilson before he became Premier, represented to the Scaddan Government the necessity for making certain alteration to the Busselton jetty.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Before the tea adjournment I said that it had not been my intention to intervene on this debate unless there were matters which required some authoritative statement to be made. The member for Sussex interpolated into his speech references to his district, which were quite justifiable, and also references to the Busselton jetty, about the wisdom of which hon. members will presently be able to judge. The former member for Sussex was my old friend and your old friend, Sir, the late Mr. Frank Wilson. Before he became Premier for the last time he had an interview with the members of the Scaddan Government with regard to the lengthening and the widening of the Busselton jetty. He received encouragement from that Government, and an indication that the work would be carried out. When the Wilson Ministry took office and after we had gone through the preliminary stages of investigation, the question of the work to be carried on came before Cabinet and eventually was brought under my notice by Mr. Wilson himself. Money was provided to the extent of £15,000 and I set about putting the work in hand. I had 94 piles at Busselton in readiness. The reason I did not put the actual construction in hand so quickly was that I only had one set of pile driving machinery, and was not prepared to spend hundreds of pounds in getting together another set when I knew I should have one freed at Bunbury, I hoped, in a comparatively short time. Some two months afterwards the Engineer-in-Chief saw me in my office and said, "I have seen the Commissioner for Railways to-day, Mr. J. T. Short. He protested most vigorously against any money being spent on the Busselton jetty because in his opinion it is not wanted. As it stood then the jetty gave him all that he required, and he did not want capital added to his capital account and so be obliged to pay interest upon it." I said that was a strong statement and that I must get it in writing. I received it in writing. I told Mr. Wilson and asked him how in the face of that statement I could proceed with the work. The result was that the work was put on one side. The Lefroy Government then suc-

ceeded the Wilson Government, and some time after that my old friend became sick with the illness which carried him away. I went to see him. We were old friends of some 30 years' standing. I can hardly speak of it to-day. He said to me, "Look here George, my old friend, if there is a chance of your fulfilling my promise to my electors about that jetty I shall be glad if you will do so. Speak to Lefroy and see what you can do." I promised him I would do so. I saw the then Premier, Sir H. B. Lefroy, who said, "The promise of a Premier must be kept. Go on with the work." There were still the same conditions concerning the plant. I could not get pile driving machinery at Bunbury then, and so things went on until the present member for Sussex took a hand in the matter. There is no doubt he is an energetic member, though he is sometimes a nuisance, as I may possibly be. I do not wish to impugn his bona fides, but I wish he was a little more considerate to other people than he is at times. I went to Busselton with the Engineer-in-Chief about the Margaret River railway and other matters. We went on to the jetty and took plans for lengthening it and putting on five sets of rails to enable the timber to be hauled, and the shunting of trucks to be made comparatively easy. The hon. member himself was there as well as Capt. Dodds. He pointed out that the men who were working in the shifts as lumpers had no place in which to shelter or to take their meals. This request being reasonable I made arrangements there and then to provide this necessary accommodation. Some two or three months ago the Engineer-in-Chief again visited Busselton and there he met Capt. Dodds, the stvedore or wharfinger of the jetty. They were talking together and Capt. Dodds said, "Look here, Mr. Thompson, if you put in five lines I shall have to stop work. You will have to take to pieces the superstructure of the present jetty, and no ship will be able to load at the jetty while that is going on. If you put four lines down instead of five, they will not be as good as five but they will do the work that I need, and I can go on loading my ships while you are doing the work." The Engineer-in-Chief thought it over. He is a man of experience and knowledge. He is not a child or an office boy, but a capable professional man. He saw that by doing this we could save £2,000 or £2,500 and if this still gave to the man who had to do the work what he wanted knowing the state of our finances, and that I was at him all the time to keep down expenses, he agreed to the altered scheme. The matter was not reported to me, as this was not necessary. If Mr. Thompson had reported it I should have told him to go on. The next thing was a letter from the member for Sussex, written in indignant terms, to the effect that his constituency was going to suffer an injustice and that he would not have it. He was going to call a meeting of his constituents in order to discuss the mat-

ter and take what action was thought fit. I replied that the work was not actually started, and that if there was going to be any bother about it I should give orders at once for the work to stand over for the time being. I would have no fiasco or waste of public funds. I would not have any repetition of what I had suffered in one or two other places in the State when indignation meetings had been called, and there had been a loss of money to the State because of alterations being made that had better have been left alone. I am not quite as qualified in political life as some people, but I have had something like 20 years' experience in this Chamber. I have had much experience during that period of different Governments, and during the last five years have had experience of different Premiers. I know how things appeal to them. I thought I had written to the hon. member in a friendly sort of way. At all events I suggested that it would be a good thing in matters of that sort to let sleeping dogs lie. I thought I had done the right thing. The hon. member, however, wrote and said I was not to write threatening letters to him and that he would do his duty by his constituents. I said I had not threatened him and wanted to carry on the work. Hon. members can see why I did want to carry it on, and that I would have been glad to have done so. The officers of the Railway Department are not merely station-masters for the issue of tickets, and for the running of ledgers and to attend to members of Parliament and get them reserved compartments when there are no compartments available for them. They are responsible officers dealing with a big system connected with our public utilities. When anything occurs which will interfere with the interests of their department, they naturally report it. The Commissioner for Railways heard I was going to spend £20,000 down there. He wrote to his Minister pointing out, as Mr. Short had done years before, that the Railway Department could do all the work required with the jetty as it then was, that to spend this money meant adding to their capital account, and that he protested against it. The Minister for Railways in a proper way wrote to the Premier and pointed out what the Minister for Works proposed to do and that the Commissioner for Railways had protested. The Premier sent for the papers, which he then returned to me, saying "This work must not proceed in view of the state of the finances; the country cannot afford it." I believe these are his exact words. The hon. member knows all about it. Nevertheless, he holds his indignation meetings at Busselton. I suppose he will have another meeting or half a dozen of them later on.

Mr. Pickering: As many as I think necessary.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When I go into Busselton I will make this unvarnished tale as plain as I have made it to-night, and will take the papers to support it.

Mr. Pickering: You can do so.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We will have a pleasant time when we get to Busselton.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not going. The hon. member brought some of his friends to see the Premier. The Premier told them the State could not afford to carry out the work, and that he would not have it done. The hon. member then took a deputation to the Minister for Railways to see what he would say about it. In the report that was sent to me by the Minister for Railways it is said that the hon. member stated that owing to the tactics of a certain Minister the work had been blocked. I object to that. There were no tactics at all about it. I did what I thought was the right thing. I would have built the jetty in honour of my old friend had it been possible to do so. When the Premier said it was not to be built, that was the end of it. It may be suggested that I failed in my duty in one respect. I knew very well that if the Premier saw the statement of the Commissioner for Railways he would feel that in the circumstances he must wait a while before carrying out the promise made by his old friend, the late Mr. Frank Wilson. I gave a warning to the member for Sussex in order to let him understand the position was precarious, and I say deliberately that if it had not been for his interference the work would have been going on now.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You were trying to struggle through.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I no hear that the hon. member is going to bring up another deputation. The hon. member spoke about the State enterprises. There is no mistake about my attitude in regard to the trading concerns. I have never held but the one opinion, and I hold it still to-day, that they should never have been started. The country can better progress by encouraging the people to embark their own capital, their energies and their abilities in these matters than the Government can do. There are things, however, such as State insurance, State Savings Banks, and State railways with which I think the Government can do better, but with regard to brickworks, sawmills, etc., I would have preferred that they had not been taken in hand. Hon. members will realise that while I hold these views and stand to them, I have tried to do my best as a trustee in the interests of the State and these concerns. If we could sell the State enterprises to-morrow and get a fair price for them, we should not hesitate to dispose of them, but is it to be supposed that after putting in five years of hard work on all these concerns, and giving to the State the benefit of my 50 years' experience, and having brought the concerns to the position in which we find them to-day—is it to be supposed that I am going to allow them to be scrapped to suit anyone? There is a certain movement in progress amongst a certain class of people whose idea is to get hold of the trading concerns which the State has brought to within a payable distance, and in order to

get possession of them, to run them down with the assistance of certain members of Parliament so that they might be scrapped. I have a fair stake in Western Australia, and it has been acquired by thrift and hard work; and I cannot afford, for the sake of my wife and children, to allow the belongings of Western Australia to be scrapped to suit the class of man who would sell the State at any time for profit if he got the chance to do so. I do not intend to do it. The member for Sussex talked about the meat works. I know nothing about them, nor do I know anything about the State steamers, the State hotels and the State forests. But with regard to the sawmills, the implement works, the brickworks, and the quarry, to say that there is lack of control is an insult, not to me, but to the men who are handling those concerns, those who are giving honest and honourable work to the State and who have done so since they have been employed by the State. When the hon. member talks about mismanagement, I can only reply that he does not know what he is talking about any more than he did when he was talking on the Architects Bill last night. The manager of the implement works, Mr. Shaw is one of the best engineers I have ever met in my life; he is not only theoretical but practical, and if he were my son I would be proud of him.

Mr. Marshall: Cannot you make a son-in-law of him.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He is married, but I would be proud, if he were not married, if his affections fell on my daughter. She would make him a good wife and he would make her a good husband. Mr. Shaw has changed those works. Hon. members have only to get the returns to see that since he has had the management of them he has obtained an output of £690 per man in the last year as against £190 per man five or six years ago. Mr. Shaw has done his work well and he is respected by everybody. The member for Sussex said something about unfair dealing. It is very difficult to listen, without feeling annoyed, to an hon. member who speaks so glibly. One does not like to say nasty things if he can help it. I do not. While the hon. member was speaking I think I interjected to the effect that he had not read his brief properly. I do not want it to be thought that the hon. member was standing here as a paid advocate for anyone outside. The hon. member, however, has evidently very large ears, with a tremendously receptive storehouse with holes in the bottom of it like a sieve. In this way he only retains a portion of what he hears, the remainder escapes. I have the authority of one who saw Mr. Monteath recently to state what he (Mr. Monteath) told the hon. member in the club.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If it was told in a club, why repeat it?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: A statement has been made that the implement

works were making pipes above six inches in diameter. This is not a fact. Monteath's have what is known as a vertical moulding plant for making pipes.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They have always made our large pipes.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They have always made the big pipes for the State. The implement works have only the plant with which to make 3, 4, 5 and occasionally 6in. pipes. Monteath's have finished their orders, and they have been trying legitimately to get the Government to give them a large order to enable them to keep their men going. Every member of the Government would have been only too glad to have been able to give the order to prevent the works closing down and throwing 50 or 60 men out of employment. But no State can afford to guarantee to any manufacturer sufficient work to keep him always going. As for the implement works, until last week they had not made 6in. pipes for 12 months. Monteath's have been doing this work the whole of the time. The implement works have been making 3in. and 4in. pipes but, as it happens, we are to-day making 6in. pipes; we have an order for 100 lengths of this pipe. It is not for an hon. member to say that there has been anything unfair about the manufacture of these pipes. The buyer asked for prices and the result was that the implement works were given the order. The pipes are being made for the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Next the member for Sussex made a statement about Bolton's. If the hon. member collects such garbage as this he will need all the sanitary carts that Bolton's can make to carry that garbage away and there will not be one left to carry him away. The statement was made by him that Mr. Shaw obtained from Bolton's their drawings, and specifications, and then started on the work in competition with Bolton's. I am not calling the hon. member a liar, but I do say that those who supplied him with the information he gave are liars. Mr. Shaw assures me there is not a particle of truth in what the hon. member stated. Mr. Shaw never obtained the specifications from Bolton's or their drawings, either for that particular cart or even for spring carts. So much for that. The hon. member said that an alteration in drays was wanted and of course the Implement Works got the order. That is another lie; I cannot call it anything else, even though I may be called to order for using the expression. The facts are that there were a lot of old drays at Fremantle that were wasting, and I said to the store-keeper, "You had better see your people and get the drays put in order and keep them in the shed until I want them." The consequence was that Mr. Shaw was asked to put one of the drays in order, and it was a dray that would have made better firewood than anything else. He did that work and the cost was £32. He was then asked to put

in a price for the others, which he did. It was about £28. Bolton put in a price also and as his was £14 a dray, he got the job. With regard to the wagons, Mr. Shaw made these, which were a copy of the Hillyard wagons. Two years ago he showed them at Claremont. We had to quote for those wagons and our price was £106. Bolton's price was £87 and Bolton got the order. The ironical part of the matter is that Mr. Shaw rang me up about ten days ago and asked me to bring under the notice of the Premier the fact that work was going away from us. No order has been given to the Implement Works unless their price has been lower than that of private firms or at any rate, equal. I might perhaps require a thousand pounds' worth of ironwork done. I have the material paid for, and in stock, and it might pay me better even if the work cost me a little more to give it to the Implement Works. I have only to pass a slip of paper on to the Treasurer and the work will be paid for. The hon. member also had something to say about Massey-Harris. There are times when I am thankful to Providence for having left me a little deaf in one ear. This is one of those occasions and I shall let his remarks on this subject pass. He also spoke about Hoskins, and that was one of the most idiotic things he put up to Parliament. It proves to me that people outside must think that some members of Parliament are silly noodles.

Mr. Pickering: Mr. Chairman—

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not referring to the hon. member as a silly noodle. The hon. member declared that the Implement Works closed down Hoskins' pipe foundry. This was closed down for two and a half years before the Implement Works ever started operations. Who shut down Hoskins? Mr. W. D. Johnson, when he was Minister for Works. He put up a plant at the Fremantle Harbour Works and started to make pipes, because he could not get a fair quote from outside manufacturers. If the hon. member will turn to "Hansard" he will find that protests were made against the action at that time. I objected to it because I knew that Hoskins had been invited to come to this State to make the pipes required for the water works, and when the Government set out to establish their own works I considered they committed a breach of faith. The hon. member has been primed up by a set of cunning people outside, who, taking advantage of his innocence, have led him to believe that the State Implement Works were responsible for closing up Hoskins, whereas that pipe foundry was closed before the Implement Works were born.

Mr. Pickering: What about the spare parts?

Mr. O'Loughlin: We would like to make you into a spare part.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mention was made of an offer to purchase the Implement Works. If I were to say that an offer had not been made I should not be telling

the truth. If a bona fide offer had been made, or an offer such as anyone with common sense could entertain, it would have been considered. Certainly there was one offer made by a powerful company which I regarded as a joke and I have letters in my possession to prove what I am going to say. They would have their own valuers to value the buildings and the machinery, and their valuator would put down his figures on a slip of paper so that they could get a total at which they would purchase the works and we would have to accept it. They would take over the stock of implements and sell them for what they could get. When they had sold it and collected the cash, the money would be handed over to the Government less five per cent. Then they said, they would carry on and they would use our stock of materials. The stocks amounted at that time, to about £30,000 worth. As they required material to work up they would take what they wanted and pay for it at the ruling prices when it was used. To show hon. members how generous they were and what good business men they were, they stated that, if there should be a profit made under their auspices, as soon as the funds of the concern would permit, they would hand it to the Government to pay for the purchase of the undertaking.

Mr. Teesdale: And then they woke up.

Mr. Mann: Who was this?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not want to mention any names unless I am forced to do so. When I received their letter, the Under Secretary, Mr. Munt, and my secretary were there. I read it through and handed the letter on to Mr. Munt. I said something at the same time, which I will not repeat at present. I asked Mr. Munt what he thought of it and he said, "Do you not think it is a joke?" I rang up this party and informed them that I had received the letter. I was met with the reply asking what I thought of it. I asked if it was a joke, and the man at the other end of the telephone said it was not a joke. I dictated an acknowledgment of the receipt of the letter. Then came the change of Government. As members will know there were a number of changes of Government about that time—and this matter was laid aside. I am not altogether an idiot and I could not put through such a proposal. Had I done so, a special place at Claremont would have had to be prepared for me. Because of this, I was hauled over the coals by a member of Parliament, who is not present to-night, who complained that I had not the courtesy to reply to them. I did take strong exception to that attitude and spoke my mind pretty plainly. I will not allow anyone to doubt my word.

Mr. Mann: Are you not going to say who it was?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Don't you know?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is only one firm in town that wants everything for nothing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They have considerable political influence as well. The hon. member made reference to the Wyndham Meat Works. When I had finished my contract to build the works, I refused to have anything more to do with those works. My reason for that was on account of the management we had at the time—there was a considerable amount of criticism from it at the time—and I adopted the attitude that I had finished my contract to build the works and they could do the rest. I have some excellent tongues from those works for which I have paid, and also some excellent extract of meat, for which I have also paid. That is all I have had out of those works or to do with them since I finished the building. I have no doubt the Premier knows more about them and he will be able to reply to the hon. member's criticisms. It will be recognised that that hon. member's facts are so inaccurate in regard to other matters that I am grateful I have not to reply further under the heading of the meatworks. Regarding the State Steamship Service, he contended that we should get rid of them. My colleague, the Minister for Mines, will probably answer his statements. I was amused, however, at his remarks regarding the electric power house. I do not know anything about how the existing contracts were made but the City of Perth, I understand, is doing pretty well.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think anyone can say what they are getting out of it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have heard it said that they are making between £30,000 and £40,000 a year out of the contract. In any case, when I wanted them to pay a little bit more for the damage they do to the main roads—they have 45 per cent. of the traffic over the Perth-Fremantle road—they fired a writ into me regarding the allocation of traffic fees. We shall see how they get on. I do not know that it is necessary for me to say anything more except to thank the hon. member for his speech. His gibes were more in sorrow than in anger.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We are sorry for you.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: At any rate, the Minister has his vote.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is the main thing.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. gentleman made some reference to the civil service. I interjected when he spoke about the service, and I repeat now, that if hon. members think that Ministers have any control over the civil service, they are quite wrong. We have no such control. Indeed, we have not sufficient control to be able to manage the business of our departments. We shall never have until the people of this State wake up and let members of Parliament understand that they are not prepared to pay taxes unless those who are engaged to do their work, are prepared to give their full service to the State, the same as would be

given in a private firm. We have some splendid men, good loyal servants, in the service. We have a lot of men who may be very good men and very loyal, but they have a very funny way of showing it. It grieves me to have to say these things, because I appreciate to the fullest extent the efforts of some of the men who have worked for me during the past five years. If I were a private contractor again, I would double the screw of those men straight away and take them away from the State service. They are splendid men, who know their jobs. There are some to whom that description does not apply so well. I need not say much more. The member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) spoke about the forest inspectors. I will bring his remarks under the notice of the Premier and see what can be done. He made one very sensible remark concerning a matter which has been receiving the consideration of Ministers for some considerable time. I do not know where he got his information, but he asked whether it was not possible for some of the rails in different parts of the State to be pulled up and utilised elsewhere, instead of paying £1,500 or £1,600 per mile for new rails.

Member: What is the price of rails now?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: For 45-lb. rails, we have to pay now between £1,500 and £1,600, where we formerly had to pay £440 per mile. The question of utilising these rails in other parts where they are more required has been receiving the attention of the Government.

Mr. A. Thomson: I hope you will give effect to that proposal.

Mr. Munsie: We will pull up some of the small agricultural spur lines.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We cannot do anything of that sort without Parliamentary authority. I am glad to hear that the deputy Leader of the Country Party will support the Government if we bring any such proposal before members. Regarding the tax on bachelors or spinsters, that does not worry me. The hon. member made reference to Mr. Laue-Poole. We cannot say very much on that matter because, as members know, an inquiry is proceeding. As a man who has had something to do with jarrah, and the timber industry in other States for nearly 40 years, I shall be glad if, when the Minister controlling the Forests Department is making arrangements concerning the industry, he will see that some consideration is shown to the views of men who were born and lived all their lives in the karri and jarrah country, men who know all about the timber and know whether a tree should be cut down or not. They can see that the State gets a fair return for its valuable timber, and I trust that regulations and imposts will not be such as to cripple the industry or to make the men engaged in it feel that their efforts are regarded as almost criminal and liable to almost any penalty under regulations intended to foster, but which really impede and embarrass the progress of the industry.

Mr. LATHAM (York) [8.10]: I want to congratulate the Premier on having such a fine Opposition. The members occupying the Opposition benches have been kind to him; and I think they are genuine in their remarks that they are willing to assist him in the difficulties he has to face. I do not think that the difficulties are so great as some pessimists would have us believe. We have a fine State, capable of doing a great deal towards the future welfare of Australia and capable of producing almost anything we want. It only requires population to enable us to do that. Regarding the land question, I was pleased that the member for West Perth asked for a return covering the district surveyor's report, wherein it is shown that 575 families can be provided with land in the Avon Valley close to existing railways and other facilities. This land is some of the best we have in the State and, unfortunately, it is held and improved. If it were not improved, we might be able to do something under the existing Act. Being improved property and freehold, it will be necessary to amend the existing land laws to enable us to bring that land into a state of greater productivity. It would be a good idea for the Minister for Lands to adopt the system in vogue in New Zealand, where the Minister is able to take over any such holdings at the valuation people put on them for taxation purposes, plus 10 per cent. Such a proposition would pay for itself very well. Recently land was sold there for £4 6s. per acre, and if the holdings were made smaller the position would be improved. The same thing applies to some estates around York which are being held up. Last year they produced very little. I know of two small holdings, however. Regarding one, the husband went to the war and the wife ran the farm, which comprised some 15 or 20 acres. She secured a return of £200 profit per year from that land, whereas the land adjoining did not bring in more than 5s. per acre. I know the difficulty these people say they have to face, which is that they cannot get sufficient labour to do the work satisfactorily. If we relieved them of some of their land and started dairying or some intense culture industry, it would be of advantage to the State. We have a tremendous area of dairying country in Western Australia that is not being utilised at the present time, and the greatest part of it lies along the Great Southern railway. Given facilities, the State would be able to see that the land was put to better use and that would mean prosperity for the State generally. It would relieve us of the necessity for sending considerable sums of money to the Eastern States each year, for which we get goods in return. Further out in the agricultural areas our railways run through a great deal of sand-plain country. While I admit that the Government are doing something to demonstrate the possibility of utilising this land, a great deal more could be done to satisfy the people that this land

might yet be put to good use. There is no doubt that eventually we will be able to use every acre of that sand plain country. I am not referring to the ironstone and gravel ridges which, fortunately, do not predominate. It would be well for the Minister to go into the matter of making that light land available even at a lower price than he is permitted to sell it to-day under the Land Act. I listened attentively to the remarks made by the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) regarding the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board. I was surprised to hear that the House had not a balance sheet from that institution. I venture to say that no banking institution in the world would be permitted to conduct its business without presenting a balance sheet to the shareholders. We are the shareholders of the Agricultural Bank, and yet I believe we have not seen a balance sheet for three years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Four years.

Mr. LATHAM: I find that the cost of administration is £73,063, and I believe there are about 3,000 clients on the books. The I.A.B. is a financial institution, but I cannot understand the manner in which the accounts are kept. A considerable number of men advertise in our newspapers their willingness to assist clients to get their accounts put in order and enable them to get their clearances from the board. It is rather astounding that our public service should be keeping the accounts in such a manner that outside auditors are required to satisfy clients that they are getting a fair deal and that their accounts are not in such a muddle that, as frequently happens, £200 or £300 has to be refunded or paid back. We are paying for this service, and surely we have a right to see that good service is rendered. If the institution were conducted as other banking institutions, we would not find people advertising in the daily newspapers their willingness to assist to clear up I.A.B. accounts for clients. The House should take a definite stand and see that it is informed of what is being done by that institution. I hate the thought of select committees or Royal Commissions, but I do not know of any of our services that demands an inquiry more than this particular institution. Recently I had an opportunity of seeing at the country shows some of the finest exhibits of agricultural implements I had ever seen. They were exhibited by the State Implement Works. At the smaller shows in the agricultural districts, a good many exhibits from the State Implement Works are displayed, and I often wonder at what cost to the State they are exhibited. Other agricultural machinery firms usually make sales and arrange for deliveries to be made to the shows. Therefore, it does not cost them a penny to have their exhibits at the show. It is well worth considering whether the State cannot adopt the same system.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The private people entered into an agreement not to show at the agricultural shows.

Mr. LATHAM: When sales are being made in a district, the exhibits are displayed and then handed over after the show.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They wanted the State Implement Works to agree with them, but they would not do so.

Mr. LATHAM: Recently agricultural shows have come more to the fore in Western Australia. A few years ago there were few shows outside of Perth. To-day nearly every little district has its show and these displays are proving a great success not only educationally but socially. I congratulate the Minister for Works on having appointed a road board secretary as road board auditor. This will be a great advantage. In the past an accountant audited the books, and he knew little of road board work. The departure that the Public Service Commissioner has been persuaded to make in appointing a man from outside the service is a very good one. I was struck with the reference to water supplies made last evening by the member for North-East Fremantle. I, too, have a grievance. We in the country have no objection to the city and the suburbs having adequate water supplies, but we do not want them to be provided at the expense of the country. I am continually harping to the Minister to let my district know what it is possible to do in the way of providing supplies for the farmers who are unable to provide supplies of their own. When we get decent water supplies in many of the agricultural districts we shall be able to run those side lines which are essential to the welfare of the State. In the near future the price of wheat will be coming down somewhat to its normal value, and we know how difficult it will then be to make wheat-growing pay. It is necessary to have side lines, such as dairying, sheep and pig raising, and we cannot run those without water supplies.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: What are the roads boards doing with the dams handed over to them by the Government? Letting them silt up?

Mr. LATHAM: They are of so little importance towards providing adequate supplies for my district that they are not worth considering. The member for North Perth cannot have any idea of what water supplies mean on the flat gimlet country. Last year we had a very good wheat yield; yet we had insufficient rain to fill the dams which were supplied from big rock catchments. The rain was light and the water did not run and, therefore, we did not get the dams filled. The goldfields, unfortunately, are requiring smaller quantities of water than in years gone by, but we believe this water could be profitably used if it were run out to the agricultural areas.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: Did not you pester the Government to put those dams down at the expense of thousands of pounds?

Mr. LATHAM: They have proved very useful.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: And when handed over to you they were not looked after?

Mr. LATHAM: That might be the hon. member's impression. In the three road board districts I represent, York, Avon, and Bruce Rock, not one of the dams has been allowed to silt up. We are continually spending money on them. For the benefit of the hon. member I will obtain the total amount spent in the Bruce Rock district during the last 12 months to keep the dams in order. I am pleased to notice that the State hotels produced some revenue last year, but what I cannot understand are the tremendous charges hooked up against them for administrative purposes in the city of Perth. There seems to be an unnecessarily large amount of stock held here. I know owners of various hotels, and I venture to say it does not cost them £2,000 a year for administrative purposes over and above the cost of local managers. I hope the State hotels system will be extended. Big additions have been made to the Bruce Rock hotel, but they are proving insufficient. I hope that State hotels will be provided in all the districts; they are proving profitable concerns. I do not know that the management is any better under the State regime, but it is certainly no worse. I would like to see the Department of Agriculture and the Agricultural Bank working in great unison. The Department of Agriculture was created for the purpose of assisting the development of our agricultural districts, but it is necessary that the financial institution, a sister institution, should work hand in hand with it. Yet we find there is not the co-operation or cohesion existing which we should expect. The result is that we are not getting the best from the bank or from the department. I hope the Minister will look into this matter and see if it is not possible to bring about better co-operation between these two departments. In the Department of Agriculture we have a number of experts, and the country districts should receive the benefit of their advice and services. The department should send out men having a knowledge of sheep, cattle and horses, which knowledge should be made available to the farmers in the various districts. I regret to notice that by way of economy the Minister is reducing the staff. This is a very unwise policy in a new country like Western Australia.

[Mr. Angelo took the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. J. Scaddan—Albany) [8.28]: I wish to take this opportunity of saying a few words on the general discussion, because it may be the only opportunity I will have of speaking on the Estimates, and because I wish to ex-

plain one or two matters which might easily be misunderstood if some explanation is not given. I wish to compliment the Leader of the Opposition on the very fine example he set to the House and to the public in his criticism of the Budget. The debate on the Budget is generally accepted as a favourable opportunity to say scathing things about the administration, while the opportunity is generally missed to say anything complimentary concerning the work of any of the Ministers. But the Leader of the Opposition has served a sufficient term on the Treasury benches to know that there are conditions operating in the State such as would make it fatal for the Government to take such action as has been suggested by those members who, one would imagine, ought to know better. Firstly, it is a very simple matter for laymen, members of the general public, to assert that economy is not being practised, and to declare that it should be done by merely using the pen to reduce items. One hon. member suggested a reduction of 10 per cent. in all departments. I do not know that such a practice is right, but it is a practice which has been very freely indulged in by hon. members. I suggest that members who consider that the Estimates can be reduced should indicate specifically the direction in which any department admits of economy, should designate the item to be reduced, so that they may carry in the eyes of the public the responsibility of reducing some service to the public. If we use the pruning knife any further, the public will have to accept lesser services than are being given to-day. On the Address-in-reply I dealt with this very phase of such demands by hon. members and by the public. I told the House that if we were to have a general policy of economy throughout the departments, the public must recognise the consequent necessity for reduction in services. We went ahead economising, especially in the Railway Department; and I declare that never in the history of this State has there been such drastic retrenchment in the railway service as during the past six months. Now I give credit to various hon. members, and particularly to the Leader of the Opposition, who might very well have taken the opportunity which presented itself to attack the Government—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There was heavy retrenchment in 1906.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But nothing like there has been during the past six months. In former years the practice was simply to retrench the casual worker, while paying no attention to the rest of the service, which ought to have been reduced correspondingly with the falling off of traffic. We have, however, gone on a definite system. That is so, notwithstanding the assertion of the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) that in his electorate certain stations had been

overlooked. A direction was given by the Government, through myself as Minister, to the Commissioner of Railways that he must reduce hands commensurately with the falling off of traffic. As a result there has been reduction not only of casual workers, but also of staff. Where the service was not on a definitely payable basis, the Commissioner of Railways had to make inroads on his staff. He cut out a lot of station-masters and officers in charge of stations. One or two of these cases happened to be in the electorate of the member for Katanning. The difficulty experienced was that every district where such retrenchment occurred thought it was the only district subjected to retrenchment. The member for Leonora (Mr. Heron) knows that in his electorate there has been an uproar because of the reduction in railway stations there, the people of Leonora apparently imagining that the reduction took place because he happened to sit on the Opposition side of the Chamber.

Mr. Heron: They did not say that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is what I read between the lines. The newspapers published in the district of the member for Katanning have suggested that their people have been subjected to railway retrenchment first because the member for Katanning was the first to mention that matter in this House. Of course that is quite wrong; a number of districts suffered earlier than the Katanning district. If hon. members want to be assured that economies are being effected in the Railway Department, let them come to my office, and I will show them files upon files of petitions and protests from every part of the State. Even some of the people who took the public platform and used the columns of the Press to insist that there must be economy, have submitted petitions against the loss of a night station-master. At Broomehill a station has been established for a number of years. The Broomehill station was treated on the same basis as other stations: that is to say, on the basis of the in traffic and the out traffic. When the Broomehill returns of traffic fell below a fair percentage, we cut out the Broomehill station-master, just in the same way as we would have done at Albany or anywhere else. I as Minister—and this applies also to other Ministers—have never interfered with the Commissioner of Railways, except to give him a definite instruction, a definite policy. I said to the Commissioner, "When a complaint comes along, I want you to give consideration to it; but I also want you to understand that if you cut out every station in my electorate I shall not interfere, because I call upon you to bear the responsibility of doing what Parliament desires." Now I want to make a short reference to a leading article recently published by the "West Australian." That article criticised the administration of the Railway Department. I would not

suggest that the article was made a little hotter than it might have been because I happen to be the Minister controlling that department: far be it from me to suggest anything of the kind. But the point is that a journal which purports to be a leader of public opinion did not take steps to verify its information before publishing an article designed to enlighten the public. The paper had the public departments available for inquiry, and could see the Minister. The paper has reporters here in the gallery when the House is sitting, and those reporters call at my office every day. Yet the "West Australian," accepting things on face appearances, published an article which deliberately stated that staff was being deliberately piled up in the Railway Department.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Estimates say that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The "West Australian" accepted that view of the case on the basis of what appears in the Estimates. The paper wrote an article denouncing the Minister and everybody concerned in the administration of the Railway Department without making an attempt to discover whether the information on which the denunciation would be based was correct. The simple explanation of the matter is that under the Railways Act the Commissioner has not power to appoint an officer to a position carrying a salary upwards of £400 per annum without first obtaining the approval of the Minister, the Minister being responsible to Parliament. This year, owing to a number of officers who previously appeared in a lump sum, being brought up beyond the £400 per annum level, there was an increase, an apparent increase, in the number of officers, for the simple reason that these officers are now itemised on the Estimates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Have you not made new appointments?

Hon. MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes and I explained that matter on the Address-in-reply. New appointments have been made for the purpose of closer supervision. Considerable savings have been effected by reason of our having responsible men on the spot, instead of continuing to concentrate in one centre the control of a system which extends over 3,000 miles. Responsibility has been distributed, and better results are being obtained thanks to the new appointments.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: New men have been given new positions.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I say it is so.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member does not know what he is talking about, then. I have had the matter thoroughly thrashed out with the Commissioner. Take the interlocking branch; new men are there, but some of the old men have gone. District engineers and district traffic superintendents

have been placed in certain positions, and have in some cases been granted a small increase of salary. That re-organisation has brought about considerable savings. In one case we discovered, as the result of putting an officer in charge on the spot, that a good deal of casual labour was being employed needlessly. I will not mention the place, because I do not want to cause pain in any quarter. We found, as the result of closer supervision, that this casual labour could be dispensed with; and as a consequence hundreds of pounds are being saved annually, ten times as much is being saved as is represented by the increase of salary granted to the officer in charge. Administrative authority for a big railway system such as ours, cannot be centred in one place and yet good results obtained. Now let me take the reduction of 10 per cent. in all departments. First let us consider the Mines Department in this connection. Let the supporters of economy take the Mines Estimates and show me the possibility of a reduction of 10 per cent. without seriously inconveniencing the mining community of Western Australia. I am prepared to surrender my portfolio to anyone who can do it, because I cannot do it. In the Mines Department we have a certain number of men who are working as hard as possible, and are in fact overloaded with work. I have had members coming to me to suggest extra facilities for these men, and the appointment of additional officers. I have declared that the Government cannot do these things. To increase the allowance by ten per cent. in one direction, we must reduce the expenditure elsewhere and that cannot be done. The same thing applies with regard to other departments. Take the Forests Department. In that instance I might be able to show that by putting in the pruning knife I could effect savings to the extent of 10 per cent.

Mr. Marshall: What has become of that "West Australian" leader? Have you abandoned it?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have told the Committee enough about that leader to show that it is easy to publish something that is misleading to the public. The Forests Department is in the same position as other departments.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Forests Department got an increase in staff.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: That is not my responsibility, but the responsibility of Parliament. This House said to the Conservator of Forests, "If you can get more revenue, you will have more to spend." And he has the right to take it and spend it, and he cannot be controlled. Therefore, the hon. member will be stranded if he reduces that by 10 per cent.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are you going to hold those regulations in abeyance for the present?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No; not unless the hon. member takes action. Those regulations have been held in abeyance since

June, and we have been making inquiries in all directions. At last we have to bow to the Conservator, on the score that he has technical knowledge which we have not. He is insistent in his contention that we are losing revenue. "Why do you not put up my regulations and get this extra revenue?" he asks.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If you are going to have the inquiry, the regulations should be held in abeyance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have said that since the House wants an inquiry, we should accept his recommendations to the extent of putting them before Parliament, where members can disallow them if they wish to do so. What would the hon. member have? We have to sit down under one of two charges, either that we are deliberately neglecting to collect additional revenue, or that we are flouting a highly salaried official. In the circumstances, the Government had no alternative to placing the regulations on the Table, where they could be perused by the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen) and others directly interested. Then, if those hon. members disapproved of them, they could move to disallow them, and the matter could be definitely settled when the inquiry was held. Again, take the tramways and the electricity supply. Everybody knows that we are trying to meet the public demand in the provision of improved tramway facilities. If the hon. member reduces that vote by 10 per cent. we must allow the tramways to get into disrepair.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Which may mean claims for compensation running into thousands of pounds.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: These are matters that must be left in the hands of those best able to control them. I am not too proud of the existing tramways.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have one of the best managers in Australia.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Undoubtedly, but if that manager cannot get money and material, it is impossible for him to prove himself better than other managers. We cannot write off 10 per cent. there and still give the public reasonable facilities. Take the electricity supply. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) complained bitterly about the agreement made with the city council. It is easy to be wise after the event. The hon. member may have known—I did not know—that there was going to be a great war. I did not know that we were going to be up against existing conditions. He may have known it. When that agreement was made it was a good bargain.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And when you brought Fremantle in you made it a paying proposition.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: It is a paying proposition now. When the agreement was made, the city council had a small power station for the generation of electric light. They were up against demands for extensions. We had previously taken over

the tramways, and were up against it for additional power. We obtained the best advice on earth, namely, that of Messrs. Merz & McLellan, who are accepted in all countries as arbitrators on matters affecting electricity. They advised us, and they advised the city council, and this was the main feature of their advice. They said, "If you erect a generating station that will meet all requirements in the metropolitan area, the city council will get their current cheaper for lighting purposes, and the Government will get their current cheaper for power purposes, and thus the community will get the double benefit." It must be remembered that the ratepayers of Perth are also the taxpayers of the State. Thus we were not handing over any profits to a company because, after all, the profits go to the community. Moreover, when the Government were obtaining current under the old system, prior to the agreement, they were paying 5d. and 6d. per unit, whereas to-day we are paying a maximum of 1½d. per unit. Was the member for Sussex aware that coal was going to increase in price from 12s. 6d. per ton delivered at the power station to 24s. 4d. per ton? I was not aware of it. After all, the generating of electricity, once capital charges are accounted for, is simply a question of coal. It will not cost us a penny more for supervision, or for anything except coal, if we increase our output 50 per cent. Coal is the key of the position, and coal has increased in price from 12s. 6d. per ton in the station to 24s. 4d. per ton. Notwithstanding that, I give every credit to Mr. Taylor. He is the most active public servant I have ever met. He is going from morning to night, looking for new business to meet the increasing cost of coal. It was never suggested, even by our advisers, that in the short period which has elapsed since the station was erected we should have so markedly increased our annual output. It is greatly to Mr. Taylor's credit.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And you will require more plant to provide for applications for increases.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, that is so. In 1922, unless the plant is increased, we shall not be able to supply the current necessary to keep our industries going. Our industries have to compete with the industries of other countries using cheap electricity. Notwithstanding that coal has gone up in price, last year we produced current more cheaply than did any other station outside the British Isles. That stands to the credit of those responsible for the scheme and for the agreement. The Treasury has not had to carry any losses by the generating station, if the station be given credit for the difference in the cost of the current now used as against the price paid under the old conditions. After all, I look upon our power station not as an ordinary trading concern, but as an aid to industry. I want that station to generate current as cheaply as possible. I do not want to make profits out

of it, but I want the people to establish industries by using cheap current from the power station. I have been trying to find new means by which we can use that current. We have assisted the establishment of industries that never could have been established here but for the power station. Electric steel works are being established in West Guildford; a big firm has come over here from Sydney to accept our offer, and presently will be making high class steel for the whole of Australia. Instead of members being so critical in regard to these activities, which mean so much from the point of view of the community, they should view it from that standpoint, discarding the standpoint of pounds shillings and pence. Members, I know, are anxious that the ledger should be squared, but one can square the ledger and ruin the community in so doing.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The criticism is due to the feeling that the metropolitan area is getting something.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not quite think that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We have had it repeatedly shown this session.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think that for a moment, although I venture to say that the best answer to those who do hold that view is to suggest that they demand as rightly they might do, that those parochial facilities be handed over to the people they serve. I believe that if we were to form, on the same lines as in Adelaide, a metropolitan trust to control the tramways and electricity supply, those complaining most would soon wake up to the fact that the people in the metropolitan area have a very fine asset. This Parliament has no right to withhold facilities because Parliament happens to control those facilities, for the development of which money is required. Those who adopt that attitude must go the whole hog and say, "Let us take over the concern, finding the wherewithall to do it." I tell the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) that I am not prepared to permit metropolitan members to do a little picking and choosing. They cannot have that which is profitable and leave on the hands of the community that which shows a loss.

Mr. Mann: We do not want to do that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I have not heard the hon. member clamour for those concerns which are showing a loss.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We are satisfied to let the Government control them.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Still, I believe the other method is better.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Then the hon. member ought to hand over the Fremantle tramways.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You can have them at cost.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course if the hon. member has made a mess of it—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The concern has shown more profits than have the Perth tramways.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The Fremantle board can control the Fremantle trams better than can the Government, just as those representing the people served by the Perth trams could handle those trams better than can the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They might not get such competent men as we have on the Fremantle Tramway Trust.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I have endeavoured to the best of my ability, in laying down the policy of my departments, under the direction of the Treasurer, to say that strict economy shall be exercised. But when one Minister begins to economise he finds all sorts of obstacles, not always of the making of Government officials, but due to the fact that the conditions will not permit of the introduction of economy. Take the Mines Department: We have the State Mining Engineer housed in Murray-street, where my office is. We have the Government Geologist housed in Beaufort-street; the Government Mineralogist housed in Museum-street; the Government Chemist housed in Wellington-street; and the Government Analyst and Inspector of Explosives in Murray-street. We have the Chief Inspector of Machinery in the Works Department. I have been moving Heaven and earth to get these officials brought together, so that instead of each officer having a staff doing correspondence and keeping separate records, one correspondence staff and one record staff and one manager could do the lot. But I cannot do it until I can find accommodation for them.

Mr. Teesdale: The quicker you find it the better.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: But it is not so simple to find it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You tried to get it, but Parliament blocked it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, sometimes members are responsible and not Ministers. If the Treasurer suggested spending £30,000 or £40,000 for additional accommodation in order to house these staffs and effect economy, members would object.

Mr. Teesdale: Bring it down, and you will find it will pass all right.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member might support it but there would be a howl from the public regarding the expenditure of this money in the metropolitan area and some members would take fright, perhaps the member for Roebourne amongst them. I have tried and am still trying to find ways and means of bringing these officers together. There would be better control, there would be an unquestionable reduction of staffs and we would get better results, but I cannot do it until I can find accommodation to house them. The Treasurer has had a most worrying time in order to bring the Estimates down. It is true that he might have done more, but had he done so he would have had to shoulder responsibilities which no individual should be expected to carry. In my depart-

ment the only means of cutting down expenditure is by doing away with inspection, which might mean life or death to members of the community. No Minister should be asked to carry that responsibility. If the officers assert that it is not safe to do away with inspectors, I am not going to take the responsibility. If the member for Katsanning proposes to effect economies in that way, the responsibility must rest upon him and those who agree with his views. We have to carry on our industries and we have to protect the individuals employed in the industries. We have to provide the essential facilities for the community. Otherwise, instead of only the State passing through a trying time, the whole community will be experiencing the trying time as well. If we set out, as has been suggested by some members, to pull in in every direction, we should lose our business. I know of more than one business firm in Perth who have not recovered from their action when the war broke out; they called in all their commercial men and reduced expenditure to a minimum. Other firms, finding that business was falling off, actually increased their staffs in order to obtain new business, and those firms to-day are flourishing where the others are still suffering the ill-effects. I do not wish my remarks to be accepted as conveying that I do not realise the need for economy, but the economy practised must be sound, and the best economy of all is to permit our people to produce more, to trade easily, and to acquire wealth from which we shall get our fair share. Notwithstanding that the position confronting the State appears to be serious, if public men who are leading public opinion and the newspapers particularly only encouraged our people instead of decrying the State, it would rebound to the advantage of the State. There is nothing which will kill a sick man quicker than saying, "You are bad. I knew Jones, who was not nearly so bad as you, and yet he died in less than 24 hours." The State is not so sick as some people represent it to be. We are in the developing stage, and we have to draw on capital.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We are pretty sick all the same.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: We might need a dose of medicine, but the position is not so bad as it is painted by some people. The State is developing rapidly. Even if our friends opposite were in power they could not do very much better than, if as well as, the Government have done. This fact was appreciated by the Leader of the Opposition when speaking the other night. The position is such that, while we might differ in ideas on details, on the broader question of establishing and assisting our industries both primary and secondary, we must agree that the only way out of our difficulties is to produce additional wealth. All the croaking in the world will not have any good effect. Some little encouragement when a man is down will often help him to recover, but put your

heel on him and keep him there and he will doubtless go out. The men in this country are working hard and they do not want to be taxed or cursed out of existence. The State will recover, but as the Leader of the Opposition said, let it be a gradual process so that any action taken will not result in keen suffering to a section of the community which will probably turn out to be a permanent instead of a temporary suffering. So far as I am able to introduce economies they will be introduced, but they will be economies such as will not seriously interfere with the operations of the department which mean so much to the State.

Mr. SAMPSON (Swan) [9.6]: I am sorry that I cannot congratulate the Premier on his Budget, but we have to realise that we are still suffering from the effects of the war and other causes beyond his power. I regret that circumstances did not permit of a better position being disclosed by the Estimates. I must thank the Premier for the thoughtfulness which suggested the visit of inspection to the South-West. I regret that the Premier himself will be unable to accompany the party. It would have given the Premier great pleasure to be present and those who go will miss him and the mass of information which he would have made available to them. The South-West portion of the State has never received the attention to which it was entitled. It offers an opportunity for advancement and prosperity and, if it were only developed, it would be the means of wiping out the deficit. We still hear much about the potentialities of the South-West while practical development is almost entirely neglected. I hope that, as a result of this visit of inspection, members will acquire such added knowledge that the House will confidently authorise the necessary schemes to open up that vast territory on broad and practical lines. We are continually hearing of the need for an adequate water supply in the metropolitan area, and I admit the necessity for it. There is a phase of the proposed metropolitan scheme which should receive the attention of members, and that is the huge area of land reserved in the hills district for watershed or water conservation purposes. There are many settlers in the hills district located on very small blocks, who require larger areas to render their orchard or garden work successful. It is impossible in most cases for a man with a family to make a living unless he holds 20 acres or more, but I have a case in mind of a party who cannot obtain further land, although he is bounded on two sides by vacant land reserved for catchment purposes. This state of affairs obtains in many parts of the hills district. I hope the Premier will take this matter into consideration, and that members will decide where the reservoir is to be located, and that the Government will then throw open for selection the balance of the

land reserved. I submit that the correct site for the proposed reservoir is in the Upper Canning. This would have the effect of bringing into use hundreds of acres of land in the flat country between Armadale and Perth. Much of this land is at present under cultivation, but the need of water is great. If the reservoir were constructed in the Upper Canning, the flow of water would be sufficient to give an ample supply, not only to Perth, but to the intervening country for gardening purposes. I am sorry to find that, notwithstanding the added road mileage which roads boards and municipalities have to maintain, the vote for the department of the Minister for Works is more than £17,000 less than it was last year. This is a regrettable fact, and regret will be echoed by all sections of the House that the pre-war subsidy has not been restored. There is no combination of men doing a finer work for Western Australia than those comprising the roads boards.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The municipalities do not get anything.

Mr. SAMPSON: The municipalities are doing good work, but they are operating in the more settled centres. I maintain that if we look after the country, the closely settled centres will be able to look after themselves. I have heard with pleasure the many references to the need for taxing the unused land contiguous to our railway system. I hope the House will do something definite in this connection during the present session. I think that a majority of the members present have promised to do their best in this direction, and I am anxious to have an opportunity to support a Bill giving the Government the necessary authority. I realise that the difficulties with which the Premier is confronted are beyond the power of any man or body of men to surmount at the present moment, but I must congratulate our leader that, notwithstanding the difficulties, he is still giving consideration to many matters which will receive the support of those who wish for the welfare of the State. Particularly is this the case with regard to the Education Vote. Although the vote is considerably higher than in the previous year, no one should cavil at it. The growing need for schools in the country more than justifies the expenditure, and I hope the time will never come when it will be found necessary to cut down this essential expenditure.

Mr. SIMONS (East Perth) [9.15]: It is difficult for new members during the first session to gather together all the details in connection with the Estimates, and it is also difficult for them to deal in detail with the great mass of figures placed before them. We can, therefore, only deal with a few particular heads. It is no use any of us regretting the fact that the State is suffering from a deficit—I believe we would be wise in preferring the term overdraft—without making some suggestion for relieving the

position. I believe we are only beating the air when we talk about the deficit. No matter what Government is in power we shall be making nothing but futile efforts unless we concentrate upon land settlement and land development. Figures were published in this morning's paper showing that in one of the oldest settled portions of the State, the Avon valley, the unused land ran into hundreds of thousands of acres. There is only one cardinal principle upon which the development of this country can be carried out, and that is to force idle lands into use even if in doing so we touch the border line of what might be called confiscation. This State cannot struggle under the great burden of heavy railway mileage unless collateral with our railway development we force our lands into use. During next week members of the House will make a tour of the South-West. The first point at which they will stop will be Pinjarra, so ably represented by the Minister for Works, but who should be representing a constituency carrying tens of thousands of people instead of only practically a few hundred. We have in that area two of the finest rivers in the State, the Serpentine and the Murray. At their junction they form an estuary which should be the natural harbour for the great hinterland at the back. From the Darling Ranges to the sea shore along the banks of these two rivers, we find that practically four families own the whole of the country side. No serious attempt is being made to bring the land into use. What applies to Pinjarra applies also to other centres. No matter what the result of this tour may be, our policy should be not to construct another mile of railway until the land already served is developed. Our policy should be more people for the land we already have served rather than construct more railways to serve unused land. I believe the tour will be productive of good, and that the Premier was wise in inviting members to make it. Although some objection has been raised, it will afford members of both Chambers an opportunity of seeing the country for which they are legislating. It is the plainest kind of folly for members who have hardly been outside the metropolitan area or who have never seen the South-West, to vote on questions vitally affecting the development of that part of the State. So long as the expenditure upon tours of this kind is reasonable, every pound spent upon them should be returned three-fold, by the increased knowledge which members will be able to bring to bear upon any questions affecting that part of the State. In regard to closer settlement, we have an example of what can be done by cutting up big estates in a part of the constituency represented by the Minister for Mines. A year ago the Kendenup sheep station, with some adjoining properties, aggregating nearly 50,000 acres, had a population of less than 10 people. We know that this closer settlement scheme was undertaken by private enterprise. There are now 498 people living on that estate. This settlement has greatly

increased the revenue of the railways from that centre. Since the Great Southern line was constructed by Anthony Hordern, nearly 30 years ago, the total revenue taken at the Kendenup siding was less than £400. During the last nine months the railway revenue from Kendenup alone has touched £7,000. That which has happened at Kendenup can occur at 20 or 30 other points along our railway lines with proportionate advantage to the Railway Department.

Mr. MacCallum-Smith: That was not done by taxation.

Mr. SIMONS: It was done by private enterprise. If other owners of estates will not disgorge their holdings they must be compelled to do so.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: It was done by publicity.

Mr. SIMONS: Let the Government try some of it. I wish to refer later to some points on which the Government policy will not succeed. If the Government publicity agents were paid to keep people out of Western Australia they could not have made a better job of it. What has been done at Kendenup can be done at Pinjarra and other centres. When we see what can be done we begin to understand the relationship between closer settlement and the revenue of the railways. We are told that our big overdraft is practically represented by the deficit on the railways. We can understand, therefore, how vital it is to force our lands into use. The member for North Perth has referred to the question of publicity. I do not know who engages the publicity agents for the Government, but I do not think if they were being paid by hostile States to keep people out of Western Australia they could do better in that direction than they are doing. I would instance the exhibits displayed by the Agricultural Department at the Royal Show. There was a pavilion there intended to show what magnificent products the State could yield. The purpose of such an exhibition should have been to attract people to the land and encourage them to go in for soil cultivation, and to create in them an incentive to do a man's work in the great inland areas that we have calling for development. Magnificent potatoes were shown, sufficiently good to impress the newcomer, but alongside the potatoes there were shown hideous examples of the potato moth. A little further on there was shown the wonderful wool that Western Australia can produce, but close by was another exhibit showing 24 samples of poison plant. In another corner were the fruit products, but alongside were examples of 300 different kinds of insects which would destroy the fruit crops of the State. Anyone entering that exhibition could learn that Western Australia grew splendid sheep, but that they could be killed in 24 different ways. They could also see that we could produce wonderful fruit, but that there were 300 different kinds of insects that would prevent us from getting a fruit crop. The same thing applies to potatoes. I do not know if hon. members think that an exhibit of that nature will do good in

any part of the world. If a shop window dresser did his work along those lines he would not last 10 minutes, and yet these officers are given an increase in salary by the Government to do things like that. I have here a railway time table which refers to the State as "W.A." Some of the officers are apparently too tired to spell out the name of the State to which they look for their salaries each month. I also see that the Swan River is referred to as the "Swanny," and there is a picture of the Swan with that erroneous name given underneath. On another page we see "W.A.'s beauty spots." Even the name of the State is not properly understood by those who are supposed to be acting as our publicity agents. The exhibit at the Show purported to represent "West Australia," whereas there is no such State in existence. I hope when the Minister for Mines sets out as leader of the publicity expedition to Java, he will see that the officers attached to it are properly trained so that they understand that they are representing "Western Australia." I hope this expedition will leave behind them potato moths and poison weeds and other things, which should never form part of a healthy exhibit sent out from this country. I agree with the Minister for Mines that a great deal of harm has been done to the State by the myriads of croakers who seem to be drawing sustenance from it. We are not going to do any good by deploring the fact that we had an overdraft. We have to remember the giant things this State has done in so short a space of time. We have to remember the great struggle this State went through during the war, when it practically stood alone amongst the States of the Commonwealth. The bloated States in the East were spending hundreds of thousands of pounds in harness factories, woollen mills and leather works and countless other activities which were absorbing money and putting cash into circulation. We did not possess that artificial stimulus. The part Western Australia played was in providing loan funds and other funds, practically all the money from which was spent outside the borders of the State. For Western Australia to have gone through such a crisis and to have paid out so much money, without receiving in return anything in the shape of a stimulus for her different industries, is undoubtedly a great achievement. It is only natural that for four or five years after going through such a trying period we should find it difficult to settle down to normal conditions. It is the recognition of that fact which causes the Leader of the Opposition and his supporters to take such a lenient view of the difficulties facing the Government, and to give to them all reasonable support. I am sure all who have cause to think must be gratified to learn that a new loan avenue has been opened up by the action of the Queensland Government in accepting a loan in the New York money market.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We regret that.

Mr. SIMONS: Nobody will ever regret it except people with narrow, squint-eyed vision.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: There was no necessity to go to America.

Mr. SIMONS: There was great necessity for it, because some of the money-lenders of Great Britain had attempted to dictate the policy of an Australian Government. An effort had been made to slam the door in the face of Theodore, of Queensland, when he went to London with a very reasonable request.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: We have money here.

Mr. SIMONS: Money may be found in Stirling-street, but there is none around this part of the country. The floating of the Queensland loan in the United States did a great service to Australia. Mr. Theodore's name will live in Australian history as that of the man who successfully resisted the attempts of London money-lenders to dictate to Queensland what laws should be enacted. There is another phase of the matter which deserves our special attention, namely that every million pounds of money invested by the United States of America in the Australian Commonwealth represents an added security for the defence of Australia. If we have, for example, one hundred million pounds of American money put into the Australian Commonwealth, the Americans have a monetary interest in keeping us inviolate from any attack by Japan or any other part of Asia. As it is now, we have no guarantee apart from sentiment.

Mr. Money: The Americans have more than that interest in Europe.

Mr. SIMONS: Yes, and that is partly why the Americans went to Europe when Europe was bleeding at the hands of the Germans.

Mr. Money: It took them a long time to go to Europe.

Mr. SIMONS: They went as soon as they had four hundred millions at stake.

Mr. Teesdale: Yes, they always think of the boodle.

Mr. SIMONS: And they always tell everybody that they think of it. On the other hand, a lot of people are always thinking of the boodle but are trying to keep it a secret. If we could imagine having several hundreds of millions of American money invested in Australia, we would recognise that that fact would place at the disposal of Australia for its defence another great fleet, and another great army, and another great nation. That amounts to something more than a sentimental interest.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: But suppose Japan were at war with America; would not the Japanese come here and smash up the American security?

Mr. SIMONS: In that case we should have another move on the great chess-board of international affairs. There is the British Navy, and any attack on Australia, in our present Imperial relationship, would be tantamount to a declaration of war against the British Empire. True, we have to-day a sentimental attachment to Great Britain; but money lenders are not sentimentalists. There may be a large number of sentimental people in Great Britain who would want to help Australia in her hour of trial; but they would have to get the consent of a great many money kings before they would be allowed to send the British army or the British navy against any enemy of Australia. The sentimentalists of Great Britain, however, will always have a standing guarantee that their wishes will be carried out, because there is so much British money sunk here that the money lenders will see that Japan does not get in here and destroy the security representing British loans. If we can have similar conditions prevailing in regard to our relationship with the United States, we shall have the natural sentiment of American citizens backed up by the interests of the American money lenders. In that case we shall have two groups of ships and two great armies standing between the interests of Australia and those of Japan. When it is all thought out, we shall begin to realise that the fact of American money coming into Australia in millions, is going to afford us additional security against attack. Consider for a moment the position of Canada. Canada never even considered it necessary to have a navy or a great army, because the integrity of Canada has been at all times in essence guaranteed by the United States. With millions of American money in this country, we shall have the same guarantee as Canada has now. That is why I think members of this House would do well to consider carefully the effect of the new financial arrangements.

Mr. Teesdale: It is to be hoped that Australians will never forget the country that protected them.

Mrs. Cowan: Hear, hear!

Mr. SIMONS: I do not think they have been forgetful so far. Let me say that I never knew a member of the Imperial Parliament or of the Canadian Parliament who shared the anti-American feeling displayed here by members opposite. Members who express themselves in that way belong to the class of literary critic who criticises a book without ever opening the parcel containing it. It is a great thing to have a people who speak our language and to a large extent have our constitutional ideals backing us with millions of pounds. As regards other matters, I was pleased to hear the Minister for Mines declare that he is going to do all he can to suppress the croakers who are abroad in Western Australia. We meet them on every hand. Only to-day this fact was brought home to me by

two settlers who have come from Colombo to inspect Western Australian lands with a view to advising friends of theirs whether this is a good place to settle in. They told me that everywhere they had received warning against settling in Western Australia—warnings in the shops they visited and in the hotels they stayed at. Coming up from Albany by train last night, they had as fellow travellers two men who strongly urged them not to settle in such a God-forsaken State as this.

Members: Why?

Mr. SIMONS: Because of the prevalence of those persons whom Sir John Forrest 20 years ago dubbed "croakers." Because we have many citizens always discovering how things cannot be done, instead of how they can be done. Because we have amongst us the sort of people who used to say that water could never be pumped to Kalgoorlie, who used to say that Fremantle would never make a harbour, that apples could never be grown here. Our apples have since brought the highest prices in Europe. Because we have here the sort of people who used to say that Western Australia would never grow wheat; within a decade this State will be exporting thirty millions of bushels annually. Many people who derive their sustenance from Western Australia do nothing but speak derogatorily of this State.

Mrs. Cowan: Oh, no!

Mr. SIMONS: Oh, yes. It is no use mumbling "Oh, no." I am sure every member will back up the optimism of our Premier, and also will back up the sentiment of the Minister for Mines that a stop shall be put to the derogatory utterances that come not only from Government officials, but also from citizens, concerning the State of Western Australia.

General debate concluded; Votes and item discussed as follow:—

Vote—Legislative Council, £975—agreed to.

The PREMIER: I move—

That consideration of Votes II. to XIII, inclusive, be postponed.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Premier might have notified the Committee of his intention to ask for a postponement of these divisions.

The Minister for Mines: We did not know that the general discussion would finish to-night.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN. The carrying of the Premier's motion means that the Committee will proceed to discuss the Mines Estimates; and some members who would have been here had they known that those votes were to come on to-night, are absent. I realise the position with regard to the Minister for Mines, but I consider that some notice should have been given of the course proposed by the Government.

The PREMIER: I acknowledge that there is a good deal in what the hon. member has said, and that probably some hon. members

who are particularly interested in the Mines Estimates are not here to-night. But that objection does not hold good as regards discussion of the other departments controlled by the Minister for Mines. I have no desire whatever to withhold from hon. members the opportunity to fully discuss every division of the Estimates. In the circumstances I suggest that we discuss only the Police and the Forests Estimates.

Motion put and passed.

[Mr. Stubbs resumed the Chair.]

Department of Mines (Hon. J. Scaddan, Minister):

Vote—Council of Industrial Development and Tourist and Publicity Bureau, £2,720:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We should have some information regarding this department. The figures are small at the present time, but it is possible that they will expand considerably. I am not sure that, in view of the present conditions, it is wise to start a new department.

The Minister for Mines: It is not a new one.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I admit that the sections grouped under this heading were carried out under several departments formerly, but we are now creating a department that stands on its own. My experience has been that such a move means increased expenditure.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: The member for East Perth (Mr. Sinons) said the Government were wrong because they had not launched out.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That may be so, but unfortunately the member for East Perth has not been long enough in Parliament to know how expenses increase with the creation of a new department. We generally start with an officer in charge and a typist, and before long we find other officers appointed and more typists engaged.

The Minister for Mines: Not in this department.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, because it has only just been started.

The Minister for Mines: It is in full swing now.

The Minister for Agriculture: It is doing fine work, too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is quite right. When these sections now grouped in this department were under other Ministers, it was only a matter of a little more life being put into it. It only meant a little more money and, under those circumstances, it obviated the necessity for a new department being built up with additional staff and increased costs. Under former circumstances, the necessary correspondence was attended to in the ordinary departmental correspondence branches, in conjunction with their other departmental work. Having travelled through the Eastern States, and observed what is being done there to encourage people to see the

country, I admit the necessity for something being done along these lines. I admit we have been a little backward in the past.

The Colonial Secretary: This work brings money into the State and advertises it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That is so, but I am afraid that in creating a separate department, we will have the staff doubled, or perhaps trebled. I regret to see that the Government have launched out in this direction. Last year I objected to the secretary of the Premier's department being made a permanent head, and I warned the House that it meant increased expenditure. This year we see that there has been the increased expenditure that I predicted. There is always this tendency for officers to increase the size of their departments in the hope that their own positions will be made more important.

Mr. Teesdale: So that they will be ready for the classification.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of course. This year we see that the secretary to the Premier has gardens, Crawley, and a number of other things placed under his direction, which means that a large department is being built up there. There is another instance in the case under discussion. I do not object to advertising the State and endeavouring to see that visitors get to know what the State possesses. The fact that we were backward in this direction in the past cannot be laid at the door of Ministers, because they did not have the necessary funds at their disposal.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I cannot take any exception to the remarks by the member for North-East Fremantle, because the House is entitled to see that we do not build up departments unnecessarily, and to issue a warning that when a department is established, it must not be allowed to expand until it becomes a burden. The member for North-East Fremantle does not object to the work the sub-departments are performing. This is not a separate department, because it comes under the control of the Minister for Mines, and, therefore, under the Under Secretary for Mines. The Council of Industrial Development and the officers are directly responsible to the Under Secretary. That branch is not a separate department, neither can that branch undertake any expenditure without the approval of the Minister on the recommendation of the Under Secretary. Members realise the necessity for advertising our wares. They require advertising both inside and outside the State. The operations of the council are fully warranted. The council operated for some years, but became defunct. In consequence, the responsibility of getting information on matters affecting the establishment of secondary industries devolved upon the Minister who had to depend on all and sundry for information enabling him to come to a decision. Under the existing legislation, the Treasurer, on the recommendation of the Minister for Industries, is able to invest trust funds for the purpose of establishing industries within the State, and that is the object of this council.

Not a penny of the expenditure approved by Parliament is utilised in connection with the expenses or cost of that council. I desire to pay a tribute to the gentlemen who form that council for the amount of work they are doing without any remuneration whatever. To my great surprise I discovered last week that when the question of establishing an industry was under discussion, members of that council travelled about the State collecting information, yet they did not even apply for a railway pass or hotel expenses. I only discovered this by accident, and surely this is evidence of the fact that these men are public spirited citizens. The chairman of the council spends three or four hours every other day in the office attending to matters which are of no concern to him as an individual. The council is doing a great deal of important work. The exhibition in Barrack-street is being run at little or no cost to the State. We call upon the traders to pay rent for the right to display their goods in the exhibition and, after all, we as a State are as interested in this matter as the traders themselves.

Mr. Angelo: Have you any objection to giving us the names of the members of the council?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: None whatever. Mr. C. S. Nathan is the chairman, and the members are Mr. Crocker, the city electrical engineer, Mr. R. O. Law, Mr. W. Perry and Mr. A. J. Monger. The cost is small and, judging by the number of people frequenting the exhibition, it is creating a great deal of interest. From remarks made to me, I know that many people were not aware that many of the lines exhibited were manufactured in Western Australia. More than one exhibitor has admitted that inquiries have been received from many directions from where no inquiries came prior to the exhibition. It has educated the people to a realisation of the work done within the State. The exhibition of work done at the Midland Junction Workshops, and at the State Implement Works, is evidence of the fact that we can turn out high class technical goods. We ask that the people shall assist themselves and the general community by encouraging local manufactures. As to the Tourist and Publicity Bureau, for a long time past complaints were heard regarding the bureau being lost somewhere in Murray-street, where it was hard to find. We were told that it should be placed in a more central position where visitors could easily locate it. It has been established in the same building as the exhibition and many people, including passengers from the mail boats, have visited the bureau and secured information regarding the State. In one case I am aware of, a family were proceeding to New Zealand and as the result of their investigations at the bureau, and their visit to the exhibition, the head of the family stated that if they did not find things to their liking in New Zealand they would come back to Western Australia as they were sat-

isfied with what they had seen. Considering the small expense, and provided we keep watch to see that this branch does not expand unduly, the State will reap the benefit from this expenditure, directly and indirectly.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: I hope members will not take too much notice of what the member for North-East Fremantle has said. I am only sorry that the amount on the Estimates is not ten times as much, because I know the advantage that will come to the State by judicious advertising. Many private firms spend three or four times this amount advertising their wares. Surely a State like this can very well spend more money to considerable advantage. We desire to attract people, and we can only do it by proper advertising. I agree that it is undesirable to build up big departments, but so long as we are getting value for the money it is good business. I hope the Committee will pass the amount.

Mrs. COWAN: I support the vote. I have seen a good deal in connection with the industrial development work. It would be a great pity not to pass the item, because very fine work has been done by the council. It is going to mean a great deal to the State in the long run.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is nothing here for advertising.

Mr. MacCallum Smith: There are many forms of publicity work.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The advertising comes under a different vote. I agree that we should show what is being made in the State. It is even more necessary that we should be able to prove that what is claimed to have been made in the State has been made in the State. I am not objecting to the item. But we are starting a new department, and I do not want it to grow too fast. The Colonial Secretary got £290 for the Tourist Bureau last year. How was it possible for him to do anything worth while with that amount? But this year, apart from the Council of Industrial Development, there is an increase of £1,139.

The Minister for Mines: That is for both branches.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Well, say £1,000. I am objecting to the building up of a separate department. I warn the Government against the creation of new departments involving increased expenditure which may not be warranted. Next year this Vote will have assumed large proportions.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Forests £16,344:

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I have no desire to delay progress. There are certain increased amounts and certain reductions in the vote. No good purpose will be served by a long discussion, for later on there will be an opportunity to deal with the expenditure of the department under the Forests Bill. The Conservator has an enormous amount of rev-

enue allocated to him and I think it would be a fit subject for inquiry whether it has been utilised to the best advantage. I see no provision here for the salary of the working plans officer. Additional foresters have been appointed and provision is made for an increase of £1,000 this year. The cost of the clerical division has increased by practically £900. It means that the expenditure of the clerical division is practically equal to that of the field officers. That is not fair. If you put on half a dozen additional field officers, surely it does not entail such an enormous increase in the clerical staff. I understand that most of the publicity work has been done by one man, who has now been transferred to the Council of Industrial Development. The only complaint I have to make is in respect to the false economy in dealing with the travelling and foraging allowances of the classification officers in the forests. Recently the Conservator made a radical reduction which rendered the position entirely unattractive, and in consequence the officers are talking of resigning. That is a bad state of affairs, because they are all good men. It is of no use discussing the division as a whole, because it is merely the annual appropriation for the salaries of officers. However, the Minister might explain the necessity for so much clerical expenditure and also give reasons for that reduction in the forage allowance.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The question of clerical assistance is almost exclusively one for the Conservator and the Public Service Commissioner. I cannot be expected to know whether the staff is fully engaged. I have repeatedly drawn attention to the increases in the staff and asked the Public Service Commissioner to satisfy himself that they are essential to the operations of the department. The explanation given to me is that those operations are expanding at such a rapid pace, and the quantity of timber being taken from our forests and the trade being done are so great, particularly in point of export timber, all of which has to be inspected, that the work cannot be coped with unless the clerical staff is increased. With the officers appointed as the Conservator appoints them, it is not fair to ask me to say whether all are doing their work. In any case, as the whole thing is to be the subject of inquiry, the least said about it the better. In regard to the travelling and forage allowances of the foresters, the previous conditions were unsatisfactory. When the Conservator went into the question he decided to put it on a different basis. He assured me that the new basis was satisfactory, not only to the department, but also to the men themselves. He explained that he had put them on a salary basis, which was more satisfactory.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Many of them could make twice as much as they are now making.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I will draw the attention of the Acting Conservator to this and ask him to communicate with the hon. member. Mr. Lane-Poole will complete his services on Saturday at 12 o'clock.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Legislative Assembly, £1,814; Joint House Committee, £4,569; Joint Printing Committee, £3,561; Joint Library Committee, £475.

Department of the Premier (Hon. Sir James Mitchell, Premier):

Vote—Premier's Department, £12,382—agreed to.

Vote—Governor's Establishment, £2,227:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There were one or two items on which I desired to speak, but before I had a chance to do so you, Mr. Chairman, had put the votes through. We did not have an opportunity to turn up the votes.

The CHAIRMAN: I did not intend to prevent any member from speaking.

Mr. ANGELO: I think the vote relating to the Premier's Department should be re-committed. We did not have an opportunity to speak to it.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to be perfectly fair to every member.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I wished to speak on the Legislative Assembly vote, but it does not matter now.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Executive Council, £53:

Item, Clerk (Special Acts, £350), Special allowance, £48:

The PREMIER: I move an amendment—

That the item be struck out.

This item is not necessary as it has been added to the salary.

Amendment put and passed; the vote (as reduced to £5) agreed to.

Vote—London Agency, £11,921:

Mr. SAMPSON: I wish to question the principle of retaining in the London office employees who have never seen Western Australia. It would be in the best interests of the State to employ Western Australians.

The Minister for Mines: And you talk of economy! It would cost twice as much to keep on sending men to London.

Mr. SAMPSON: Their work would be more effective and probably we could do with a smaller staff. Perhaps we could cut out the hall porter and a few other officers who, I imagine, are unnecessary.

The PREMIER: It would be impossible to send all officers from here, because the cost would be too great. But I think that the men in the London Agency who meet the public should at least know Western Australia. We contemplate sending another Western Australian to London to replace an officer there.

Mr. Sampson: Perhaps you could cut out two officers if you sent one Western Australian over.

The PREMIER: We have the right to send two officers Home to deal with immigrants. Apart from this we want a few men at the agency who know Western Australia and who can deal with the public.

Item, Incidental, Fees for inspections of goods and materials, £1,120:

Mr. MacCallum SMITH: Will the Premier explain who receives these fees?

The Minister for Mines: They are paid on a definite scale.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: For all goods purchased in London.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Years ago an arrangement was made with the firm of Carruthers in London to pay so much per cent. on goods examined. The Government of the day had no idea that the State would be purchasing goods to the value of millions of money representing rails, locomotives, and rolling stock. The commission in one year amounted to between £12,000 and £15,000. The question was discussed in the old House of Parliament and it was then decided that the arrangement with Carruthers should be terminated and that an engineer should be sent from the staff here to do the work.

Item, Incidental, Upkeep of Savoy House, £2,600:

Mr. TEESDALE: This seems to be a large sum and in addition there appears under incidentals—"Other, £270." Can the Premier offer an explanation?

The PREMIER: Naturally there is a great deal of expense in connection with the upkeep of a house of this size. The rent is particularly high. It is essential that we should maintain a decent appearance in London.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is this for ground rent?

The PREMIER: Ground rent and upkeep generally. It is impossible to do anything in London at present except at great expense.

Vote put and passed.

Vote, Public Service Commissioner, £2,698:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The estimate for this office has been increased 100 per cent.

The Premier: And the work 400 per cent.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The re-classification was done last year at an expenditure of £2,050. Is there any necessity for two Public Service Commissioners?

The Minister for Works: Yes.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: What work will there be for two Commissioners after the classification has been completed? I know that one is engaged continuously at the court. Is the court to go on continuously? There is no incentive for officials in other departments to economise when the Public Service Commissioner's office expenditure is doubled.

The PREMIER: The service has been placed on an altogether different footing. There is the work of the court which, as the hon. member suggests, like the "Brook" will probably go

on for ever. It was never expected that there would be so much work in connection with the court. We deal with the wages staff through the Assistant Public Service Commissioner. This is very desirable. There are a great many wages men employed by the Government, outside of those in the Railway Department, and it is necessary to have uniformity. It is desirable to have an official whom representatives of the union can interview, and who can make agreements with the union. This expenditure is fully justified in that connection alone. It is just as right that the wages men should have someone to go to as that the salaried staff should have someone to attend to their affairs. It saves a great deal of time and heart-burning.

Item, Assistant Public Service Commissioner, £850

Mr. TEESDALE: Will the Premier explain whether there was anything irregular in connection with the appointment of this officer? There seems to be some discontent in the service in that others were not even given an opportunity of putting in applications for the position. Was there anything unfair to those capable of filling the position?

The PREMIER: I am surprised at the question. The hon. member knows that in addition to the Public Service, we have an appeal board and that the service is on a totally different footing. The Government had the right to select the officer it thought best fitted for the post and did so, and mean to stand by it.

Mr. Teesdale: What about the discontent in the service?

The PREMIER: There is not much discontent.

Mrs. Cowan: Yes there is.

The PREMIER: I know the service a good deal better than the member for West Perth.

Mrs. Cowan: I do not think so.

The PREMIER: And I have done more for the service than the member for West Perth. I have treated the service fairly. I did more for them before the strike than had ever been done before. Men who were getting £204 were brought up to £252. The service is not dissatisfied. I am one of the few members who have stated that the rank and file are a capable body of men. When I find that an officer is not suitable, if he is in my department, I tell the Public Service Commissioner he must get rid of him. We have had to get rid of a good many officers.

Mrs. Cowan: I thought you could not do that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Under certain conditions.

The PREMIER: I am sorry to see some of them go. There must be economy and a re-organisation of departments. Officers cannot be kept on if there is no work for them to do. We have a difficult position facing us in the control of the service. I believe in the system of the Public Service Commissioner. It is through him that the service should properly speaking be managed. Many officers in the service may be doing work which Ministers may consider unsatisfactory and who may feel that they will be put out by their Minister, but if they are dealt with by the Public Service Commissioner it becomes a different matter.

Mr. Pickering : Is there not an understanding that applications are called for these different positions ?

Hon. W. C. Angwin : You gave this man the wrong title. If he had been called something else there would have been no trouble.

The PREMIER : Our duty to the service is to see that it is rightly cared for by the Public Service Commissioner, who in turn has to see that officers are protected against Ministers. We are determined that there must be this additional man, and we selected the man most suited for the post.

Mrs. Cowan : Should there not have been an advertisement inserted ?

The PREMIER : Certainly not.

Mrs. Cowan : Why not ?

The PREMIER : If not, why not.

Mr. Marshall : I think we have heard that before.

The PREMIER : This was not an ordinary appointment. This officer was selected for the position, because we considered him the best man for it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin : A very good man.

The PREMIER : We have given the service a splendid opportunity of protecting themselves. Reference has been made to officers going to the court and saying that other officers were entitled to an increase in salary. Those officers who now say they have good men under them have not been to us to say a word for them, and scarcely ever in their lives lifted a hand to help them. If heads of departments do not keep the Public Service Commissioner fully acquainted with the merits of the officers under them the Public Service Commissioner cannot be blamed for not finding this out.

Mr. Munsie : The head, if he puts in a good word for another officer, may get a few pounds extra for himself.

Hon. W. C. Angwin : That is not fair.

The PREMIER : I do not know that this is so. It is an extraordinary thing that senior officers have such good men under them, and have only now decided to do something for them. I have never refused to recognise special merit in any official when it has been brought under my notice. While we are managing the service we must do what we think is right, and put into the chief positions men capable of doing justice to both sides.

Mr. Angelo : My experience of the different departments causes me to congratulate the Government on this appointment.

Mr. CORBOY : Even without the salary of this extra officer the vote has been increased by nearly 50 per cent. Altogether the Public Service Commissioner and his assistant are being paid £1,850 to administer the Public Service Act. In South Australia the same work is done for £800.

The PREMIER : Apart from the increased work due to the inclusion of the wages branches of the service these officers have to do a great deal of clerical work, and other work in connection with the Appeal Board. The office itself does more work because of the change in the circumstances surrounding the control of the service. The increase set down here is both justified and necessary.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : I have personal knowledge of an instance where an officer of

lower grade, who was appealing to the board, asked the head of his department to give evidence, and the head refused.

The Minister for Works : I would like to know that head. I am sure he is not in my lot.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : The only chance the officer then had was to summon the head to appear and give evidence.

The Minister for Works : I do not think the heads want much summoning.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : The officer in question was entitled to an increase, in my opinion. His pay was low. Ministers should not run away with the idea that officers, while unwilling to come to them, rush to the board. Some officers go to the appeal board under compulsion. A salary of £850 is shown for the office of Assistant Public Service Commissioner, but two-thirds of that officer's time is devoted to the Appeal Board. Portion of his salary should be allotted as part of the cost of that board. A return of the cost of the Appeal Board presented in another place was wrong ; the expense represented by the judge's salary was greater than the total shown in that return. The Assistant Public Service Commissioner is a good man, but he should be given a different designation. In my brief time at the Public Works Department I used to experience great difficulty in getting industrial agreements drawn up and completed. This caused much dissatisfaction among the employees affected, and should be avoided.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Government Motor Car Service, £1,364 :

Mr. McCALLUM : In answer to a question I asked during the early part of the session I was informed that some £2,800—a fairly heavy amount—had been spent in the purchase of motor cars during the past two years, and that amongst the motor cars owned by the Government about a dozen were kept at the private residences of officials. Those cars become practically the private property of those officials, and during week ends are used for joy riding.

The Minister for Works : Formerly there was some of that ; I do not think there is much of it now.

Mr. McCALLUM : There is some now. I think it would be better to keep all those cars in the one garage. Perhaps it might be advisable in one or two instances that a motor car should be kept at an official's house ; but with the telephone service an official can obtain a motor from the Government garage by the time he himself would be ready to start. The Premier knows that cars are being put to uses which are not legitimate. I believe the Government garage is well managed, and I should like to see all the Government cars kept there, instead of some being kept at the homes of officials.

The Premier : I agree with that.

Mr. TESDALE : Is there any supervision over the issue of petrol from the Government garage, or are officials allowed to take just as much petrol as they like ?

The Premier : All the petrol issued is booked up.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Printing, £75,640—agreed to.

Vote—Literary and Scientific Grants, £9,250 :

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Why is there an increase of £350 in this vote?

The PREMIER: The purpose of the increase is to provide books for the travelling library. We were told that the country districts needed books, and that if the money was provided additional cases of books would be sent to country centres. Books are, in fact, sent to any country centres, where they are greatly appreciated.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That has always been one.

The PREMIER: But not on a very large scale, as at present.

Mr. ANGELO: On visiting the Zoological gardens a little time ago, I was very disappointed to observe that the fences and buildings were in poor state of repair and badly in need of painting. The gardens do really good educational work, and are a very nice pleasure resort for the people. Some little additional amount should be allowed for purposes of renovating and painting. This would really be an economy, because the buildings and fences are allowed to remain the same state as at present, the cost of renovation and painting later on will be considerably greater. Mr. LeSoeuf is giving valuable figures, and doing all he can to make the gardens successful. The Government should encourage the director in the work he is doing and make the park and its surroundings as attractive as possible. By this means people will be encouraged to remain within the State and not go East.

The PREMIER: I am willing to give the director every encouragement possible but I am not willing to give him any more money. The gardens are not in a condition I would like to see, and the baths are not in a satisfactory condition either. If a considerable sum had been spent on the baths in years gone by, the health of the people would have been greatly improved. Additional accommodation is required there, and if £10,000 had been spent in erecting suitable baths years ago, we would not be asking the House for £975 or anything like it at the present juncture. During the past ten years upwards of £15,000 has been spent in connection with these gardens for upkeep and so on. It is necessary that better facilities should be provided for the women and children, adequate tea rooms and increased accommodation at the baths. People suffering from rheumatism have come away cured for a time as a result of a course of baths. There is no need for people to go to New Zealand in order to take the mineral baths there, and people from South Australia have been living in South Perth lately recently in order to take the baths at the gardens.

Mr. Angelo: Too few people know about them.

The PREMIER: That is so. As it is, I think the vote is sufficient.

Mr. TEESDALE: I oppose any increase in the vote. It is quite adequate at present. If these baths are so beneficial, let these people from South Australia pay 2s. 6d. instead of 1s.

Vote put and passed.

Department of Lands and Repatriation (Hon. James Mitchell, Minister):

Vote—Minister for Lands and Repatriation, 1921, 1922: 33,442:

[50]

Mr. PICKERING: There is an area in the Sussex electorate to which I have drawn the attention of the Minister for Lands on previous occasions. This area is suitable for closer settlement. I have asked that a report should be made upon it but so far as I know nothing has been done. To render the land suitable for settlement, it would be necessary to go into the question of drainage. Some expenditure would be entailed in snagging the Vasse River and in other directions to open up the country. The area is situated behind the Busselton Commencement and is within a few miles of the township. It could be easily cleared.

The PREMIER: I do not remember the hon. member drawing my attention to this area, but we have officers out now looking for suitable land for settlement. We are looking into the question of land settlement in the South-West, from Fremantle southwards, and this area will come within the scope of that investigation. I will instruct the district surveyor to look into this matter. If there is land there we want it at once.

Progress reported.

BILLS (2)—RETURNED.

- 1, Supply Bill No. 3, £1,047,000.
 - 2, Northam Municipal Ice Works.
- Without amendment.

RESOLUTION—STATE FOREST DEDICATION, REVOCATION.

Message received notifying that the Council had concurred in the Assembly's resolution.

House adjourned at 11 p.m.

Legislative Council.

Tuesday, 25th October, 1921.

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Wyndham Meat Works, Select Committee's resolution	1400
Questions: Miners' Pensions	1400
Esplanade Fair Grounds, vesting	1400
Bills: Wheat Marketing, Recomp., further Recomp.	1400
Permanent Reserve, (Point Walter), 2s., Com., Administration Act Amendment, 2s., Com., Report	1410
Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders, 2s., Com., Report	1411
Motion: Electricity, Generation and Distribution defeated	1412

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