

ing laws. A prospecting area is limited to 24 acres, for which the rental is 10s. per year.

The Minister for Mines: That is not £1 per acre.

Mr. MARSHALL: No.

The Minister for Mines: Then why talk about £1 an acre, when the charge is 10s. a year?

Mr. MARSHALL: Will the Minister argue that every man who is prospecting is on a prospecting area?

The Minister for Mines: No.

Mr. MARSHALL: What does a prospector pay for a lease?

The Minister for Mines: When he proves that the area is payable, he has to take it up as a lease.

Mr. MARSHALL: And when it is payable, what does he pay?

The Minister for Mines: £1 per acre.

Mr. MARSHALL: There we have it! The Minister and the member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie would have put the Committee completely wrong.

The Minister for Mines: It is you who would have put the Committee wrong.

Mr. MARSHALL: A prospector who takes up a P.A. can hold it as a P.A. only until it has proved payable. Then he must take it up at £1 per acre.

The Minister for Mines: Hundreds of prospectors have had extensions for three years.

Mr. MARSHALL: In my case the warden was most dubious about granting an extension of six months. Why should wealthy companies obtain leases more cheaply? Companies should be obliged to pay £1 per acre, and then £18,699 would be coming into the Mines Department from which the Minister could recoup the State Batteries if he granted the reduction suggested. The member for Yilgarn-Coolgardie has been extremely fortunate with regard to the State Batteries in his electorate.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Cave House, etc.*, £7,786—*agreed to.*

This concluded the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year.

Resolutions reported.

BILL—DIVIDEND DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Returned from the Council with amendments.

House adjourned at 11.29 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 26th November, 1936.

	PAGE
Question: Group Settlement areas, clearing by un-employed	2148
Bills: Metropolitan Milk Act Amendment, 2B., passed	2148
Trade Descriptions and False Advertisements, further reported	2148
Factories and Shops Act Amendment, 2B.	2148
Forests Act Amendment Continuance, 2B., Com. report	2151
Financial Emergency Act Amendment, 2B., Com. report	2153
Fair Rents, 2B.	2154
Industries Assistance Act Continuance, 2B.	2156
Guildford Cemeteries, 2B., Com. report	2158
Resolution: Betting Control Bill, to Inquire by Joint Select Committee	2151

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

QUESTION—GROUP SETTLEMENT AREAS.

Clearing by Unemployed.

Hon. A. THOMSON (without notice) asked the Chief Secretary: On the 10th November I asked the Chief Secretary certain questions relating to the clearing of the group settlement areas by single men. The Chief Secretary replied in answer to Questions 2 and 3, "In course of preparation." Will he please inform me whether the preparation is nearly complete?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: I have no further information but will make inquiries.

BILL—METROPOLITAN MILK ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—TRADE DESCRIPTIONS AND FALSE ADVERTISEMENTS.

Committee's further report adopted.

BILL—FACTORIES AND SHOPS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [4.37]: The Chief Secretary, when introducing the Bill, mentioned that it was the

desire of the Government to bring this legislation into line with Eastern States legislation. The first thought that passed through my mind was: What did the Eastern States do with legislation of this nature, or how far did they advance with legislation of this nature at the time when they were no further developed industrially than we are now? Comparisons between our own State and the States whose legislation we are seeking to copy become essential, for the reason—if for no other reason—of justifying the type of legislation which we have had placed before us. (We all know that factories, shops and industries generally are in a much more developed condition in each of the Eastern States, and especially in New South Wales and Victoria, than in our own State. The question which arises is this: If New South Wales, Victoria and the other States waited, as they did wait, until they were well established industrially before introducing legislation of this nature, then clearly, if we are going to follow on the lines of comparison I suggest, we should wait until we have reached an equal developmental stage prior to our attempting to introduce legislation as advanced as this. It is advanced legislation. It is more than advanced, because it will usurp, as hon. members who have spoken to the Bill have pointed out, the functions of the Arbitration Court.

The Chief Secretary: That is not true.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I shall be pleased to listen attentively to the Chief Secretary on this point when he speaks in reply. But I would like to draw the Chief Secretary's attention to the fact that certain functions rightly belonging to the Arbitration Court are going to be a matter of statutory enactment under this measure. The fixation of hours which we find embodied in the Bill is clearly a matter of determination by the Arbitration Court. Clause 68 of the Bill, for instance, states—

Section 155 of the principal Act is hereby amended by inserting at the beginning of Sub-section (1) the following words:—"Subject to the express provisions of Section 42 of this Act."

The effect of Section 42 is to provide that notwithstanding any provision in an award made by the Arbitration Court certain things will apply, and that again is a matter of taking away from the Arbitration Court its particular functions. The members of the Arbitration Court have a particular duty to perform. They have an opportunity that

Parliament undoubtedly does not possess to make full inquiry and investigation into the numerous matters connected with trades or avocations to determine what rates of pay and conditions of labour should be observed in any department of industry. By making a fixed condition that certain things shall apply, as laid down in the Bill, we shall be taking from the court the opportunity to make that investigation and inquiry and to decide what is right and fair in the interests of employees and what industry can bear.

The Honorary Minister: You are referring to holidays.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Holidays, hours of labour and certain rates of wages are prescribed by the Bill, and other provisions are included, all of which come within the scope of the Arbitration Court.

The Honorary Minister: You are speaking of Section 42 which deals with holidays.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is so. Section 42 of the Act is to be repealed and a new section inserted in lieu. The proposed new section begins—

Except as hereinafter provided, and notwithstanding anything contained to the contrary in any award or industrial agreement heretofore or hereafter made under the provisions of the Industrial Arbitration Act, 1912, and its amendments, etc.

The Honorary Minister: It says what holidays shall be observed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, but the clause contains the words "notwithstanding anything contained to the contrary in any award or industrial agreement." If an award or agreement provides something different from what is in the Bill, then the award or agreement should not be over-ridden by an Act of Parliament. By seeking to follow what is done in the Eastern States without first examining our own industrial development, we shall be making a grave mistake that will be detrimental to industry and employment here. If we adopt legislation parallel with that operating in the Eastern States where industries are far in advance of ours, we in our struggling condition shall be giving a great advantage to industrial concerns there. This reminds me of the huge imports made annually by Western Australia from the Eastern States. During the year ended the 30th June last the value of goods imported from the Eastern States totalled considerably over £10,000,000. That fact alone should cause us to reflect. Faced with a position

such as that, we should do everything in our power to get our industries established on a firm basis before attempting to rank equal with the other States in legislation of this kind. I am a believer in fair conditions of labour, but I do not believe in an Act of Parliament fixing those conditions as this Bill seeks to do. The Government would have been wise in the interests of the State had they set up a competent authority to determine the extent to which the cost of production would be affected by adopting the principles contained in the Bill. That would have helped us to reach a proper determination. Having regard to the facts I have mentioned, I consider that we would be better advised, while maintaining proper conditions in our factories, to leave the law as it stands at present, and first make an investigation to see how the new proposals would affect the cost of production. If it were shown that our cost of production would be seriously affected and raised above the cost of production in the Eastern States, our hope of getting factories established here would become more and more remote. Believing as I do that the Bill would be opposed to the best interests of the State at the present time, I cannot see my way to support the second reading.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [4.55]: As the ground has been covered so thoroughly by previous speakers, I have only a few remarks to offer on the Bill. I find myself in the position of being unable to support many of the clauses, although I can see a very good reason for some of the amendments proposed. Frankly, however, I do not believe that we shall get the best results by adopting the amendments. I find myself in agreement with other members in opposing the attempt to bring the one-man factory under the operation of the measure.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It is the only good thing in the Bill.

Hon. H. SEDDON: We have to recognise that the man conducting one of those small factories is amongst the most enterprising citizens of the State and ought to be encouraged.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: There must be enterprise of that kind before larger concerns can be developed.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I believe one reason actuated the Government in introducing that

amendment, a very important reason. Undoubtedly factories have been started, largely by the foreign section of the community, that compete on absolutely unfair lines and do not observe our ideas of the standards that should be maintained in industry. We have to provide against that sort of thing, which presents a serious menace to our factory conditions. Thus I can understand the motive of the Government in proposing that amendment. I should like to see the question dealt with in some other way, although I cannot offer any suggestion at present that would be helpful to the Government. The question of hours is really one for determination by the Arbitration Court. I am looking to the time when the question of hours will be dealt with internationally. All civilised countries, in my opinion, are rapidly approaching a stage of recognising that means must be found to make greater leisure available to workers. I do not think we shall be very much older before civilised countries will adopt the convention of the 40-hour week; whether in the form of 5½ working days or five working days remains to be seen.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: It will certainly be a five-day week when it does come.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Provided such a convention were adopted in all countries it would be a move in the right direction. If introduced in only some of the industrial countries, they and their industries would be placed under a very serious handicap as compared with those that maintained a standard of longer hours.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: That is what you will be doing by not supporting the proposal to bring small factories under the law. They will be allowed to work on six days.

Hon. H. SEDDON: I have already dealt with that point. Until such a convention is adopted, the question of hours should be dealt with by the Arbitration Court, but I hope that before long this State and the Eastern States will be able to fall into line with other civilised countries by legislating to make a 40-hour week general in the community. I am opposed to the amendment that seeks to abolish the present method of determining the half-day closing of shops in the country. Conditions in the country are quite different from those in the city. Consider some of the goldfields districts where men are working in the

bush; the only day on which they can get their supplies is at the week-end. If shops are closed on Saturday afternoon such men would have to lose a day's work during the week in order to go into the town and secure supplies. The existing arrangement gives the consumers a voice on the question of when the holiday shall be observed. That is a sensible arrangement, and it is democratic, seeing that it gives them a voice in determining their own affairs. Therefore I cannot support that clause of the Bill. There are in the Bill necessary features; for example, the appointment of a deputy or assistant to the Chief Inspector of Factories. That officer now has a great deal of responsibility and work, and there should be some means by which he can obtain the help to which he is entitled. I cannot support the greater part of the Bill, though I am in sympathy with many of its provisions.

On motion by the Chief Secretary, debate adjourned.

RESOLUTION—BETTING CONTROL BILL.

To Inquire by Joint Select Committee.

Message from the Assembly notifying that it had agreed to a select committee being appointed to consider the Betting Control Bill, and that it requested the Council also to appoint a select committee of five members to join with the select committee of the Assembly now considered.

HON. G. FRASER (West) [5.3]: I move—

That in accordance with the request contained in message No 31 from the Legislative Assembly, a select committee of five members be appointed by ballot to consider the Betting Control Bill; the committee to have power to call for persons and papers, to confer with the select committee of the Legislative Assembly, to sit on days over which the House stands adjourned and to adjourn from place to place.

All hon. members are aware that the betting question has been the subject of much controversy during recent years. Anyone who has paid attention to the subject must realise that the question has reached a stage at which something needs to be done. The present position is one of absolute chaos. That being so, legislation dealing with the subject has been introduced; and, as a result, another place has appointed a select committee. At its first meeting that select

committee arrived at the conclusion that in order to do justice to the subject a joint select committee was needed. In view of the nearness of the end of the session, it is considered that the select committee will have to be converted into an honorary Royal Commission, so that all phases of betting may be gone into and a report covering every aspect of the subject presented to Parliament. Therefore I submit the motion.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.6]: The mover of the motion has made it clear that if the proposed joint select committee is to do any good—the committee being able to sit only while Parliament is in session, and Parliament not being likely to remain in session for more than another two weeks at the outside—

Hon. C. F. Baxter: That is rather optimistic.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: To do any good, the joint select committee must subsequently be appointed an honorary Royal Commission. I wish to draw the attention of members to this aspect particularly. During the debate on the measure to amend the Constitution, various authorities, including the Crown Law Department, were quoted to show that the acceptance of an honorary Royal Commissionership was acceptance of an office of profit. It has been ruled by the Crown Law Department that a member acting as an honorary Royal Commissioner acts in an office of profit. I warn hon. members that if—

Hon. A. M. Clydesdale: You need not warn me.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I warn other hon. members that if they go on the joint select committee—and it is useless to go on the committee unless they are prepared to become honorary Royal Commissioners—they are liable to be shot at. My duty ends with drawing attention to the fact that in accepting such an office they will run a grave risk.

On motion by Hon. J. Cornell, debate adjourned.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 18th November.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West—in reply) [5.8]: During the debate on the Bill several hon. members

stressed forcibly the great importance of the conservation of certain forest plants and trees, and the importance of the problem of soil erosion in the dry areas of Western Australia. Those hon. members are right in saying that the Government are fully alive to the danger of the depletion of these particular plants and trees, and also to the grave danger which may possibly arise from soil erosion, especially in certain districts of Western Australia which already disclose signs of that process. In fact, certain steps have already been taken, and experimental work has been put in hand, to deal with the danger. Investigations are being made to indicate in what direction action can best be taken; in other words, what is the most effective way of dealing with the problems mentioned. In regard to the classes of timber to which hon. members alluded, the Forests Department have already taken action. They control all timber-cutting throughout the Eastern and Murchison Goldfields, with a view to conserving the interests of pastoralists in those areas. Measures are also being taken to establish a closer relation between the work of the Forests Department and investigations being conducted by the agricultural branch of the University. This refers particularly to field experiments being made by the Forests Department to determine the extent and distribution of mulga and other timbers in pastoral areas where there are demands for mining timber, firewood, and charcoal. Mr. Hall drew attention to the depletion of jamwood in the timber belts in the vicinity of Geraldton. That matter has been referred to the Conservator of Forests, who informs me that his department some years ago investigated the question, at a time when large quantities of jam timber for supplies to Geraldton were being obtained from reserves in the vicinity of Northampton. As a result of the investigations, further cutting of jam timber for firewood in those localities has been prohibited. Since then the whole of the firewood supplies of Geraldton have been obtained from private property, over which the Government, and therefore the Forests Department, have no control whatever. When speaking on the subject, the hon. member conveyed an impression that he was perhaps possessed of more information than the department had in that particular connection. I would like to suggest to Mr. Hall that if he feels he has additional information, he might communicate it to the Forests Department, who would

be only too pleased to consider what is possible to be done with a view to arriving at a satisfactory solution of the problem. Mr. Seddon in his remarks referred to the amount of £28,692 set down in the departmental report as interest on loans. The hon. member asked for information on the subject. That amount of £28,692 represents approximately 5 per cent. interest on a sum of £591,600, particulars of which appear in the Estimates for the current financial year. The latter sum includes all loan expenditure on pine planting, purchase of land, and forest regeneration since the enactment of the Forests Act, 1918. It also includes all loan money made available for relief work by the Forests Department during the past five years. Consideration has been given to the question of how much of that relief expenditure is a proper charge against forests revenue, and the effect of such a charge on the reforestation fund. Other members commented on the Bill, but I do not think their remarks call for any references from me. Certainly a good deal of interest is being shown in the question of reforestation, and it is highly gratifying to know that so many members of this Chamber are prepared to give credit to the Forests Department, and more especially to the Conservator of Forests, for the work accomplished in recent years. I agree with those views. I consider that we are fortunate in having at the head of the Forests Department a gentleman—and a young gentleman at that—who has made his mark among the forestry experts of the world. Anyone who cares to visit the areas over which the Forests Department has been operating during the last few years must realise that the State will eventually benefit greatly from the work done. I am asked by the Conservator to inform hon. members that if any of them, either individually or collectively, care at any time to pay a visit to any of the plantations or districts where the department are actively engaged, or any district coming under the jurisdiction of the department, he will be only too pleased to endeavour to give them all information they require, and generally to assist them to understand exactly what the department are doing and what the value of that work will be to the State in years to come.

Hon. L. B. Bolton: Let us make sure that we keep him in the State.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I know the Conservator fairly well, and I agree with the remarks of hon. members that we are fortunate in having an officer of his ability at the head of the department. Although quite a number of matters have been referred to by several members on the Bill, I do not think there is any need for me to say anything further.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

**BILL—FINANCIAL EMERGENCY ACT
AMENDMENT.**

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West) [5.20] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill to continue the operations of the Financial Emergency Act as amended last year. When this legislation was last reviewed by Parliament, it was decided that it was no longer necessary to re-enact those sections which relate to salaries, wages, pensions, and grants, but, nevertheless, still to retain on the statute book provision for a 22½ per cent. cut in the interest payable on all mortgages which were in operation prior to 1931. This section further provides that the maximum reduction shall be 5 per cent. per annum. In view of present day conditions, it is not considered expedient to allow mortgages in force at the time the original legislation was initiated, and which have not been converted to a lower rate of interest, to revert to the former high rates. Accordingly, the Bill proposes to continue this provision for a further period of twelve months. It will also be necessary to continue the operation of the other section of last year's enactment. This is a saving provision inserted last year to protect the interests of those public servants who might retire subsequent to the 31st December 1935, and who are entitled to superannuation based on the actual salary received during the three years prior to their retirement. It is not desired that they should receive a lesser amount of superannuation than that to which they are really entitled. The House agreed to that provision last year, and I feel sure members will

agree to its continuation to-day. There is nothing else in the Bill; it simply provides that the existing Act shall be continued for a further 12 months.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [5.23]: The Bill, which has been very much curtailed by reason of the Act passed last year, is one of those measures in regard to which I think most members have been approached by people who are still affected by the retention of this legislation. Those who are mainly affected are the people deriving interest from mortgages. I have heard of a number of cases, and I have no doubt other members have also heard of instances of people who have suffered very materially because of the shrinkage of probably a small income which provided a bare subsistence for them. Those people suffered because of the reduction of 22½ per cent. Probably the reduction is not felt to the same extent by those who may be enjoying a large income. The position is entirely different in cases of that kind, but there are instances of hardship, and I have no doubt the Chief Secretary has heard of them. The request has been made that there should be a cessation of this legislation in view of the fact that there has been a restoration of the deductions made when the Act was first introduced. I have no intention of opposing the second reading, but I desired to refer to cases of hardship, and I hope the measure will not operate beyond the term mentioned in the Bill.

HON. L. CRAIG (South-West) [5.25]: This will be the first occasion on which I have been able to support this Bill. My objections previously were that the Government, while forcing private people to accept a lower rate of interest had, themselves, until this year, been charging a higher rate. I am referring to repurchased estates. When legislation forced mortgagees to reduce the interest rate by 22½ per cent., the Government, until recently, were charging purchasers of repurchased estates 6 per cent. That was most unjust, and I said, soon after my election to Parliament, that until the Government reduced the rate of interest they were charging and brought it into line with the rates outside, I would oppose the Bill. Now I am glad the Minister has informed us that the rate of interest in respect of repurchased estates has been reduced to 5 per

cent. Consequently I shall support the second reading. I have a little knowledge about this legislation and the abuse of it. However, the good it will do will probably override the abuse.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.27]: I wish to reiterate what I said last session. It does seem absurd that we should restore practically all that was taken away from members of Parliament and others and should continue to impose the cut on another section of the people, those who have loaned money. I consider that illogical. I presume there was some justification for restoring the cuts to public servants and members of Parliament, and others. If there was no justification for that, it should not have been done. There is only one logical way out, and it is that we should put the people who are still affected on the same basis as the holders of war bonds at the time of the commencement of the emergency legislation, when war bonds were written down 22½ per cent. It is about time we finalised the whole question of interest charges being imposed to-day under the emergency legislation, and finished up that legislation altogether; otherwise from year to year we shall be carrying out something that is illogical, a section of the community having had their cut restored and another section, so to speak, being left in a state of indecision. It is as well that we should let them know where they are likely to stand in the future. But the Government are continuing the line of least resistance. Whilst I hold no brief for that section of the community to whom the emergency cut still applies, I consider there should be a permanent adjustment of the whole question.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—FAIR RENTS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 24th November.

HON. C. H. WITTENOOM (South-East) [5.31]: I have perused the Bill very carefully in an endeavour to find out if there

were sufficient good points in it to enable me to vote for the second reading. I am disappointed, because I cannot see any good that is going to accrue from the Bill to Kalgoorlie or any other goldfields town. Nor do I think it will be any good for the seaport towns or the agricultural towns. I cannot see that the Bill is going to make much difference at all in the city. Against that, Mr. Heenan and Mr. Hall have said that the Bill is wanted in goldfields towns, and I presume the Government have been asked by the goldfields community to bring down the Bill. So, if the Minister, when replying to the debate, will agree to restrict the Bill to goldfields areas I will support the second reading. Perhaps it is not possible for the Minister to do that. The necessity for the Bill emanates, it is to be supposed, from the extravagant rents being charged by landlords in goldfields towns. I am one of those unfortunate persons who own a few of the dwelling houses to be affected by the Bill. Notwithstanding all the years I have had those houses—and in this I am speaking for others who own similar houses—I can say I have never received in return for them bank interest plus 1½ per cent. plus depreciation and maintenance. Neither in Albany nor in any other town have the landlords received so much. I will vote for the second reading if the Bill be restricted to Kalgoorlie alone.

Hon. E. Heenan: Make it Bunbury.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: I have been told that the rents being asked in Kalgoorlie amount sometimes to 30 per cent. and 40 per cent. I am not sure about the 40 per cent., but I have been told that so much has been charged. Even if 30 per cent. or 25 per cent. or 20 per cent. is being charged, it is extortionate, especially since in Kalgoorlie there is an abundance of rich ore sufficient to keep Kalgoorlie going for very many years. It is a town with a long life before it. I once lived in Boulder, but I do not know whether the houses that have been referred to in the course of the debate are the dwellings of the old town or whether they are new houses that have been built since the revival of the gold industry. I admit that probably it would be fair to restrict the rents charged for those older houses which through the years have paid for themselves, but it would be totally unjust to restrict rent that is charged for a new house. Moreover, it would be imprac-

ticable to separate the old from the new. Whenever houses are in great demand two things occur: Rents rise, and people with a little money come along and build more houses, having recognised the opportunity to use their capital. So before very long it occurs that the problem solves itself.

Hon. G. B. Wood: That is what is happening on the fields today.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: The reason for the shortage of houses in Kalgoorlie today was well explained by some speaker last week, who pointed to the big alteration in population that has occurred during the last five years. Naturally if people will rush into a town they must experience difficulty in securing houses. However, as time goes on this problem undoubtedly will solve itself. On the other hand, if rents are going to be restricted by Parliament, if building is going to be discouraged in that way, the mining community will have to do as they used to do when I lived in Boulder. In those days a large proportion of the population were living in hessian camps, and good comfortable camps they were. In those days most of the single men were living either in boarding houses or in the hotels. I have referred to Kalgoorlie, and now I am going to refer to a supposititious new field whose life is totally unknown. We do not know whether the life of the town will be one year or many years. Now who on earth is going to build houses under those conditions? For the owner of a house would be quite unable to determine whether the house would be paid for in the course of years. Suppose rents were allowed to go to 10 per cent. or 12 per cent., which is what is expected in a city such as Perth. I venture to say that if the Bill becomes law in its present form, the new position of the housing difficulty on the goldfields outside of Kalgoorlie will be considerably worse than the present position. It must be recognised that the position on the goldfields is entirely different from the position in the city. There is a great deal of difference between buying or leasing a house in Kalgoorlie, and buying or leasing a house in Perth. The miner as a rule does not want to own his house at all. He wants to be free to move about from one town to another, or from one field to another. Men living in Kalgoorlie probably would get better tributes and more wages on a new field. So they do not want to own a house, and because the miner does not want to own a house he is prepared

to pay more rent in Kalgoorlie than he would pay in Perth. Clause 8 prescribes the basis of determination of fair rents under the Bill. Subclause 2 of that clause reads as follows:—

The court shall determine the fair rents at a rate of not less than 1½ per cent. per annum above the rate of interest which is for the time being charged upon overdrafts by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia on the capital value of the dwelling house determined as aforesaid, plus the following:—

Then there are enumerated rates, and painting and maintenance, renewals, insurance and depreciation. I have said that the Bill is no good to Albany, Bunbury, or any of those places, because the rent in such places never gets up to 6½ per cent., as prescribed in the Bill. When the depression finally lifts it is on the cards that a large number of people will go to Albany, Geraldton and Bunbury. To encourage them to build houses they should be allowed to build and take whatever rent they can get for the houses. The Bill will be of no use in agricultural districts. Only the other day I read a speech by Mr. Watts, M.L.A., who showed that in Katanning the average rent was not more than 6½ per cent. I know from personal knowledge and experience that rents in the city do not realise more than about 6½ per cent., except in odd cases. It appears to me that the gross returns to the owners of houses in the city is about 8 per cent., but of course out of that has to come depreciation and maintenance.

Hon. H. V. Piesse: And you have to collect the rent.

Hon. C. H. WITTENOOM: In my opinion the Bill is a bad Bill, and altogether ill-considered. If it becomes law in this form it will seriously affect the letting of houses, particularly on the goldfields. Probably it will affect some towns that are likely to make progress in the near future. What has been the position for the last five years? The biggest sufferers from the financial emergency legislation have been landlords, those who let houses, buildings, etc. Time and again we have heard of the unfortunate widow who has lost the little she had to live on. During the five years when this financial emergency legislation has been in operation, landlords have been in considerable trouble. I can recall the tenants' relief Bill. Most members know of cases where the owners of houses had to go for weeks and months without any rent. I know of one owner of dwelling houses who received no

rent for a year. At the end of that time the rent owing had to be written off, and the rent of the premises reduced. I never heard of the suggestion that a minimum rent should be fixed. If I thought this Bill could be confined to Kalgoorlie, I would support the second reading. It leaves out a lot of important points. It does not mention agents' or lawyers' charges. It puts a great deal of responsibility upon the shoulders of magistrates who are not in that line of business and cannot carry the responsibility. I intend to oppose the second reading.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [5.47]: There is no need for me to discuss the Bill at great length. As a landlord, I have had experience of renting houses. I can assure members that no definite rates should be fixed by Act of Parliament dealing with the interest that can be earned on a building or dwelling house. The Bill will not suit the country, nor the people at seaports. The majority of those who reside at seaports, such as lumpers and other workers who have a fixed occupation, own their own houses. Visitors to seaports cannot expect to rent premises at $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the capital value. That is an absurd suggestion. People who can afford to visit the seaside should be able to pay a rent exceeding $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. Premises at the seaside can only be rented for $2\frac{1}{2}$ to three months during the season, and that income has to cover the whole year. We should not saddle the goldfields with legislation that we do not require in the coastal or metropolitan areas. Before I give my vote on this measure I shall want to hear from other goldfields members concerning whether it is required on the fields. We have heard Mr. Heenan's remarks. I cannot altogether agree with them, but I want further information from other members before I decide definitely how I shall vote. So far as I can see at present my vote will be recorded against the second reading.

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

BILL—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE ACT CONTINUANCE.

Second Reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. W. H. Kitson—West [5.49] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to

continue the operation of the Industries Assistance Act for a further period of one year. Not since 1914 has it been so necessary for the Government to have legislative powers to enable them to meet the state of emergency that has arisen as a result of the series of bad seasons experienced by farmers over the past few years. The Industries Assistance Act contains a provision which allows credit to be granted expeditiously under an automatic charge upon the crops, land, and chattels of the borrower. Events of recent years bear witness to the usefulness of this provision, which applies to the country rather than to the metropolitan area. During 1935-36, for example, as a result of abnormal seasonal conditions and the consequent poor harvest, farmers' credit was severely restricted. The Industries Assistance Board, however, was able to provide funds for the provision of seed wheat, chaff, superphosphate, fuel, wages, and machinery parts for seeding and fallowing. It will be agreed that it is highly desirable to continue this legislation. In all, relief was granted to 1,066 settlers last year, of whom 319 were already operating under the Act. It is apparent that, as a result of the intensified recurrence of last year's drought conditions, it will again be necessary to provide a large number of farmers with sustenance, chaff, fuel and so on, to enable them to carry on during next year. As at the 31st October, 1936, there were 2,121 accounts in operation as compared with 1,720 for the same date in the previous year. Advances made by the Board for drought relief, as from the 1st July, 1935, to the 31st October, 1936, totalled £78,615. During the same period other advances to borrowers amounted to £14,485.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: What did you get back?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: At the 31st October, 1936, principal and interest outstanding amounted to £1,422,480 and £388,531 respectively, the total liability being £1,811,011.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Ninety-two thousand pounds went out last year. How much did you get back?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY: Collections for the twelve months ended 31st October totalled £35,537, comprising principal £15,840, and interest £19,697, while over the same period £154,911 was written off the Industries Assistance Board's funds. The interjection of Mr. Holmes is a very

pertinent one. He says that we have advanced so much money and received back a smaller sum. I am sorry to have to suggest that that position will obtain for another year. We know that a large number of very competent farmers are suffering through drought conditions, and through no fault of their own, and it will be necessary for some provision to be made to enable them to carry on their operations. If we are to have a repetition next season of what we have had, our position and that of the farmers to whom I have referred will indeed be a serious one. It is under this Act that the Government are able to provide the assistance I have mentioned. It is absolutely essential that assistance of this kind shall be given, and to this end it is also essential that the Act should be continued. The Bill provides for a continuance of the Act for only one year. I am afraid we shall have to bring down a Bill of this nature for at least another year.

Hon. G. B. Wood: Why not make it five years?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I am not prepared to say how long legislation of this kind should endure. This House has decided on previous occasions that it shall be brought down from year to year, and we are bringing it down on this occasion to last for another 12 months. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. H. V. PIESSE (South-East) [5.55]: I am sorry this Act has to be continued. That is largely due to the serious drought conditions from which we have been suffering. I commend the Agricultural Bank for having so splendidly acquired chaff for farmers who will be needing it for their stock during the coming season. The authorities concerned went into the market and bought chaff at a reasonable figure. I understand the price paid will prove of great advantage to the farmers who will need the chaff to maintain their stock. We are facing very serious times. Crops are by no means good. Even in districts where we have had fair rain, the returns are not coming up to expectations. Many farmers in the so-called wet areas will have to be helped owing to the dry season, and it will be necessary to help others in various districts. There are several men in the Nyabing-Pingrup district who recently had a meet-

ing, and who have written to the Minister informing him of the seriousness of the position. This Act will have to be continued. The only thing we have to worry about is whether sufficient money will be made available to assist the farmers concerned and keep them on the land. I support the Bill.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.58]: I desire to issue a warning to some members, particularly those representing agricultural provinces. Mr. Piesse referred to the purchase of chaff as being a favourable deal. That will be only a drop in the ocean. Owing to a catastrophe having struck the agricultural industry, not only this year but in some parts for the last three years, this is given as one reason for continuing the Act. I warn members that they are going to face a situation by the continuance of this Act that they have not faced for many years. They think that the situation can be met by continuing an Act of Parliament that has been in existence for 21 years. The Act was first passed in 1915, since when there have been very few amendments to it. The machinery provided in the Bill will be that which will operate to meet present-day conditions, if that has to be done. During the good times the stage had been reached at which consideration was given to continuing men on the land or putting them off if they were not regarded as satisfactory. That stage was reached before the depression and the drop in prices. Now, when the agricultural industry is reduced almost to a state of absolute insolvency, we are to say that, willy-nilly, we shall continue an Act that is nearly 22 years old and apply its machinery to deal with a set of conditions that had not existed formerly. If members representing agricultural provinces consider that fit and proper, well and good. I warn them that later on, when the repercussions are felt, they will not be able to offer any excuse that will avail. I prophesy that if we do not bring the Industries Assistance Act up to date, members will be compelled later on to somersault, as they did in connection with the Agricultural Bank Act. They will support the legislation now and later on describe it as one of the worst legislative iniquities ever perpetrated.

Hon. G. W. MILES: Who said that?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Quite a few said that regarding the Agricultural Bank Act. Even at this late stage, we may take note of the

treatment of the Lotteries (Control) Act Amendment Bill in the Legislative Assembly, where, owing to certain exigencies, members have felt impelled to insert an amendment regarding audits, or some other minor matter. So we can have regard to the exigencies of the agricultural position and demand to know from the Government whether or not the machinery of the Industries Assistance Act, which is obsolete in many respects, should continue. Few of our farmers will be affected because, like the Red Indians, they are disappearing from the outer parts of the wheat belt. I suggest to members representing agricultural provinces that they should adjourn the debate and find out where they stand. They should do that rather than, later on, say that if they had known this, or known that, the position would have been otherwise. I support the second reading of the Bill because there is nothing else to do. There is no other legislative machinery by means of which necessary aid may be administered. The Industries Assistance Act has been availed of to assist the miner-settlers at Southern Cross, because there was no other legal channel enabling necessary assistance to be rendered to them.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, debate adjourned.

BILL—GUILDFORD CEMETERIES.

Second Reading.

THE HONORARY MINISTER (Hon. E. H. Gray—West) [6.5] in moving the second reading said: The purpose of this Bill is to vest in His Majesty certain cemetery lands held at Guildford by the Salvation Army, the Church of England, and the Roman Catholic and Methodist Churches, in order that they may be proclaimed a public cemetery

Hon. J. J. Holmes: This is to be a public cemetery, not a recreation ground?

The HONORARY MINISTER: Yes, I will explain the position. It is quite different from the Bunbury proposal. At present, the Guildford cemeteries are subject to a divided control that has been found unsatisfactory. The most used parts of these cemeteries are held in fee simple by the aforementioned religious denominations. These are indicated on the plan I have caused to be laid on the Table of the House. The bal-

ance of the cemeteries area is set apart as a public cemetery under the Cemeteries Act, and is controlled by a board of trustees, who have no control over the areas held by the churches. With a view to taking some action to place the control and maintenance of the cemeteries on a better basis, the local governing authorities concerned held a conference in March of this year, when it was decided that the necessary action be taken to convert the whole area into a public cemetery, subject to the provisions of the Cemeteries Act. When approached in this regard, the religious bodies concerned agreed to surrender their respective areas, subject to the land being irrevocably dedicated for cemetery purposes, under the conditions laid down by the Act. The Bill, therefore, provides, under Clause 2, that the lands held by the churches shall vest in His Majesty, freed from any trust, but subject to certain existing rights set forth in Clause 5, namely, the preservation of any existing rights of burial, and the observance by the new trustees of all provisions and conditions under which such rights were granted. Clause 3 provides that the lands so re-vested shall be forthwith proclaimed a public cemetery under the provisions of the Cemeteries Act, and Clause 4 relieves the original owners of all further responsibility in respect of the control of their lands, when the new cemetery has been proclaimed under the Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

House adjourned at 6.10 p.m.