

saying that the management was overdone. I have said here, by interjection, that men like Mr. Hamilton have outlived their usefulness. They ought to have been pensioned off long ago. If Mr. Hamilton dies to-morrow, the Great Boulder Mine would not know he was dead, but would go on just the same. If we could get amalgamation and increased efficiency of management, it would be a great thing for our goldfields. Most of the mine managers are being paid £5,000, £4,000, or £3,000 a year, whereas one man could look after all the mines if they were properly organised. I am pleased to see that the Government intend to go on with the Esperance railway, which has been promised for the last 25 years. The 60 miles northwards were built, but that length was useless unless continued to Norseman and thus connected with the railway system of Australia right through to Rockhampton in Queensland. The Governor's Speech does not refer to the sandalwood question, which has caused much uneasiness in my electorate. Residents in the North-East Province are very sore about that matter. However, we have the assurance of the Government that it will be rectified at the end of the year. Mr. Dodd said that one Government or House should not control the destinies of the State. If Mr. Dodd were here, I would remind him that when he was returned to this Chamber he was pledged by the Labour platform to work for its abolition.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: I think what Mr. Dodd said that unless the initiative and referendum were introduced, he was not in favour of a single Chamber.

Hon. J. R. BROWN: The initiative and referendum are in the air. Mr. Burvill suggested that training camps in England would be suitable for the migrants. The migrants are trained in England for about three weeks I believe; but it is done in a camp in the town. There are no big trees to cut down and when these people come out they are not suitable for clearing work. If we get 50 per cent. of successes among the migrants, we shall be doing admirably well. It is an uphill game, and not too many Australians would take it on, although they are born and bred in the place and know the ups and downs of the game. I think the Address-in-reply debate is to some extent a waste of time. Two or three days ought to do it and members ought to confine themselves to about 20 minutes instead of trying

to put up records in the way of lengthy speeches.

On motion by Hon. W. H. Kitson, debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.10 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Tuesday, 25th August, 1925.*

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

### TEMPORARY CHAIRMEN OF COMMITTEES.

Mr. SPEAKER: I desire to announce that I have nominated the member for Menzies (Mr. Panton), the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo), and the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) as temporary Chairmen of Committees during this session.

### QUESTIONS (2)—APPRENTICES AND TRADESMEN.

#### *Railway Department.*

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Railways: 1, How many journeymen tradesmen are employed at the Midland Junction workshops? 2, How many apprentices are being trained? 3, What is the number allowable? 4, How many journeymen are em-

ployed in the Way and Works branch? 5, What is the number of apprentices being trained? 6, What is the number allowable?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Railways) replied: 1, 675. 2, 227. 3, 327. 4, 104. 5, Apprentices are not employed in this branch. 6, 52.

#### *State Implement Works and Public Works.*

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Works: 1, How many journeymen tradesmen are employed in the State Implement Works? 2, What is the number of apprentices being trained? 3, What is the number allowable? 4, What is the number of journeymen employed in the Public Works workshops? 5, What is the number of apprentices being trained? 6, What is the number allowable?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, 103. 2, 25. 3, 34. 4, 42. 5, 8. 6, 13. The shortage is mainly caused by the fluctuation of work. In departments where any security of permanency can be estimated the number of apprentices will be brought up to the number allowed under the various awards.

### QUESTION—TRAFFIC.

#### *'Bus Routes Advisory Committee.*

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Works: 1, What are the constitution and personnel of the Bus Routes Advisory Committee? 2, What are the functions of the committee? 3, Do the decisions of the committee override the powers of the Minister under the Traffic Act? 4, Has he any objection to the Press being admitted during the deliberations of the committee?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, Representative of the Tramway Department (Mr. E. Shillington), representative of the Railway Department (Mr. E. G. Backshall), representative of the Police Department (Mr. C. Treadgold), representative of the Metropolitan Local Authorities (Mr. S. H. Fletcher), representative of the Motor Transport Association (Mr. J. C. Irvine), representative of the Public Works Department (Mr. A. E. Sanderson). 2, To receive and consider all applications made for licenses for motor buses to ply over routes and to give especial consideration to the question as to whether the public are already reasonably well served; and also to

advise when a route is defined how many motor buses should be allowed to ply for hire thereon. (Vide Subsection F of Section 14 of the Traffic Act) 3, No. 4, As it is an advisory committee only, it is considered to be undesirable that the Press should be admitted when the committee is sitting.

### BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Second Reading.*

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [4.27] in moving the second reading said: This is a small Bill, which seeks to amend the Land Tax and Income Tax Act of last year. It has been rendered necessary because of an oversight on the last day of the session when the Bill was finally passed. For some years prior to 1922 land tax and income tax were collected in one instalment for the year. After the agreement was made with the Commonwealth Government for the combined collection of the taxes, provision for the collection in one payment yearly, as in the Land Tax Assessment Act, was made. Since 1922 we have been collecting the tax in one amount, to bring our legislation into line with the Commonwealth Act, which also provided for the payment in one instalment. This provision has been made annually in the taxing Act, but last year whilst we made provision for the collection in one payment, we overlooked the fact that it would not be necessary to have any taxing Bill this year, for last year we passed the tax as for two years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Let us go all over it again.

The PREMIER: Last year we only made provision for the collection of the tax in one instalment. It is now necessary to add the few words contained in this Bill to Section 7 of the Act of last year to enable us to collect the tax in the manner in which we have been doing it for the past three years. I hope there will be no opposition to this little Bill.

Mr. Latham: We might reconsider the whole thing if we amend the Act.

The PREMIER: There is only the one point to consider, the collection of the tax.

Hon. G. Taylor: Or whether we do not collect it.

The PREMIER: Whether we collect it in one instalment or in two equal half-yearly payments.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: This brings us into line with the Commonwealth Act.

The PREMIER: Yes. It is very desirable that this should be done, otherwise we shall be at a disadvantage. Although we may be able to get out our assessments, we shall not be able to collect a considerable amount of revenue which should come to us this year, and we may, therefore, go behind.

Mr. Latham: There will be no 31st of December excuse this year, for the assessments will be out earlier.

The PREMIER: The Bill brings us into line with the Commonwealth Act, and I hope the House will pass it. The Commissioner of Taxation will then be able to issue his assessments at once. We want to be able to get them out early so that we may be able to get in all the revenue that belongs to this year.

Hon. G. Taylor: We shall be in the same position as we were last year.

The PREMIER: Yes. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam [4.42]: This Bill merely continues what we have been doing. As the Taxation Departments are amalgamated it is advisable we should fall into line as far as possible with Federal methods. In the past we have had a Land and Income Tax Bill each session, which meant that notices could not go out until the Bill had been passed. This year we are not to have the pleasure of considering a taxation measure.

The Premier: The pleasure?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know why the Premier did not bring such a Bill down as usual.

The Premier: Because last year we made provision for the tax for two years.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I know, and it is the first time in our history that it has been done.

The Premier: It was a very wise provision.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: There is no reason why the Premier should not have brought down such a Bill.

The Premier: It irritates members to be discussing taxation every year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Our taxation is very high. I hoped, as a result of the Commission that is sitting, that it might have been possible for the Premier to have

brought down an amending measure before the session closed.

The Minister for Lands: You had better not say that. It may influence the position in Melbourne.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I said in my evidence before the Commission that we could not be expected to tax our people up to 4s. 3d. in the pound in order to meet our ordinary expenses, when other States under Federation are taxing at one-third of that amount. It is one of the great arguments on our side. In the circumstances, I do not oppose the Bill. It is barely September and only three months of the year have gone. When the Bill passes, the Commissioner, after getting in his returns, will be able to issue his assessments.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [4.45]: We can only deal with the particular clause of the Bill before us. I feel rather disappointed. I hoped we should have been able, when the Premier brought down the customary taxing Bill, to discuss the whole question more fully. I would like to have embodied in the Bill the effect of the Premier's statement when he introduced the taxation measure last year. He then said that the farmers who were living in the country would not—

The Premier: You cannot get in a speech on that subject now.

Mr. THOMSON: I am dealing with the Assessment Bill.

The Premier: No.

Mr. THOMSON: Well, with the tax.

The Premier: No, nor with the tax either.

Mr. THOMSON: I can oppose the amendment and give as one of my reasons why I adopt that course, that the Government should bring down an amending Bill at a later period to deal with this particular phase. I was referring to the statement made by the Premier last session when he said that the farmers would derive the benefit from the land tax, as it was collected.

The Minister for Lands: So they will.

Mr. SPEAKER: I remind the hon. member that he cannot discuss the measure of last session as it has passed into law.

Mr. THOMSON: I admit that.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot criticise a measure that has become law without giving specific notice of his intention to do so. He must confine himself to the proposal embodied in the Bill as set out in Clause 1.

Mr. THOMSON: I presume I can give my reasons for opposing the Bill.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, but the reason must be relevant to the clause.

Mr. THOMSON: That does not give hon. members an opportunity to discuss the phase I wish to deal with. I recognise that and, in the circumstances, I must oppose the Bill because I would like to have included in it an amendment, for the reason that—

The Premier: The hon. member should be confined to a discussion upon the Bill. He is proceeding to deal with a subject not relevant to it.

The SPEAKER: That is quite correct. The hon. member must give notice if he desires to deal with last session's measure.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We will do that.

The SPEAKER: The member for Kaitangia is discussing a matter not dealt with in the Bill.

Mr. THOMSON: In the circumstances I oppose the Bill. I understand that this will enable people to pay the tax once a year and they should be in a position to pay it in two moieties. I would like to have an opportunity to discuss the matter I wish to bring forward and I would like the Premier to assure us that we will have such an opportunity.

The Premier: You discussed it on the Address-in-reply for an hour and you can do so during the Budget debate. That is sufficient surely.

Mr. THOMSON: But it is not effective when it is discussed on the Budget. I would like to discuss it now when it could become effective.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee, etc.*

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

### **BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.**

#### *Message.*

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

#### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [4.52] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is practically identical with that which was discussed in this Chamber last session. It is practically in the same form as was that Bill when it left the Chamber and was transmitted to the Council. There is only one material alteration, and that refers to the 44-hours question. That will be dealt with in a separate Bill, and is not included in this measure. A Bill to deal with the 44-hour week will be brought down later. There are several minor alterations, mainly machinery matters dealing with the apprenticeship question, but apart from those the Bill is identical with that passed by the House last session. Therefore I do not think it is necessary, nor do I think the House would desire, that I should go into a lengthy exposition of the Bill. If it were possible, and you, Mr. Speaker, would accept such a motion from me, I would like to move that the Bill be taken as printed, dispose of it in that way and send it on to the Legislative Council.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Wipe out Parliament altogether!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I understand that the Standing Orders will not permit me to do what I would wish, and it is necessary for us to go through the whole formula of the different stages as we did last year, notwithstanding that the personnel of the House has changed only in respect of the representation of the Forrest electorate. I do not think anything has occurred since the Bill was before the Chamber last year to justify members in altering their attitude on the principles involved. I do not feel disposed to embark upon a reiteration of the case in favour of such a Bill. There have not been many new situations since we discussed the measure last year to which I can draw attention, but we as a Government found ourselves in a unique position. We were practically unable to obtain a President for the Arbitration Court. The existing law provides that the President must be a judge of the Supreme Court, and, as hon. members know, each of our judges had previously held the position of President and each had resigned. We were then faced with the position that we had either to allow the Act to remain a dead letter and industrial chaos to reign, or to adopt some method

that would tide us over a period until we could ask Parliament to deal with the matter. As an interim arrangement we appointed the Master of the Supreme Court an acting judge of the Supreme Court and President of the Arbitration Court. As I informed members last year it is the considered opinion of the Government that it is most unsatisfactory to have this important office filled by any temporary appointee. The greater percentage of our troubles in connection with arbitration in the past in this State has arisen from the want of permanency regarding that tribunal.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Although I agree with you, precisely the same difficulties are experienced where there is permanency.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not precisely.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Queensland has had the same trouble.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Much of the trouble has arisen from the fact that there has been no unified policy in connection with the Arbitration Court. Different judges sitting as presidents have adopted different standards, each has laid down different interpretations, and there has been no one man who would make the work his life's job. Each judge who has occupied the position of President recognised that he was there filling a gap and was anxious to get rid of the position at the earliest opportunity. It was impossible in the circumstances to expect success or anything in the nature of a concerted, well-thought out policy when the head of the tribunal was there in a temporary capacity.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We have had the same measure of success as in the other States where they have had permanent presidents.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not one of the other States has a permanent president.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, Queensland and South Australia.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have not had the success that Queensland has experienced.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Oh, good gracious!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: South Australia has not the same system that we have. It is quite different. Certainly we have not had the success that Queensland

has had, because there cases are dealt with in a few weeks and there is not the delay that we have experienced here; neither has there been the bother owing to the different interpretations and different policies laid down that we have had in Western Australia.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Queensland has some trouble every day.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is one phase of the question that is most essential and urgent. We should be given a declaration from Parliament that we can place in the position of President of the Arbitration Court a permanent appointee, a man who will recognise the position as his life's work, who will know that he is there to carry out his job and fulfil the duties of such an important office. We have filled the position temporarily in the hope that Parliament will remedy the defect in the law this session.

Mr. Sampson: Is a permanent judge more likely to be obeyed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know what the hon. member has in his mind. It is the court that gives the decision, not the judge.

Hon. G. Taylor: The hon. member asks if the orders of the court will be obeyed to a greater extent if a permanent president is appointed.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know that there is any complaint that the judge's decisions have been disregarded. I know, of course, that in some instances the court's decisions have not been accepted. But that has not been confined to one side. Indeed there have been a greater number of breaches by the employers than by the unions; statistics and the cases before the court prove that. However, I will not deny that the court's decisions have not been accepted in all cases where they should have been accepted. I am not introducing this Bill in an atmosphere as favourable as it was last year.

Hon. G. Taylor: The working of compulsory arbitration is more clearly against you now than it was 12 months ago.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not say that at all. Since this measure was introduced last year there have been but two disputes affecting us in this State. One was debated in this House a little while ago, one that I think should never have occurred.

The other arose from the de-registration of the Seamen's Union.

Mr. Thomson: There was a lot of trouble before that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, but I am reviewing occurrences since the Bill was last before the House. The great bulk of the trades unions have laid it down as an accepted policy that they will stick to compulsory arbitration. The movement generally stands for that. Because there is here and there a rebel who will break out and refuse to keep to the general principle accepted by trades unions as a whole, are we to brand the whole thing as a failure? It is altogether unreasonable, because one or two defy the law, to say that the law should be repealed. If we were to apply that argument to other laws we should require to repeal practically every law that Parliament has passed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We want to make this a good law. Will you help us?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: My ideas are contained in the Bill. I do not think that arbitration is going to be a panacea for all industrial ills, but at the moment we cannot find anything better. My reply to those advocating the abolition of compulsory arbitration is that they should give us something in its place. I have not yet been able to get those employers, or even that inconsiderable section of the trades union movement that is against compulsory arbitration, to offer us any policy that will take its place.

Mr. Thomson: It is compulsory only in respect of the employer.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That argument is entirely fallacious. If it were not, we should be in the throes of industrial upheavals all the time.

Mr. Thomson: But you have evidence of it just now in the seamen's trouble.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no seamen's trouble that I know of respecting Australian conditions. If the hon. member thinks this Parliament or any other Australian Parliament can pass laws dealing with the position in Great Britain, he is sadly mistaken. We have to carry the blame for a good many troubles as it is. We have been accused of crimes that happened in far distant parts of the world, and have had to carry obligations that should be fastened on other people.

Hon. G. Taylor: But this trouble has happened in Melbourne, not in London.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, the wages were reduced in London, and the position has nothing to do with our local laws. There is no Arbitration Act in the Commonwealth governing the conditions of the men engaged on overseas vessels.

Hon. G. Taylor: Then Havelock Wilson knows nothing about the position?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He agreed to the reduction of wages, and that is the whole cause of the trouble. But how can that affect the industrial arbitration law in Western Australia? Do any Australian industrial laws apply to men on overseas vessels?

Hon. G. Taylor: It goes to prove that Australian workers will not recognise agreements made in other countries.

The Premier: It is not the Australian seamen who are on strike, but the British seamen.

Mr. Mann: The officials of Australian unions are actively engaged in the trouble.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is a point about which I am not going to express an opinion, for I have been too long associated with industrial troubles to form opinions on reports appearing in the daily Press.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You want first to see them in the "Worker."

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Well, if I saw them there I would know the source of the information, but I do not know the source of the information published in the daily Press.

Hon. G. Taylor: Would you deny the accuracy of the cable published in this morning's newspaper?

The Premier: What has the action of half a dozen Australian officials to do with the whole principle? If you want to know my opinion of Walsh, I will let you have it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If it be a question whether Walsh is obeying the arbitration laws of this country, I think the House knows my views on that gentleman, for you all had an illustration of my opinion when he attempted to defy our Government. However, to say that his attitude in the present trouble has any connection with laws made in Australia, is a flight of imagination I am not capable of achieving. We have in our own ranks men who are against industrial arbitration, but the movement itself is committed to it, and we as a party desire to make our industrial laws as perfect as they can be. We want to

facilitate the machinery of the court and permit of business being done as expeditiously as possible.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A very good sentiment, that last one.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** I hope all my sentiments are good; they are all intended to be good. The Bill, as I say, contains the same provisions as were agreed to last year. The whole structure of the measure is exactly the same: the court at the top, with boards and committees operating under the jurisdiction of the court, and with appeals from those committees and boards to the court only with the court's permission, and with a permanent president of the court supervising, and administering the awards made in respect of different industries. There is in the Bill an important provision that we have failed to incorporate in previous Acts, but which operates successfully in Queensland. It would have been well had we had that provision during the last trouble in our own State, for it would have meant a good deal to us. I refer to the provision prescribing that the court may act on its own motion. At present the court has no such power. The Queensland Act contains that provision, and when serious trouble is threatened the court there steps in and acts on its own motion. I hope the House will agree to the Bill. We did pretty well in getting it through last session, for there were marked differences of opinion as between this side and members opposite. After the experience I have had of compulsory arbitration, hon. members opposite are not likely to produce any arguments that will alter my considered judgment; nor do I pride myself that any contention of mine is likely to alter the views of the majority of members opposite. There may be one or two of those members open to reason, but I cannot help feeling that a man who has had years of experience of compulsory arbitration is not likely to have his opinion altered by an argument, or by a few minutes or even an hour or two of subsequent consideration. If such a man's opinion could be so easily altered, that opinion would not be worth having.

Mr. Mann: But you may be moved to amend some detail in the Bill.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** Of course, but on the broad principle the House has already declared, and in the 12 months that have passed, I have not been able to find much fault, if any, with the case we

presented here last session. At all times we are prepared to consider any promising improvement to the machinery side of the Bill, but I have had so long and varied an experience of arbitration and have been up against so many difficult problems that my convictions have been pretty well formed. I have canvassed the whole situation, extending over many years past, and have presented my considered ideas to the House in the form of the Bill; and so, as I say, it will need pretty strong argument to convince me that my experience has led me astray. I submit the Bill without any lengthy explanation, because such explanation is quite unnecessary, and I think the House does not desire it. Last year we argued the Bill in Committee and went exhaustively into it, and so it cannot be necessary that I should again submit a lengthy explanation.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Is the Bill exactly the same as last year's Bill?

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** Except that one or two of the machinery clauses have been slightly amended, and the 44-hours' principle is to be embodied in another Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

## **BILL—GROUP SETTLERS' ADVANCES.**

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle [5.15] in moving the second reading said: I hope members, when dealing with this Bill, will not enter upon a discussion of the report of the Royal Commission on Group Settlement, as they will have opportunities to do that not only on the Estimates, but on further legislation regarding group settlement, which it will be necessary to introduce this session.

Hon. G. Taylor: The report has not influenced this Bill in any way?

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** I will explain it. This Bill is required urgently, and the first opportunity after the conclusion of the Address-in-reply has been taken to introduce it in order that we may get it passed at the earliest possible date.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why did not you give us copies of the Bill before?

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** The Bill has been before members for some time.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: No, it has only just been distributed.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Under the system of group settlement it is necessary for the State to provide the full requirements of settlers in order that they may make a start as dairy farmers. That being so, the State should be protected in respect to the funds used for that purpose.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will have to take a bill of sale.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Unfortunately we have been barred from doing that. There are 2,248 settlers on groups, which number 129. Twenty-four groups are engaged on piecework and the men have been supplied with tools, plant, horses and stock up to 10 cows and bulls as required, the value of which is from £250 to £300. In addition a large number of group settlers have received one cow to assist them to keep down household expenses. From the starting of the groups to the 30th June last we have supplied 2,400 cows, 62 bulls and 270 horses. Supplies of this description were issued to settlers up to about two weeks ago, when I found it necessary to give orders to cease making available to them any further stock or equipment. Thus, the matter is urgent. I had to cry a halt because, while we were advised that the system we were adopting was the correct one, we found some difficulty in carrying it into effect. The system adopted was to supply stock and equipment under a bill of sale, the settlers having previously given an undertaking in the following form to sign the bill of sale:—

I hereby agree to sign the necessary documents submitted by the Hon. the Minister for Lands as security for—

It is difficult to fix the exact cost of stock. We had imported a large number of cows and placed them on the land before the bills of sale were drawn up. A few settlers, after having received stock, refused to sign the bills of sale. I am of opinion that that difficulty could have been overcome easily when the matter was thoroughly explained to them. Two weeks ago, however, we discovered that traders in districts where group settlements are established have been supplying settlers with goods, as to which the Government had had no say whatever. Settlers have thus become indebted to traders and the latter immediately took steps to lodge a caveat against the bills of sale the Government sought to register. That happened at Busselton. Immediately that occurred, I considered it neces-

sary to stop the issue of further stock or equipment until legislation had been passed by Parliament. It would be impossible to carry on the groups if those conditions operated. Traders would be able to supply goods and might, indeed, induce settlers to take goods of which they were in no real need, without incurring any risk, because there would be the Government stock as security for the debts. As the Government's bills of sale could not be registered, a halt had to be called to the issuing of any further stock or equipment until the State was protected. I cannot for the life of me understand any firm thinking that it could secure itself in that way in respect of debts incurred by settlers. We are advised that the Bills of Sale Act does not apply to the Crown, but there might be a possibility of heavy expense being incurred to test the point in court, as such an issue would have to go to the higher courts. Members will agree that the State should be protected without the need for going to the courts on the question of the application to the Government of the Bills of Sale Act. This Bill is drafted on almost similar lines to the Industries Assistance Act, which has been the law of the land for the last 10 years.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Does it cover group settlers' own purchases of cattle?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; only the chattels, stock and the progeny of stock supplied by the Government. It also covers crops and pastures and the money paid by the Government to a group settler for his own or any other labour on his holding. It also applies to the group settler in respect of any moneys received while working on another settler's block. The group members, of course, work on various blocks, and thus assist one another as a community. A man might be for a month on one particular block and for another month on another block. Thus it is necessary that the money advanced to him for work done on any part of the group area should be brought within the scope of the Bill. It is intended to do away with the bills of sale.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is right.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A register will be kept in the Lands Department, and it will be open to the public for inspection at any time without charge. Those provisions are exactly the same as under the Industries Assistance Act. The power of sale is given similarly. Immediately a person is



in a position to transfer from the group settlement to the Agricultural Bank, a mortgage will be drawn up. To-day a group member has no legal title to the holding on which he is placed; he is working under a permit. Immediately the requisite work on a group area is completed, a title will be granted by the Lands Department and transferred to the Agricultural Bank, and the settler will then become a mortgagor to the Agricultural Bank. Until that stage is reached, this measure will apply to the stock and equipment and moneys supplied to, or expended, in behalf of the settler.

Mr. Thomson: Apparently there is no limit.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There is no necessity for a limit and, besides, the exact amount could not be stated. The amount, of course, depends entirely upon the stock and equipment supplied to the settler. The Bill is urgently needed to enable us to proceed with the group settlement work. I am not going to supply any settler with another cow so long as any outside trader has an opportunity to lodge a caveat to prevent the registration of a Government bill of sale. I was hopeful that this Bill would not be necessary, because I realised that the advances made by the Government were only temporary pending the transfer to the Agricultural Bank. We considered the question of supplying the stock and equipment on the hire purchase system, but we have been informed that that would be too costly.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: To save expense we adopted the other system until the private trader came in and took the action he did. I regret very much that this has occurred, and that it is necessary to introduce the Bill. I am assured that nothing in the Bill applies to the Industries Assistance Board, with the purpose of which we are fully acquainted, namely, to get in the funds spent by the State in the preparation of the farms, the provision of stock, and the supplying of equipment necessary to enable the settlers to live on the land. However, we have many difficulties to contend with as regards the group settlement scheme, and to these, if I am in order, I will draw attention. I find that there are in this State people who never miss an opportunity of trying to decry the group settlements as they affect the State as a whole. I thought it was desirable that the Premier should have an opportunity

to peruse the report of the Group Settlement Royal Commission before it was made public. However, previously to my chief having an opportunity of reading the report, somebody who thought he was doing a good turn to the State showed it to the Press; and a certain statement was published on the 16th July. I do not mind that very much so far as Western Australia is concerned, but I find that on the very same day the following statements were cabled to London and appeared in the London "Times":—

The Royal Commission on Immigration has presented a report condemning group settlement and recommends its abandonment, but the Government is not likely to accept the recommendation. The report declares that much of the country is unsuitable for settlers, who are only being asked to try land at the expense of others. The failure of a number of settlers has directed attention to the fact, upon which stress is laid, that nearly half of the original settlers have left their holdings. The Commissioners harshly criticise the agreement of the Imperial and Commonwealth Governments, and suggest that undue haste was shown in making an agreement with Great Britain.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I cannot allow a discussion on the Group Settlement Royal Commission's report to take place on the second reading of this Bill. The hon. member must confine himself to the Bill; otherwise he will be out of order.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I realised that, and I prefaced my remarks on this subject with an apology. I think it well, however, to let the House know that some people in Perth will decry Western Australia at every opportunity.

Mr. Teesdale: Rotten sweeps!

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: On the very day the report I refer to appeared in the "West Australian," that report was sent from Perth to the London "Times."

Mr. Teesdale: I saw it in the Eastern States.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I do not worry so much about the other States.

Mr. Teesdale: It does not do any good, anyhow.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am certain that the action to be taken in regard to the supply of stock and equipment will redound to the credit of the State in the very near future. Before the end of the year we shall have 3,000 head of stock on the group settlements, and between 30,000 and 40,000 acres of pasturage which three years ago was bush that would not keep

anything. In the circumstances we cannot but realise that the time is not far distant when the millions of money which we send to the Eastern States for dairy products will be retained in Western Australia, thanks to the development of the great South-West. I hope members will pass the second reading and the Committee stage of the Bill to-day, as it is a matter of urgency. I want to provide the needs of the settlers who are crying out for stock and equipment.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You will have to adjourn the discussion until after tea.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS:** The Bill is similar to the Industries Assistance Act. That being so, I am safe in asking members to pass the Bill and thus enable the Government to proceed with this work as speedily as possible, so defeating the object of those who are trying to defeat us in our efforts to establish group settlements. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I move—

That the debate be adjourned until after Order of the Day No. 5.

Motion (adjournment) put and passed.

## **BILL—TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT.**

### *Message.*

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

### *Second Reading.*

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS** (Hon. A. McCallum—South Fremantle) [5.39] in moving the second reading said: With regard to the present Bill I find myself in much the same position as with regard to the arbitration measure. Members will recollect what happened last session. We passed the Traffic Act Amendment Bill here, and it went to the Legislative Council, but the schedule was the only part of the measure adopted there, the rest of the Bill not being dealt with at all. The present Bill, therefore, is practically on all-fours with that which the House passed last session. There are one or two alterations, but they are not of a vital character. The Commissioner of Police is made the licensing authority throughout the State, with power to delegate his authority to councils and road boards

wherever he deems it advisable. The Bill is framed in anticipation of the passage of the Main Roads Bill. In fact, the two are sister measures, and hon. members reading through the present Bill will notice that the Main Roads Bill is frequently mentioned. One Bill is practically contingent on the other. The present Bill is intended to find the wherewithal for carrying on the main roads policy. If the other Bill does not pass, this measure will need some reconstruction. It is provided, as in last year's Bill, that until such time as the Main Roads Act is proclaimed in respect of certain areas, those areas shall have the licensing fees which are collected in their districts refunded to them. It is not anticipated that the Main Roads Board will be able to cover the interior of the State for many years, or reach the remoter parts of the South-West for some considerable time. The Main Roads Board will proclaim main roads outside the area as they find means and facilities to extend their activities. Once road board districts come within the area, however, the Main Roads Board will take over the control of roads and be responsible for their upkeep, and the fees collected will go to the Main Roads Board. I have widened the provision for the exemption of farmers' vehicles. Under this Bill the exemption is far more liberal than that which now exists, or than the exemption proposed by last year's measure. Clause 33 deals with the matter—

Provided that if it is proved to the satisfaction of the licensing authority that the license is required for a cart used only on occasions by a farmer for the carriage of produce or farming requisites to and from his own farm; or for a cart mainly used for the carriage of ore and mining requisites within a mining area; or for a cart used only in connection with the sandalwood industry; or for a cart mainly used for the carriage of supplies to and produce for cattle and sheep stations—the fee shall be one-fourth of such prescribed fee, with a minimum fee of 15s.

That proviso gives a concession to the mining districts and extends it to the cattle and sheep stations on the Murchison and in the North-West, and embraces also the sandalwood industry, giving those who by the nature of their calling do not frequently use the roads what is considered a fair rebate.

Mr. Latham: The provision should apply to motor lorries.

**THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:** I entirely disagree, and I have given the matter careful consideration.

Mr. Latham: Otherwise injustice will be done.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: Would not the Minister consider motor lorries replacing farmers' wagons?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. I do not propose to allow a rebate to motor vehicles. The case is different where, as on stations in the North-West, the vehicle is used solely on the property, as motor cycles and motor cars are now used for boundary riding and for the inspection of wells. Such motor vehicles will be treated on the same basis as the cart or wagon used on the farm and not coming off the farm. In such cases no license fee at all will be charged.

Mr. Sampson: It would not be possible to charge the fee in such a case.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is charged to-day.

Mr. Sampson: Those vehicles do not come on the roads.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That does not enter into the question. On the strict reading of the law those cases are included.

Mr. Sampson: Why is there preference to horse-drawn vehicles?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The motor vehicle gives the owner many more advantages, and does more damage to the road, than a horse-drawn vehicle. In that respect I venture to say my own district is proportionately more affected than any other district in Western Australia. I have not had one request from my electors to give them the concession for motor vehicles, and that is where the advantage accrues to them. Before the advent of motors the producers at Jandakot, in order to reach the Perth market, would have to make a start at about midnight and frequently before that, and be on the road practically all night. At the same time they came up only twice a week. Now that they have motor vehicles they give themselves 2½ hours in which to do the trip before the opening of the market, and they come to Perth every morning. Motor traction therefore has given them that added advantage. But it is of no use to them unless they have good roads. We know that motor lorries do considerably more damage to the roads than horse-drawn vehicles, and therefore there is no occasion to give them the concession that is extended to horse-drawn vehicles.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: Would you not except those that are competing with the railways?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The concession was given to horse-drawn vehicles because of the argument advanced that they were using the roads for about three months of the year only.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: Those I have in mind in my district use their motor vehicles for perhaps a few months of the year while they are carting their produce to the railway.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Then those who are keeping their motor vehicles idle for about eight or nine months are on a bad business footing.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: They are forced into that position.

Mr. Latham: It is the same with harvesters; they are used for only a part of the year.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Owners of motor vehicles often take jobs for the whole district, and they reap a great deal of advantage in other respects. Without decent roads therefore motor vehicles are of no use. That was where the horse-drawn vehicles had the advantage. Horses could draw a vehicle through country in which motors would fail. Why, sometimes horses have had to be requisitioned to pull motors out of a bog. I see no reason for making the exemption, and I believe my electorate is affected more than any other in the State. Vehicles to be used solely on the farm will be exempted altogether. The Act which was passed last session is not satisfactory and does not give farmers much advantage. It is also proposed in the Bill to appoint inspectors to control roads, particularly in the South-West where the traffic is heavy. I had the painful experience of seeing a road being chopped to pieces in the South-West after the Government had spent several thousands of pounds on its construction. The Government built the road and allowed the local road board there to take it over. It was soon afterwards cut to pieces by the heavy traffic resulting from sleeper carting. The road was so green that in a few weeks it had become impassable.

Mr. J. H. Smith: There was no remedy at the time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is proposed that the Minister shall have power

to appoint inspectors to see that heavy traffic does not pass over those roads until they have properly set, at any rate, for a period of 12 months. At the end of that time it will be possible to hand them over to the roads boards and the obligation will be on them to look after the roads. While we are in charge, and while the roads are still new, we intend to prevent heavy traffic passing over them. We know the effect of the rains on newly made roads and we cannot afford to build roads and have them cut up in the manner that we have seen. When I was in the South-West recently I saw heavy drays carting sleepers to the road where motor trucks were being loaded. Those motor trucks then travelled with their great weights at a speed of about 25 miles an hour and the effect on the roads can be imagined. It is necessary to guard against that kind of thing. It will be admitted by the House and the public generally that it is time the law relating to traffic, particularly in the city, was tightened up. Traffic in the city is becoming very congested, especially since the development that has taken place during the past year or two. The law to-day does not give us sufficient authority to control the traffic. Besides, there is no power to take action against reckless driving on the part of intoxicated people in charge of other than motor-drawn vehicles. A man who may be intoxicated whilst in charge of a horse can be as much a danger as the driver of a motor vehicle in a similar condition. It is proposed that power shall be given to take action against intoxicated drivers of every kind of vehicle. Another matter that is a danger exists to a considerable extent on the Perth-Fremantle road, especially now that the abattoirs at Midland Junction are starting operations once more. This danger is emphasised particularly on the narrow road bridge at Guildford. Drivers of motor wagons allow their loads to overlap to a considerable extent. I myself experienced the danger of this a few weeks ago on the way to Fremantle when I passed a motor lorry with a load that was hanging over its side to the extent of 18 inches or two feet. The spread of that vehicle can thus be imagined. The lights in the front covered only the usual width and driving against them it was not possible to notice the extent of the spread of the load. In that way driving at night is rendered exceedingly dangerous. We propose to ask Parliament to give us power to remedy that

state of affairs. I had another experience a few mornings ago while driving behind a motor lorry on which there were a number of empty barrels. Those barrels were rolling and slipping all over the place and threatened to topple off at any time. There seems to be a total disregard on the part of some drivers for the public safety, and this is very apparent on the road between the port and the city. We propose to take power to regulate this matter and also to ask for authority to send an officer to motor ranks to examine a vehicle and find out whether the brakes and the machinery are in proper order. At the present time we have no power to compel owners of vehicles to effect repairs, that is, vehicles that are plying for hire. It is our intention also to ask for authority to regulate the style and the construction of motor buses. There are buses in the city at the present time that look like coffins. These buses have not even an emergency escape door. Quite a number have only one door, and in the event of one catching fire, it would be quite impossible for the passengers to escape through that door which is near the engine. The windows also are so tiny that they would be out of the question as a means of escape. Consequently there would be a big sacrifice of life. It is therefore essential that power be given to regulate the construction and the style of these vehicles while plying for hire.

Mr. Sampson: Are you varying the boundaries of the metropolitan area?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. We also propose to compel owners of motor buses to keep to a time table. It has been found also that once a route has been granted and a license obtained, that license has been hawked about and sold for as much as £160, almost within a few hours of its having been granted. Then there is an absence of power to compel these people to maintain a regular time table. It happens sometimes that if there is better business offering elsewhere, for instance, at a football match or at a race meeting, the owners of the buses abandon their time table and cater for the more profitable trade, and their ordinary clients are left. In that respect the public should be protected, and if a vehicle is licensed to travel over a certain route it should be retained for that route. The public could thus depend upon the time table. I am also asking for power to compel owners of vehicles to insure against accident. This

matter appeared to me to be so important last year, that when the Bill failed to go through in its entirety I sent a circular to owners advising them for their own protection to insure. I do not know how many took out policies, but I do know that many owners of vehicles would not be able to pay any claims that might be made as the result of an accident. A number of vehicles carry 30 passengers. If they are owned by men of straw, and an accident occurs, the passengers would not be able to get any redress. In justice to the travelling public we should insist that policies should be taken out against accident. It will be remembered last year that the schedule was gone through by a select committee, the report of which was adopted by this House. It has been found since the operation of the schedule—to my satisfaction at all events—that the fees charged for horse-driven vehicles are too heavy. I propose to reduce these for all vehicles over two tons in weight (that is the total load of the vehicle) by 50 per cent.

Mr. Sampson: They were high.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I think so in the case of the heavier vehicle, but in connection with the lighter vehicle we are very little over anything in the other States. There has been an unfair system in operation, and there has been a line between the metropolitan area and the road boards outside. Take the case of the hills just beyond Midland Junction. A man who owned a dray and worked in the road board area, where the heavy traffic fees operated, had to pay as high as £4 10s. to £5 for the license of his tip dray; the man on the other side of the road, but in the metropolitan area, where the heavy license fees did not operate, had only to pay 10s. The system of taxation on the wheel basis is wrong, inequitable and bad. The system set out in the Bill is that vehicles should be taxed on the load weight, which is the sounder principle. I have provided that all vehicles over a 2-ton load weight, in the case of those that are horse-drawn, shall pay a license fee 50 per cent. less than the present. I have also provided for further extensions of this provision to the North and the mining and pastoral areas. The greatest hardship brought before me was in connection with the big waggons that cart for the stations in the North. Under the schedule the fee for some of the big vehicles pans out at £23.

Mr. Teesdale: That would kill them.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Under the proposed schedule they would come within the concessions of quarter rates and their fee would be approximately £3.

Mr. Heron: How will the Bill affect the carting into mining towns? Does it cover food supplies?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No.

Mr. Heron: Will they still be heavily taxed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This will not be treated as a party measure. I hope to be able to arrive at an understanding upon it. We do not want any injustice done to anyone, but the fees must be such as to permit the local authorities to keep their roads in decent order. Not one penny of the money goes to the Government.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It all goes to the Board?

Mr. Latham: Except the cost of collection.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The cost of collection goes to the police. The local authorities get the benefit of the lot. We have no axe to grind.

Mr. Thomson: Some of the road boards may lose a lot.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But the main roads will be looked after for them. In the matter of motor vehicles I am making no alteration.

Mr. Latham: I think you should in the case of those situated a long way from the railways.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not suggesting any alteration, because I believe the fee we imposed last year was a reasonable one. In the case of lighter motor vehicles, our fees are just about what are operating in the other States.

Mr. Sampson: Do you refer to passenger vehicles?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: To all of them, motor cars, motor-buses, and so on.

Mr. Sampson: I think the fees for motor cars are higher than they are in the Eastern States.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not in the case of lighter vehicles. Upon a Ford truck in London £20 is charged, and here we shall charge £5. In New South Wales the fees are about the same as ours for lighter vehicles. Every Parliament I find will be dealing with the question this session, and members of each Government have told me that they propose to put on a substantial in-

crease. We have substantially increased our heavier fees. Our heavy fees come in only when the vehicles are over 200 power load weight. Under the Act a limit was made, and they were only taxed up to 200 power load weight. For anything over that they paid nothing no matter how heavy the vehicle was. If the vehicle went up to 400 power load weight only the same would be paid as for 200 power load weight. Where it appeared that on paper our fees were heavy, they were only so in the case of the heavy vehicles. In my judgment they should pay more heavily, otherwise the local authorities have no hope of constructing roads that will carry them. It will be wise for us to let it be known that these vehicles cannot be permitted to run over the ordinary roads. I am told that there is a certain firm in the city that has under order two 10-ton lorries. If these travel between Perth and Fremantle, no bridge will carry them, and no road outside St. George's-terrace or Hay-street can carry them, and yet they will be running about smashing the roads and breaking all the bridges, and not one local authority will have a chance of keeping their roads in perfect order. It is suggested in the Bill that we should confine the traffic over a given weight to certain roads, so that the local authority may be in a position to say they will make one thoroughfare strong enough for that kind of vehicle, and shall have power to keep such vehicles to that particular road. Some of the lorries that are carting from the warehouses to the stores follow one track only. If they break it they will then go to a side track, such as is the case in North Perth and Leederville, and break up that track. These small roads were not intended to carry such traffic. The fees we are asking for the heavy vehicles are not too high. I do not propose to alter them. A deputation placed their case before me, and one man stated he had been called upon to pay as much as £76 for his license. I asked for particulars from the authorities, and found that the highest fee was just over £50. In this case the amount had been entirely overstated, and published in the Press. I hope the House will agree that heavy vehicles, such as have developed in recent years, and for which no provision is made on our statute-book, shall pay increased license fees so that the local authorities may construct highways strong enough to carry such vehicles.

Mr. Thomson: Will the local authorities have the right to say whether or not they should come under the Bill, or will they be compelled to come under it and forfeit their fees?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member is now talking about the Main Roads Bill.

Mr. Thomson: Automatically the fees you are collecting under this Bill will go to the Main Roads Board.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The fees will only go to that board as the board proclaims new areas. The board has sole power to proclaim these areas, and as they stretch out and take in added country so will the fees from the areas concerned come to the board. By that time the board will be under an obligation to keep up the main roads and repair the bridges; but that is the subject of another Bill. The two Bills are so interwoven that if one does not pass, the other may have to be reconstructed.

Mr. Heron: What about the mining areas?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If there are areas affected, I hope members will instance them. Plenty of time will be given to them in which to consider this Bill. I have made liberal concessions already, and have been told that in the case of mining districts the concessions suggested are more than was anticipated.

Mr. Panton: What is the definition of a mining area?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is a mining district. That is quite plain. I am told that these proposals were in excess of what was expected.

Mr. Panton: A mining area would not be a mining lease, I suppose?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No. Any man who is carting for a prospector will get concessions.

Mr. Thomson: Even if he is a contractor?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. Many prospectors have not their own turn-outs, and a contractor does the work for them.

Mr. Thomson: What about the man who enters into a contract to cart wheat to a siding?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He has a permanent job. I know that a farmer uses the roads chiefly for three or four months in the year. I have been told, however, that during that time, he carts a greater tonnage over the roads and perhaps does more dam-

age to them than many who are carting regularly. I think the farming community should be well satisfied with the substantial concessions they are getting under the Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Mr. Davy, debate adjourned,

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

### RESOLUTION—MINING INDUSTRY, GOLD BONUS.

A message having been received from the Council requesting the concurrence of the Assembly in the following resolution, the message was now considered—

That as compensation for the disabilities suffered by gold mining through Federal action, this Chamber is of opinion that the Commonwealth should assist the industry by the payment of a gold bonus.

**MR. LAMBERT** (Coolgardie) [7.30]: I move—

That this House concurs in the resolution forwarded by the Legislative Council.

I congratulate Mr. Kirwan on having moved this motion in the Upper House and also the Council upon having agreed to it and transmitted it to us for our concurrence. Most hon. members will agree that it is fitting that all sections of the House should take the deepest interest in our gold mining industry, particularly in view of its present-day position. It is hardly necessary for me to reiterate at length the arguments that have been advanced in support of similar resolutions and adopted by different representative bodies throughout the States, favouring the granting by the Commonwealth Government of assistance and relief to the gold mining industry from the imposts due to the national policy of Australia. When we consider that Western Australia possesses the greatest length and probably the greatest breadth of any known auriferous area in the world to-day, extending as it does from Ravensthorpe in the south to Darwin in the north, and extending nearly half way across Australia, and when in addition we take into consideration the state of the industry to-day, it must be patent that there is some reason for the existing position. I hope, if there be any opponents of this resolution, they will point out the basis of their an-

tagonism. Notwithstanding the enormous amount of capital invested in the industry to-day, and in its organisation, no matter how imperfect that organisation may be from the viewpoint of some people, it is backward, despite the great metallurgical skill displayed in opening up and developing the mining industry throughout the Commonwealth. I believe it can be shown that the tendency is not so much attributable in the first instance to under-valuing or under-estimating to any degree the great value of the industry to Australia. Nor should we depreciate the great efforts that have been put forward to develop the industry. Present-day conditions are due, to a great extent, to the national policy of protection in operation. When we consider that in a comparatively few years we have produced in Western Australia something like £156,000,000 worth of gold, and that in comparatively isolated instances only have our mines attained anything like deep levels, and remember the great expense incurred in these workings, hon. members must agree that there is something radically wrong. Over £1,000,000,000 worth of gold has been produced in Australia, yet to-day the returns have dropped to an almost insignificant figure. This can be directly attributed to Australia's protective policy. It is the accepted policy of the Commonwealth that we shall protect any and every industry, and while in a qualified way I subscribe to that national aspiration, I realise at the same time that it presses harshly on the mining industry. One need only look at the inflated cost of mining material, at the increased cost of living in pursuance of that policy, the necessarily increased wages paid to-day because of that policy, to realise the position. When we consider that all other industries are enjoying protection, or assistance by way of bonuses or bounties, it will be recognised that the gold mining industry, which must sell its product on the basis of standard values, is hit to such an extent that it cannot continue much longer. It is estimated that most of the biggest mines in Western Australia which carry large reserves of millable ore, will be extinct in five years' time. It will be seen, therefore, that this industry must either receive assistance or go out of existence altogether. We need only review the comparative costs of mining to realise the position. In 1916 the cost per

ton of ore milled in Western Australia was 19s.; at the end of 1924 it had increased to 38s. per ton. This is due almost entirely to the increased cost of material, increased wages, and, of course, the increased cost of living in consequence. The fact remains that there has been no relief whatever accorded the mining industry. The position is reflected in the fact that although in 1905 or 1906 we produced about 2,000,000 ounces of gold per annum, worth close upon £8,000,000, we have scattered all over our isolated and abandoned goldfields about 4,000 gold mining leases. Thus it is that we must realise something has to be done if the industry is to survive. In Coolgardie alone over a million ounces were produced in the course of a few years within a mile of the local post office. No mine was worked there, nor was ore milled on anything like an extended scale. Mining companies that looked for a rich reward received it from mines in the district in a very short time, yet not one of those mines is working to-day. No longer are they attractive to capital, and therefore no longer are they worked. A few years ago the Eastern Goldfields, which comprise our biggest working auriferous areas, maintained a population of nearly 50,000 souls, yet to-day that population has dwindled to under 30,000. That shows that in that isolated area, practically a mile square, where mining operations are carried on, there has been a decrease in population of nearly 50 per cent. While all other Australian industries are enjoying national protection, that protection should be accorded equally to the mining industry.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That protection is not so much for primary industries apart from the sugar industry.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Leader of the Opposition is wrong in his assumption that the Commonwealth Government are assisting the sugar industry only; there are many other industries being assisted to which I shall make reference later on. The national policy of Australia is that we shall protect our industries. That policy has been adopted and it is not for me to discuss whether it has been rightly or wrongfully adopted. As a corollary to that policy of protection, there has been the granting of bonuses to industries. So in asking the Commonwealth Government to give effect to this motion we shall not be ask-

ing them to make any departure whatever from their settled policy of assisting industries in other portions of Australia. Apart from all that the State has contributed to the Commonwealth and the little it has received by way of benefits, and notwithstanding the disadvantages under which the State is labouring as the result of Federation, it is only in pursuance of the policy of giving bonuses and bounties to industries that we ask this of the Commonwealth Government. In Western Australia the position is becoming very serious. We have invested in our railways nearly £20,000,000, and almost half of that has been spent on railways in mining areas. In addition, we have provided water supplies for those areas and built up for them all the institutions inseparable from a civilised community, and this at a cost of nearly £5,000,000. Yet to-day the bigger portion of our auriferous areas are in a semi-abandoned state. So hon. members who do not favour this system of protection to the mining industry must ask themselves what other means they can suggest of giving relief to that industry. The Leader of the Opposition, a few minutes ago, said the Commonwealth Government are not giving bounties to any but the sugar industry. The hon. member is wrong. They are also giving bounties to the iron and steel industry, to the meat export industry, to the preserved fish industry and to the production of shale oil.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Mighty little. Has any shale oil yet been produced?

Mr. LAMBERT: Undoubtedly. Two or three big industries have been built up on it in Tasmania. Shale oil is actually being produced, and the crude oil is being used for the manufacture of cement. However, I am only asking the Leader of the Opposition to accept the view that the Federal Government have laid it down as part of their policy that our industries should be protected; and that where protection is required other than through the Customs, bounties or bonuses shall be given to assist in the establishment of industries. Back in the 16th century the House of Commons passed an Act standardising gold at its present value. That standard has never been reviewed. It affects the basis of all our economic dealings throughout the world. Our complex society has grown up around it, and our social system is so intertwined with our economic system that it seems almost impossible to secure a revision of that gold standard. So, while gold is diminishing in yield, its importance to us and



to other parts of the world is still acknowledged. Let us see how it affects us in relation to the Commonwealth. Let us take the figures as affecting our economic position in the scheme of things, and our business relations not only with the Commonwealth but with the whole of the Empire. In the "Statistical Gazette" we find that the Commonwealth gold reserve is set down at £25,566,000 odd, while the note issue is stated at £56,890,000. So the actual gold represents only 44 per cent. of the note issue. Our national credit cannot be established by any other means than the gold reserve. That gold reserve has built up a national credit which is difficult to express, whether in language or in figures. In a time of national crisis, England found her gold reserve all-essential for the passing of credits and the buying of munitions of war. After the gold reserve, her great international securities were next in importance. But the first foundation upon which the security of the British Empire stood was the great gold reserve, which enabled England to lavish money on munitions. So our statesmen should recognise that we as a nation may be at war tomorrow, when a great gold reserve would be found to be essential. It is only when a nation's gold reserve is depleted that the national credit is shaken. So I say, apart from any parochial view that may be expressed, it is all-important when asking the Commonwealth Government to grant a bonus to assist the gold mining industry that we should impress upon that Government the necessity for taking a broad conception of their obligations to that industry in order that the great gold reserve of Australia should be still further built up, and as a consequence the banking institutions of the Commonwealth placed in a position to function as they should do. The incidence of protection has almost spelt ruination to the ambitions of Western Australia that her secondary industries should be developed. Yet to-day we are faced with the position that the whole of our primary products has to be exported. Therefore, anything the State Parliament can do to furnish additional markets and so give greater security to the primary industries should be done. It is regrettable that while we remain a State of the Commonwealth there will not be any possibility of building up those secondary industries that are all-essential to a country. As a State we are in a most deplorable position. Still, I think this is one way in which the Commonwealth

can show an interest in the future of Western Australia, namely, by assisting our endeavours to develop a young country in most adverse conditions imposed by the establishment of the policy of Australia to give protection to most of the industries of the Eastern States, and as a corollary to give bonuses and bounties to assist in building up other industries on the eastern side of Australia. I have here an opinion by a banking authority in America as to the value of gold mining. Let me read it as follows:—

Agos ago, Almighty God built stronger vaults in His granite banks than we have in ours. He filled His vaults with gold, silver and copper. He gave the prospector knowledge and insight, and guided him on his way to the door of the vaults He had built. The Government handed him a title patent to all therein. It is not a crime, but a virtue, to enter. With drill, blast, pick and spade the prospector has broken the combination locks and entered. But for him our notes of issue would be as the stump-tailed currency of 1857. But for him this Government of ours would be bankrupt. Mines will be producing millions of gold, silver and copper in that future day when national banks are unknown.

It matters little whether banks come and go, this one medium of exchange, which is accepted the world over, will remain when banks are unknown.

A mine contains a crop already raised, harvested, and on deposit for you to cheque against at your pleasure. The wealth gathered from the mines immortalised King Solomon. Mining has made the United States the richest country in the world.

Mr. Teesdale: And the rottenest, too.

Mr. LAMBERT: This authority continues—

Mining is an industry as necessary to the welfare of the community as is the raising of crops.

That is a point which should be driven home to the Commonwealth Government. While they can give bounties to encourage many industries, and deservedly so, overshadowing them all possibly is the gold mining industry.

Mr. Sampson: The Federal Government, then, can do some good things.

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, and they have an overflowing Treasury out of which to do it. If the State Treasury were similarly overflowing, there would be no need for this motion. I know of no people in the community more sympathetic to the mining industry than are the Premier and his Ministers, and only because they are not in a position to offer monetary assistance have we to look to another Government for help.

Mr. Sampson: You could not find anyone who is unsympathetic.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope that is so. There are people who call themselves freetraders and who object to bonuses and bounties to industries. It is not for me to find fault with the varying principles that prompt members. If the Federal Government are not prepared to give a bonus of £1 per ounce on gold, the responsibility devolves upon them of finding a formula that will be acceptable to the people of Australia in order that gold mining may be placed on a better footing.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you say the Federal Government should grant £1 per ounce?

Mr. LAMBERT: That is a matter for the Federal Government to decide. The authority I was quoting continues—

Show me a country without mines, and I will show you a people sunk in degradation and poverty; and poverty makes cowards of nations as well as of individuals.

I cannot claim that the mining industry made heroes of all of them; at any rate their heroism was rather long postponed.

Mining is the second industry in the United States. Mining has transformed more poor men into millionaires and raised them to positions of honour and trust than has any other business. Mining has scored less than 35 per cent. of failures against 95 per cent. of failures shown in the general merchandising business of the United States. Without the products of the mines, you would have neither a frying pan, a spoon, a hatpin nor a monetary circulating medium. Eliminate the miner and you set civilisation back to the dark ages. Outside of the element of great personal profit which will accrue to us as bankers who are able to supply the money to open great mines, it behoves us to foster an industry upon which the prosperity of not alone our depositors but the entire nation depends.

We cannot revert to the old system of barter that half a century ago prevailed among the few people in this country. In days gone by when the banking institutions in the Eastern States were tottering, when young venturesome spirits flocked to this State, and in face of almost insuperable hardships pioneered its auriferous wealth, there was prosperity in the land. If we could remove the hardships that to-day are grinding down the mining industry, I believe there would be a reversion to the prosperity of 25 years ago. I appeal to members to give the question serious consideration. It is all important to present a unanimous front. We should show the Federal Govern-

ment that, apart from political divisions, we are one in the belief that, as they give assistance to other industries in the Eastern States, they should do something for the great industry that has done so much for Western Australia and for Australia.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES** (Hon. M. F. Troy—Mt. Magnet) [8.10]: I congratulate the member for Coolgardie upon the excellence of his speech, which I am sure has enlightened members regarding the value of the industry to Australia and the important part it has played in every civilisation of which we have read. In Western Australia we must admit a continuous decline in the mining industry. No member will deny that the decline is largely due to the increased cost of commodities, which has resulted since the war and has imposed upon the industry a burden that it is unable to carry.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: And on every industry, too.

**THE MINISTER FOR MINES**: Yes, but mining is the one industry which is not able to pass on its handicap. The standard value of gold has been unaffected; so far as we know it cannot be affected, and as the standard value is that which has obtained so long as we can remember, it is apparent that the high cost of production has not been passed on. In every other industry, however, consumers have been compelled to buy at enhanced prices, and thus the higher cost of production has been passed on. Western Australia has produced mineral wealth to the value of £152,000,000 and it is within the knowledge of members what a great part gold mining has played in the development of the State. It attracted here from the Eastern States and from many portions of the world the cream of their people, the most venturesome, the most enterprising and the most progressive, and those people have had a very large influence in the building up of other industries in the State. The gold-fields have been a recruiting ground for the energetic spirits who have helped to build up the pastoral, agricultural, and timber industries and the commercial enterprises of the State. So it can be claimed that the production of gold in Western Australia has led to the State entering upon the progressive phase of the present time. Without the gold production, the present stage of development would not have been reached for probably the next hundred years. The motion asks that the Commonwealth Gov-

ernment shall pay a bonus on gold production. The suggested bonus is at the rate of £1 per ounce. We are entitled to ask this of the Commonwealth, because the heaviest burden the industry is bearing is due, not to any State enactment, not to anything left undone by the State, but entirely to the economic conditions arising out of Commonwealth legislation, namely the tariff. The tariff has so increased the cost of mining commodities and the cost of living to the people engaged in the mining industry, that the cost of producing gold has risen considerably.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Federal Government ought to be asked to reduce the tariff.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: When the proposal for a gold bonus was mentioned to Mr. Gregory, he said the proper course to adopt was to fight the tariff.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: That is what you said too.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: No.

Hon. G. Taylor: Yes, unless you were wrongly reported.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: What I said was, "Give us our own Customs duties." I did not say, "Fight the tariff." I am a protectionist for Western Australia, but I say that the protectionist tariff has not been good for Western Australia because we have been exploited by the Eastern States. If Western Australia, however, were independent of the Commonwealth, it would naturally have a Customs tariff to build up its own industries. That would be the natural policy of any Government of an independent Western Australia.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A moderate tariff.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If we had our own Customs duties, it would be incumbent upon ourselves to relieve any industry oppressed by such duties. In this resolution we are asking the Federal Government to give relief to an industry which is oppressed by the duties. I hold out no hope in this House or anywhere else of a successful issue with regard to an agitation to reduce the tariff. When Mr. Gregory talks about fighting the tariff, it rather amuses me. What occurs to me is, how long is this sham fight to continue? Mr. Gregory may tickle the ears of the people of this country by talking about a fight against the tariff, but he knows perfectly well that he is not fight-

ing a fight which can give any immediate results, or even results in the near future, because Western Australia is the only State, so far as I can see, which concerns itself about a freetrade policy, and freetrade here is entirely confined to the people engaged in the primary industries.

Hon. G. Taylor: I do not think the State needs absolute freetrade; it only wants some of the duties removed.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Mr. Gregory knows he will not get that. The agitation for reduction of the tariff is merely a sham battle. The people who agitate know they have no hope of success. The worst feature of it is that immediately they go back to the Federal Parliament they join with a Government pledged to a high tariff and keep that Government in power.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Labour Party want a still higher tariff.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Of course they do. But these people have no business to condemn a proposal of this character and to hold out to our people the expectation of getting something by reduction of the tariff.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: But as Western Australians they should protest.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, and that would be the end of it. If we were apart from the Commonwealth, we ourselves would enact a tariff, and in that case we would be expected to give relief to any industry oppressed by the tariff.

Mr. Richardson: You believe in a tariff, then?

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I am a protectionist—not a rabid protectionist, but a reasonable protectionist. I am not a free-trader by any means. I have never yet found a sincere free-trader. I lived in the freetrade colony of New South Wales when Sir George Reid came in as an absolute and pronounced free-trader, and if my memory is right he imposed more protectionist duties than any Premier previously in office. All the alleged free-traders are now protectionists. There are very few free-traders in Western Australia.

Mr. Davy: There are more and more every day.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: If I may digress, I read in the newspapers here of a committee which had been formed in Melbourne for the purpose of fighting the tariff. I was in Melbourne a few months later, and

I searched for the committee, but could not find it. I do not think it could have been found with a microscope.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Melbourne is a big place, you know.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: During my stay in Melbourne there appeared in the "Age" an article stating that the chairman of the Tariff Board complained that the people who made most protest against the tariff never came before the Tariff Board to give evidence. During my stay in Melbourne the "Sunshine" people were asking for increased duties, and the chairman then made complaint that the people who opposed the duties never came forward to give evidence.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: A great deal of evidence was taken for and against.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: But not in Melbourne. The Federal Disabilities Commission in my opinion put up a very good case why a gold bonus should be given. I may be pardoned if I repeat some of those arguments to-night. It was pointed out that in Western Australia successive Governments had expended a very large amount of money to assist in gold production and to build up the gold mining industry, and that this expenditure amounted in round figures to about £8,000,000, included in which was the construction of 1,150 miles of railway, 2,000 miles of roads, 350 miles of piping to deliver 5,000,000 gallons of water per day to the mines, innumerable wells throughout the goldfields, numerous reservoirs, and, in addition, 1,700 miles of telegraphs and 3,000 miles of telephone line. Furthermore, there were provided public buildings, State batteries, and other conveniences by the State to maintain the gold mining industry in this country. The value of the machinery erected on the mines here amounted to £1,950,000. These items show to some extent the magnitude of the Commonwealth and State interests which are involved in the goldfields of Western Australia to-day. That the industry is deserving of assistance is shown by the fact that in 1923 the Commonwealth taxation per head of the goldfields population amounted to £8.6. That taxation was contributed by our goldfields residents to the Commonwealth by direct and more particularly by indirect taxation. The 32,000 residents on our goldfields contributed to the Commonwealth revenue a sum of £275,000, and if the Commonwealth had assisted the gold mining industry by granting a bonus

at the rate of 20s. per ounce, the total expenditure, based on the figures for the year 1923, would have amounted to £495,000. If we deduct from this supposed bonus of £495,000 the taxation paid by the goldfields people, £275,000, it means that the Commonwealth would be paid as a bonus to the industry an amount of £220,000. It has already been pointed out that the Commonwealth Government pay bonuses to other industries, and that if the policy of paying a bonus to any industry is good, it cannot be logically said that it is wrong to pay one to the gold mining industry. Much has been said about disturbing economic conditions. None of us here know too much about those conditions, and, therefore, it is not competent on our part to discuss them. But we do know that the policy of the Commonwealth Government is to give bonuses and bounties to industries when they have been in a state of stagnation, or languishing; and it is only reasonable to expect that the same treatment should be given to the gold mining industry of Western Australia. The sugar industry receives a bonus of £3,000,000 annually. A bonus is paid on the export of beef. A bonus is paid to the steel and iron industry. As mentioned by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert), the shale oil industry receives a bonus. Again, a bonus is paid to the dried fruits and canned fruits industry. The total of these bonuses is some millions per annum. If it is reasonable to pay bonuses to all those industries, it is reasonable to pay one to gold mining. And it must be borne in mind that the tariff represents a bonus to some of the manufacturing industries. Those manufacturing industries are bonussed by the amount of money which the people of Australia have to pay in duties on goods arriving from other countries, and by the enhanced prices the people have to pay for the manufactured products of Australia. The average value of the ore mined here in 1923 was over 12 dwts. A bonus of 20s. per ounce would, on such ore, be equivalent to 12s. per ton. It would enable the existing mines to treat a much larger tonnage of low grade ore, and would stimulate into production hundreds of mines now abandoned and closed down in Western Australia. If 50 per cent. more ore was treated, the average grade would drop to 10dwts. A 50 per cent. increase in the tonnage by 6 dwt. dirt to the 12 dwt. dirt would mean a total of 1,172,000 tons of an average of 10dwts. per ton. This tonnage would produce 586,000 ounces of

gold, which would mean a bonus of £586,000. The consequent increase of production would mean an increase of 50 per cent. in the population of our goldfields, bringing their population up to 48,000. The increased population, at the present rate of taxation, £8.6 per head, would return to the Commonwealth Treasury £413,000, leaving a reduced difference of £172,000 to represent the assistance given to the gold mining industry as a bonus in hard cash by the Commonwealth Government. Apart from the stimulus this bonus would give to the existing mines, it would also stimulate the industry throughout the State and it would also help a great many small leaseholders and thousands of prospectors who are of immense value to the country. Many of those men have disappeared owing to the handicaps they were subjected to during the last few years. Now if the bonus were paid, thousands would be engaged on small shows and also in prospecting. That would be of immense value to the State by reason of the opening up of ore bodies not known to exist at the present time. All this would stimulate the activities of the State, the goldfields population would increase, and the bonus would have a marked effect not only here but on Australia generally, because the larger population that would be attracted to the goldfields would be living on other communities which would be engaged in producing for them. As an aid to migration, any assistance that might be given to the mining industry cannot be over-estimated. A flourishing mining industry from the point of view of employment is of the greatest value to Australia. It employs by far the greater number of men in proportion to the value of the output than any other industry known. It was that state of things that made Western Australia; it was that state of things that increased the population from a few thousand souls to over a hundred thousand souls, and if the industry were again stimulated the same thing would occur. It may be as well to point out what the State has done to assist the industry. The State has expended over half a million pounds in an effort to assist gold mining from time to time. In addition we have spent a large sum every year on State batteries, in rendering assistance to prospectors, providing water supplies, and other activities to assist the industry. We pay in water

services a sum of between £50,000 and £60,000 a year. We reduced the railway rates this year to the extent of £15,000. We relieved the industry largely from direct taxation.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Only in respect of future work.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: We have exempted mining companies from taxation until the whole of the capital has been returned to the shareholders.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Only in regard to new companies.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The amount we now receive is very small. It can be said that the State has given the industry every consideration. I shall conclude by saying that there should be no person in Western Australia opposed to assistance being rendered to the industry which has done so much for Western Australia, and which, by its wealth, will be able to do so much in the future. We have the greatest gold mining and mineral belt in the whole world. We have an area that extends from Ravensthorpe in the south to Kimberley in the north, and it is capable of great exploitation and of producing great wealth if only it gets reasonable consideration from the Government of the day. The excessive imposts that have been put upon the industry by the Commonwealth are largely responsible for its stagnation to-day. It is, unhappily, a declining industry. We cannot afford to wait until the time arrives when economic conditions will be such as to warrant the industry being revived in a natural way. It must be revived in the manner that has been done with respect to other industries in Australia. The sugar industry and other industries have been assisted with bounties and from that standpoint the people of Western Australia, and particularly those engaged in the gold mining industry, are justified in asking the Commonwealth Government for a bonus, and Parliament is justified in supporting the resolution.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [8.37]: I have listened with a good deal of interest to the speech of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert) and that of the Minister for Mines. I am not quite certain whether the Minister is serious when he says he is a protectionist. He has protested

against the excessively high tariff that this country is subjected to. Just now the whole world is engaged setting up tariff barriers, one country against another, and it happens that we are heavily billed, and it does happen, too, that protection in Australia is protection run mad. When we remember that 47 of the 75 members in the House of Representatives are from the States of New South Wales and Victoria, the great manufacturing centres, the position to-day can hardly be wondered at. If on the one hand we should protect manufacturers by a tariff, and allow them to extract from their customers higher prices for the manufactured goods than they would pay under freetrade, and if, on the other hand, we give a bounty to all other people who are doing nothing, I should like to know—

Mr. Lambert: Scientifically all moneys that are used to protect secondary industries should be returned to the primary industries to assist them.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: That is really more than I can quite see through.

Mr. Lambert: All the revenue you take as the result of protecting a secondary industry, should be returned by way of a bounty or otherwise to the primary industry to also help it along.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I wish that could be brought about. It would be interesting for the primary producer to have the 40 million pounds, which is collected through the Customs by the Commonwealth Government. Of course it is impossible to benefit all people by the tariff; someone has to pay. The primary producers are largely paying by reason of the tariff. Western Australia has spent a great deal of money in providing transport and other facilities to keep the industry going. We have over 1,000 miles of railways through the goldfields areas and very little business results from them. If mining could be revived, it would again become a paying proposition. Then we have a non-paying water scheme.

Mr. Lambert: You had a sinking fund of 3 per cent. spread over a period of nearly 20 years. That was unprecedented.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: The general taxpayer contributed largely to the cost.

Mr. Lambert: Yes, but the debit balance has been in favour of the goldfields.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Against the people of the State. A tradesman can-

not manage to live altogether on the indirect gain; he must have some regard for the losses. The goldfields have had to pay a high price for their water, but a year or two ago we reduced the cost by about £45,000 to the mines served by the Kalgoorlie water scheme.

Mr. Lambert: The goldfields made it possible for the agricultural areas to get water from Mundaring.

Mr. Thomson: It was not built for that.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is also used to supply Northam and other towns along the route. We put millions of pounds into our railways, and provided water supplies and other works, which were necessary to enable the industry to carry on, even when it was producing 8½ million pounds worth of gold per annum. Last year, however, the industry produced only two million pounds worth, but the services are still being operated.

Mr. Lambert: A fifth of the State's indebtedness is invested there to-day.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is a difficult thing for the Treasurer to find money with which to carry on these services. I am sorry the gold production in ounces is going down year after year. In 1913 dividends to the amount of £750,000 were paid, in 1923 to the amount of £73,000, and last year to the amount of £124,000, due to a better price being realised by the Gold Producers' Association. The profits obtained were apart from the returns for the gold output last year. We ask the Federal Government to bonus this industry in order that the mines now operating may carry on, and others may be searched for and developed. It was said in Victoria the other day that we had an auriferous gold-bearing belt of a thousand miles in length by 150 miles in width. I do not know that the first prospectors had all the luck. They certainly found all the rich mines which have been found in the few years after the discovery of gold. We have had nothing of a sensational character since then. I hope the Wiluna field may prove a second Kalgoorlie, but beyond that there is apparently no rich field at present known to exist. We have had prospectors out for years without their meeting with any luck. It would pay the Federal Government to contribute a considerable sum of money annually so that the auriferous belts of the State may be tested. The Minister has just had the report of the Royal Commissioner who was appointed to

inquire into the mining industry. I heard the Commissioner say that the world's wealth depends for its gold upon 7 dwt. shows. I was, therefore, surprised to hear the Minister say that it takes 12 dwts. to pay in this State. If we cannot get mines to return more gold than are at present being worked, the bonus will have to be more or less permanent. I do not see how we can go on buying £4 worth of gold for £5 unless the bonus will do some good and lead to the opening up of new mines, except that it will keep the mines which have produced all the wealth in the past in working condition. According to the figures, £28,000,000 has already been paid in dividends, but that has all gone and most of the mines are carrying on under difficulties. I am glad the matter is being discussed. The tariff does come under consideration now. The debate has brought home to us as never before that the tariff is responsible to an extent for the unfortunate position of the industry.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: There are also other causes.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, but the tariff is one of the causes. The member for Coolgardie pointed out that the tariff not only increases the price of commodities but the cost of living. It makes it imperative to pay higher wages than would otherwise be necessary to enable men to live in comfort. A high tariff means high wages, and higher cost of mining. It affects the industry in a hundred ways. Everything we buy and have transported to the fields must be transported at greater cost.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: There has been no evidence to show that wages have had any influence.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not agree that the tariff does not make the cost of living high.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: That is what I say.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Everything that a man wears is heavily taxed. The house a man lives in is made to cost more because of the tariff, not because the materials for the house are imported, but because the cost of everything is higher through the tariff. The disadvantage comes from so many directions that it is impossible to calculate the influence it has over the cost of production. The ventilation of this question brings home to us the disadvantages of high protection. It shows clearly what the primary producers are suffering from.

Mr. Lambert: Not so much the high protection as discriminate protection.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Apart from the £3,000,000 we paid in customs and excise duty last year, we imported £6,000,000 worth of goods from the other States, and nearly £5,000,000 of manufactured goods, including those that came from overseas.

Mr. Lambert: The Argonauts have suggested boycotting all Eastern States goods.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know whether they have done so or not. The tariff is costing the country many millions. It would be very much better if the tariff were made lower, so that we might have more money with which to carry on the affairs of the country. Just now the Federal Government are taking from us enormous amounts in revenue. Machines that cost £100 are to-day costing nearly £300. The producers, including those connected with mining, have to pay more for everything they require because of the tariff. It is, I suppose, only reasonable that the mining people, who are particularly active and energetic, should be demanding something of their own back. The payment of bounties is a matter for the Federal Government. Last year they paid to one industry and another about £455,000 in this way. There is no sugar bounty just now. The money that goes to the sugar industry comes from a different source. I suppose the member for Coolgardie will say there is no reason why there should not be a gold bonus too. Whilst I know that the Premier is expecting to receive some measure of justice from the Disabilities Commission, and that the Federal Government have given us money with a fairly generous hand during the past 12 months, and have promised to help us in our agricultural work, I see no reason why their attention should not be called to the possibility of assisting our gold-mining industry. I hope this will not in any way interfere with the amount which might come to us as a result of the Disabilities Commission. If they had returned to us the surplus received since 1910 we should have been able to look after our own affairs. If they had collected only a reasonable amount of revenue from the States, sufficient to carry on what we regard as their legitimate functions, we could still have been in a position to assist our own primary producers. Since the Federal Government elected to collect from us so much revenue, and since we are not per-

mitted to pay bounties ourselves, we can at least draw their attention to the fact that assistance to the gold-mining industry would mean a great deal to Western Australia. It is a pity that we take from the people through customs and excise to such an extent that we should have to ask the Government to prop up industries because of the disadvantages deliberately caused by the acts of Government. I do not know if the Premier will feel it his duty to do what he says the Federal Government ought to do if they fail to respond to this request. I refer to the payment of £1 an ounce on gold production. I do not know whether this House would agree to stating the amount that ought to be paid, or whether the Premier will feel it his duty if the request is refused to provide this assistance.

The Premier: I have no doubts about the matter.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: It is more pleasant to be able to say to other people, "Pay, pay, pay," than to have to face the question of considering the payment here.

The Premier: The people who caused the injury should provide the remedy.

Mr. Thomson: That is the point.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I do not know that it is. The method by which the injury has been caused should be carefully considered. The people responsible for the imposition of the tax should take into consideration the fact that gold to a much less extent than agriculture is being hit hard by an unnecessarily high tariff.

The Premier: The State has given substantial assistance for many years by way of water supplies, railways, mining development and in other directions.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Of course we have. We have done all that could be expected to do. If our finances had been in a more buoyant condition we would have rendered even more assistance to the industry. We have probably rendered more assistance than our tremendous deficits really admitted of. There is no doubt that the people of Western Australia are willing to assist the industry and to recognise the value of it.

The Premier: Do they?

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: They do. They know what the gold yield has meant to this country. It attracted people who came here and ultimately became permanent

citizens. If we could develop another great mine we would again attract population and would probably get out of all our difficulties.

Mr. Lambert: I think there is little doubt about that at Wiluna.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I hope that the hon. member will prove to be right. We all know the value of gold mining to the State and if we could bring our gold production to half what it was in the past, it would be a great thing for us.

MR. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.2]: I have been in Parliament for 11 years, and particularly when discussing the Estimates and during the Address-in-reply debate invariably the gold mining industry has been referred to. Everyone has expressed a wish to arrest the decline of that industry. On this particular occasion the House is asked to give a decision on a motion that may prove ultimately to be beneficial to the mining industry without costing the State anything directly in cash. Briefly the position is that we have a system of bounties that is a vicious one. The vicious circle is on account of the high protection accorded other industries. As mentioned by the Leader of the Opposition £450,000 was doled out last year to bolster up industries, the majority having suffered from the effects of the high tariff. If there are two industries that have suffered they are gold mining and agriculture. We stand on all fours on that question. No one can deny that the high tariff has dealt harshly with the gold mining industry. If we look at the position regarding the Collie mines, we see that the price of coal has been raised and the people engaged in that industry have been able to carry on.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The trouble is that with the gold mining industry the output declined and that hampered efforts.

Mr. THOMSON: That is so, and in addition the price of gold is on a fixed standard. While costs may increase, it is impossible to increase the value of gold beyond the standard price. That is where those interested in gold mining have been handicapped. However, the resolution before us may be agreed to, for while we oppose the principle of bonuses and bounties, we recognise that this is the only way in which the gold mining industry can be assisted. I intend to vote for the resolution hoping that the Federal Government will decide to give some measure of relief. The motion is quite open



and does not define the assistance that should be rendered by the Federal authorities. It does not say whether it shall be by way of the payment of £1 per ounce or on the tonnage basis. We leave that to the judgment of the Federal authorities. We recognise that the position has been created by the high duties imposed by Federal Government which have forced up the cost of mining materials, and in turn, the effect has been to advance the cost of living directly and indirectly, while wages have been increased correspondingly. In these circumstances it is reasonable that the Commonwealth should give favourable consideration to the proposal. The Leader of the Opposition intimated that he hoped as a result of the report of the Federal Disabilities Commission we would get a certain amount of money for Western Australia. That will be somewhat in the same category as the bounties are given, for the Federal Government will continue to take three millions or more out of the pockets of the people and then hand back £200,000 or £300,000 and say that we should be thankful to them for their generous treatment, although they robbed us in the first place.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The system is rotten.

Mr. THOMSON: It is absolutely vicious, and while I am not in favour of high protection, I shall vote for the motion for the reasons I have set out.

**HON. S. W. MUNSIE** (Honorary Minister—Hannans) [9.7]: As I represent a goldfields constituency I naturally agree with the resolution. I believe it will have influence, not so much in assisting companies already in existence, as it will in regard to the prospectors who will be encouraged to go out and do more prospecting, and by that means, perhaps, open up new gold mines. Many of the existing companies in Western Australia—I do not put them all in the same category—do not deserve any assistance of this description. I well remember three years ago, when an award of the court was given granting an increase of practically 3s. per day to the men working underground, that increase was looked upon by the mining magnates as disastrous to the industry. They broadcasted throughout the State and throughout Australia towards the end of that 12 months, that if they got a reduction of 2s. per day in the wages of the

employees, it would lead to an increase of about 1,000 in the number of men employed. That statement was made during the period known as the gold steal in Western Australia. It was when the Commonwealth Government commandeered the whole of the output of our mines at the standard price. The agitation started after that period ended and the mining magnates were then permitted to negotiate with other countries for the sale of their product. The result was that they got the world's parity for their gold. For some considerable time the gold produced in Western Australia was sold at £2 above the normal value. Strange to say, while it was at the top price, not only did the mining companies get a reduction of 2s. per day that they asked for, but they got more. First they received a reduction of 1s. and later on another of 1s. 6d., making the deduction per day 2s. 6d. as against 2s. which they asked for. On top of that, the mines adjacent to the goldfields water scheme received generous assistance from the State Government by way of a reduction in the price of water to the extent of £45,000 a year. Despite all that, the mining companies put off men instead of employing more. Now they tell the country that if they get back the standard and receive the gold bonus it will mean a wonderful increase in the number of men employed on the mines. Western Australia is entitled to some assistance from the Commonwealth Government in the interests of the gold mining industry and I believe that if the bonus is provided, we will have beneficial results from prospectors opening up new areas. I admit that some mines have done exceptionally well. Some have struggled under very adverse circumstances, and they are absolutely deserving of the gold bonus. One mine I would mention is the Sois of Gwalia. They encountered ill fortune. Their plant was burnt down, but subsequently erected an up-to-date one. They have done everything possible to make ends meet and they are doing so to-day. They deserve every credit for what has been done and if the gold bonus is provided, there should be a greater revival.

Mr. Heron: There will be a 20-head battery there.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: In other districts, I believe that unless there is an alteration in the management, we will not have any benefit even if the gold bonus is granted. I trust

the House will agree to the resolution unanimously and that it will result in benefit to the State.

**MR. DAVY** (West Perth) [9.16]: This is more or less in the nature of a pious hope and it does not seem to me that the matter need be thrashed out to any great length. At the same time I cannot allow the House to approve of the resolution without stating that I am against it. All the people who have referred to it here or in the street or elsewhere have favoured the proposition in rather an apologetic tone. They have admitted that we have suffered grievously in Western Australia from what they term the Commonwealth tariff run mad. They have suggested that their sufferings are due to the tariff, but at the same time they say that it is impossible to get away from that and, therefore, they say, "We will join in the plot with the rest of them." They say that the sugar industry is subsidised by the Federal Government and that they disagree with the principle, but instead of putting their shoulders to the wheel to get rid of it, they agree to ask for a similar bonus to be given to the gold mining industry. That may be sound reasoning, but to my mind it is immoral reasoning, which in the end cannot but work harm against ourselves. I am not prepared to admit that the policy of Australia is protection run mad, the existing type of protection that we have—although, of course, many people will say that protection is protection run mad from the moment it starts. However, I am not prepared to agree that, because this Federal Government and their predecessors and even their successors believe in this type of protection, therefore we are condemned to it for the rest of the life of Australia. One can never expect immediate results from an agitation to effect political reform in any country. It took 30 or 40 years of most earnest, zealous and skilful work to wire out the corn laws in England, and I have no doubt when the first advocates of that great reform lifted up their voices, they were voices crying in the wilderness; and that they were told, just as to-day the Minister for Agriculture tells us, that it was perfectly hopeless to expect any result, that the settled policy of England was protection for the growth of corn. However, they kept on, and got their result in the end. Now, 30 or 40 years is a very short period in the life history of a nation, and if we keep on with

efforts to effect that reform and do effect something in 50 years, I should say we were doing pretty well. The statesman or Government not prepared to embark on a policy that will not show results for five or ten years is short-sighted. So if, in spite of our views that what we in Western Australia are suffering from is tariff run mad, we are going to say, "Because we cannot get rid of that to-morrow we shall ask to have this bad policy extended," we are putting beyond our grasp any possibility of effecting the real reform that will enable this country to prosper. With all respect to those members who have spoken, it appears to me that they are too much inclined to personify the mining industry. They think of it as an abstract proposition, and it grieves them to see it dying. Just as some people grieve seriously to find the Eskimo race dying out, in the same way there is here that tendency to think of the mining industry as a person, and to shed tears over its gradual decline. For my part, I will have no tears to shed over the decline of mining in the abstract, provided the people engaged in that industry do not die, but prosper in some more permanent sphere of life.

**Mr. North:** From gold to coal.

**Mr. DAVY:** Yes, or from gold to agriculture. The change from gold to agriculture has been a remarkable one during the last 10 or 15 years. When people complain that the advance of population and prosperity in Western Australia has not been so great as it should have been during the last 15 years, we should remember that during that time a very great industry has declined, notwithstanding which the population and prosperity of Western Australia have not declined. I say that if we have merely held our own during that period it has been a wonderful thing to have done.

**Mr. Lambert:** Have you made up your mind that the resources of the mining industry are exhausted?

**Mr. DAVY:** Certainly not. Every member here thinks, as Sir James Mitchell said to-night, that it would be remarkable if in that unique belt of auriferous country there was only one Golden Mile. It seems to me that if it is not Wiluna, it is going to be somewhere else some time.

**Mr. Lambert** interjected.

**Mr. DAVY:** But the discovery of the Golden Mile did not depend on the payment

of a gold bonus. What it depended upon was the gambling spirit deeply rooted in human nature. People do not need any encouragement to go gold mining; what they need is a little spare cash, a lot of enterprise and the desire to get rich quickly. However, I do not wish to labour the point. Feeling as I did, I realised that it would be wrong for me to allow this motion to be carried unanimously, because I am not with it.

Question put and passed.

Resolution adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

## **BILL—GROUP SETTLERS' ADVANCES.**

### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from an earlier stage.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL** (Norham) [9.22]: The Bill provides that group settlers and other persons who have had advances from the Government shall not be required to secure by a bill of sale the chattels from the purchase of which such advances were made. Under the Industries Assistance Act it is necessary that everything paid for by the Government should remain as security for the advance without a bill of sale, and merely by keeping a register of the transaction. That is a very good way of doing it, for it saves the settler the expense of the bill of sale. I do not think the Minister for Lands would be justified in doing other than he is doing, and I feel sure the House will agree to the Bill. Under the Bill moneys advanced to group settlers for the purchase of stock and machinery and chattels shall be secured by those chattels and stock, just as they would be if the Government took a bill of sale over them. I thought they were so secured without the Bill, and I feel sure Mr. McLarty thought so too. However, it is better to have the Bill. The principle is quite right, for the settler will not be put to any unnecessary cost. In the early stages of any form of land settlement assisted by the Government, practically everything is paid for by the Government. It follows that the Government must be protected. If the group settler with his own money should buy cattle, machinery or chattels, of course he will not be a party to the security held by the Government.

**The Minister for Lands:** The Bill provides for that.

**Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL:** I know the Minister proposes that the Bill should operate only until the settler is free from group conditions. After that the security will be to the Agricultural Bank, and given in the ordinary way. However, I notice the Minister takes security over the growing crops. He needs to give some consideration to that point, for when the group settler grows potatoes and similar crops they must be marketed. It may happen that the Government advance to the settler the cost of the fertiliser used for the putting in of the crop. On the other hand, if the Government have advanced money only for the purchase of cattle, and the settler grows a crop of potatoes, although the Government have not contributed a penny towards the raising of the potatoes the crop will be a security to the Government. The Minister, I know, does not mean that.

**The Minister for Lands:** The Bill does not mean it either.

**Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL:** I think it does. I shall be glad if the Minister will put through the second reading to-night and defer the Committee stage until to-morrow, in the meantime getting an assurance from the Parliamentary Draftsman that the position is clear.

**The Minister for Lands:** I have that assurance now. I have a minute here, and will read it.

**Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL:** Clause 5 provides that a group settler or other person is a man in possession of land under the ordinary conditions of settlement, that is to say, a man with a conditional purchase lease. But a group settler has merely a permit to occupy, which is a very different thing. The Bill will apply only to people who are on special settlement areas. It may be under group settlement, or it may be, as on the Peel Estate, where a number of the settlers are under Agricultural Bank conditions. I do not think the Bill will necessarily apply to them. However, it will be convenient to have authority under the Bill to make advances without a bill of sale. The Minister, of course, does not wish the Bill to apply where the I.A.B. or the Agricultural Bank can do the work. Although it seems to me that this clause does so provide, the Minister says the Solicitor General has assured him that my interpretation is wrong, and that the clause refers only to group settlers and to those on any special settle-

ment area. The group settlers are getting cash from the Government, and I take it, are paying cash for their purchases, and it will only be when they are producing and selling goods that they will need to be relieved from the provisions of this measure and come under the ordinary Agricultural Bank conditions. I support the second reading.

**MR. THOMSON** (Katanning) [9.32] : When the Minister for Lands was moving the second reading I felt afraid that we were about to be faced with a request for another board like the I.A.B., which, instead of strengthening the Agricultural Bank, in some instances undermined its security. This was due to the I.A.B. advancing money to clients who were involved with the Agricultural Bank, and it led to a great amount of unpleasantness and trouble. I hope the day is not far distant when the I.A.B. and the Agricultural Bank will be consolidated and worked as one institution. \* Under this Bill I trust it is intended to deal only with the goods and chattels supplied by the Government, but I wish to have an assurance on that point. Clause 2 refers to crops raised on a holding "while growing and afterwards when cut or severed from the soil." If a group settler cultivated a plot in his spare time and purchased burr clover and grew a crop, the crop should be the property of the group settler. If a man has cows of his own, he should be entitled to deal with them as he thinks fit. The question is whether such a settler will find himself under this measure in the same position as the men under the I.A.B., who, as I stated when the Bill was under discussion, had not a soul to call their own, because nothing on the property belonged to them. I hope such a state of affairs will not apply under this measure. I want an assurance that this Bill will not involve the creation of a new board. It is essential that the Government should be secured for the money and goods advanced to group settlers. It would not be right if other individuals could take possession of goods which the Government have advanced to settlers. At the same time it would not be right to discourage the energetic man into doing no more than the regulations compelled him to do.

The Minister for Agriculture: He has the inducement to produce all he can and pay off his liability as quickly as possible.

**MR. THOMSON**: Such men ought to be

encouraged, and we must be careful not to remove the incentive for them to utilise their spare time to their own profit.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle—in reply) [9.38] : I do not think there need be any fear of an additional board being set up; in fact, the provisions of the Bill will reduce the work of the board already dealing with group settlers. Over 400 bills of sale have already been registered, and as bills of sale will no longer be necessary, the measure will have the effect of saving instead of adding to the work of the department. In reply to the Leader of the Opposition, I have a minute from the Solicitor General that puts the position clearly. It reads—

This Bill extends to the advances by the Lands Department similar provisions as regards the registration of the Government security to those which have worked satisfactorily under the Industries Assistance Act for the last 10 years, and which are also contained in the Discharged Soldier Settlement Act. The statutory security only extends to the chattels which have actually been supplied by the Government, and to the crops that have been raised by the expenditure of Government money.

**MR. THOMSON**: That is the point I wanted you to clear up.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS**: That is a clear answer to it. I agree with the hon. member that to a certain extent some of the I.A.B. clients have been tied up as regards their trading, and consequently have not been able to get outside credit because the whole of their crop proceeds had to be paid in to the I.A.B. This measure will not operate in that way. It is merely for use during the period while we are settling these people on the land. Once they are transferred to the Agricultural Bank under a mortgage, the Agricultural Bank will take the whole responsibility. Meanwhile, if we are to continue settlement, it is necessary that the State should be protected in regard to the money spent on behalf of settlers.

**HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL**: This is really intended to help settlers.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS**: The Leader of the Opposition referred to other settlers. I have no desire to be placed in the position of being pressed by members of Parliament to grant assistance to other settlers for whom the Government are not taking responsibility under the migration agreement. If possible, I want to get the money at 1 per cent. instead of 6 per cent.

I put that point to the Solicitor General and he advised me that it was necessary to make the clause apply to other than group settlers. He pointed out that there might be other areas which it would be desirable to settle in the same manner, and that unless provision were made under this Bill, it would be impossible to take security in the same way. The Bill contains the safeguards necessary to protect the State. I did not think such a measure would be necessary. The Leader of the Opposition mentioned that it would make our work much easier. I was hoping that in the short space of time prior to the Agricultural Bank taking charge, there would be no necessity to protect the interests of the State by special legislation. However, when traders endeavour to block the State from obtaining security over stock and equipment provided by the Government, simply because they had allowed settlers to get into debt, it is time to introduce legislation to protect the State.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Anyhow, the Government would be a preferential creditor.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: But the stock and equipment belong to the State. It would be too costly for group settlers to enter into hire purchase agreements and pay for the registration.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: It would be cumbersome.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, and doubly expensive.

Hon. G. Taylor: This is the most effective way of dealing with it.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Not only is there expense attached to registering hire agreements, but the cost of mortgages and transfer to the Agricultural Bank. Dual charges would thus be involved. We want the work to be carried out as simply and cheaply as possible, consonant with protection for the funds of the State. I hope the Bill will be put through early.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

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

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Advances for chattels, etc., to be a charge thereon:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I understand the Solicitor General says this clause

is properly worded, but it does not seem to me to be quite clear. Apparently the only interest the Minister will have in a crop will be that which is grown with the aid of State funds. Crops grown by settlers in their spare time would not come under this clause. If it were so worded as to refer only to crops grown from Government advances, it would be safe to pass it. These settlers must be allowed to market crops they grow at their expense.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The clause applies only to advances made for the purposes set out in it. It only deals with money advanced by the State. If a man puts in a crop by spare-time effort, and nothing has been advanced upon it by the State, the crop would belong to him. The clause does not apply to the butter, milk and eggs produced by the settler. In some cases on the groups the Government have paid for the seed and manure, put in the crop and paid sustenance, but the resultant crop has been sold and the department have had no return. In other cases there may be a good pasture on a block and the cows belonging to other settlers have been depastured there. Agistment fees have been charged for such stock and the fees credited to the owner of the block. The clause is very clear.

Mr. LINDSAY: In the groups some of the blocks must be pastured before others. The agistment fees the Minister speaks of have been charged against the owners of these blocks as well as against the owners of the stock depasturing there.

The Minister for Lands: The owner is not charged.

Mr. LINDSAY: And the fee has not been credited to the individual block but to the group as a whole. It is fair to put that money to the group. The individual who has had cows issued to him and receives a cheque for cream, may have cows of his own; and the Government would have no mortgage over those cows, and therefore would not be able to take the cheque for cream from him. Such a position has occurred under the Industries Assistance Board, and I would like the matter cleared up. Take the case of a crop grown with Government money and used to feed cattle which are the private property of the settler. Settlers have stated that they saw no reason for doing spare time effort, because eventually the Government would charge the results of spare time effort.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: From what I have heard here, I am convinced that all the good crops will be produced by overtime effort, and that in the case of a settler who has cows of his own and cows from the Government all the big milkers and cream producers will be his own cows.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Toodyay has made a statement which is contrary to what has been told me by the departmental officers. They have assured me repeatedly that the cropping on a holding is charged to the holding, and that when cattle are put on a holding which belongs to other members of the group, the agistment charges are credited to the holding and not to the group; and that is only fair. The group settlers have been officially notified times out of number that any spare time effort they do will not be charged on. It is only work done by means of moneys provided by the State that will be charged on. It has never been intended to charge the group settler in respect of work done by him outside his eight hours. I know someone has been on the groups telling the settlers that that will be done. On every group I have visited I have stated definitely that spare time effort work was the man's own, and his own entirely. It appears to me that the clause is perfectly clear.

Mr. SAMPSON: It would be possible to make the clause harder and to deprive the settler of that encouragement which the production of small side lines—perhaps a few eggs or a little butter—might mean; but the ultimate result would be bad. In my opinion the Government already have sufficient security without the harsh and unconscionable course of charging small side lines. I support the clause as it stands.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I shall offer no further objection to the clause. However, I suggest to the Minister that it is necessary for him to see that his officials allow the crops, grown as the result of the work and money of the group settler, to be sold by him. Last year I saw pastures which were not stocked. There are two ways to destroy pasture—one is over-stocking, and the other is not stocking at all. In the first year non-stocking may not do much harm. I have seen an example of pasture made by stocking almost as soon as the pasture was up, though in this case I do not advocate that.

The Minister for Lands: We cannot get all the stock we want.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Stock can be had, and a beast to the acre could be fattened on the pasture this year.

The Minister for Lands: I hope to get 20,000 head of stock brought in by the end of the year.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Unfortunately, owing to the want of rain, ewes and lambs are selling at about half their value.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: One of the first things I complained of when I took charge of the scheme was that no provision had been made for stock. Everyone wanted to know why there was no provision for stock. During the last 12 months we have bought 2,400 cows, and a lot of bulls and horses. We also have a lot of sheep for fattening on the settlements. I hope that within the next month or two 3,000 head of stock will be brought into the State.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: This is a very useful clause. Of course, we put stock through the country and the Minister has reaped where I sowed. I could not reap because I had not been in office long enough before the people decided that there must be a change of Government.

The Premier: That is the trouble; we go out before we have had an opportunity to do things.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I am certain the Premier will. I assure the Minister for Lands, however, that he can get a number of good dairy cows from the wheat belt to-day. It would be quite wrong to take them if they were supplying factories, but I believe there is not much dairying in the parts I refer to and a good number of cattle are available.

The Minister for Lands: The Government are running the butter factory at Northam and we are not going to rob that institution!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Years ago, when I was in favour of buying cows and bringing them to the State, the Minister for Lands thought I was wrong.

The Minister for Lands: No, I did not.

Mr. Thomson: That was when you were called "Moo-cow Mitchell."

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, that title is now passing to the Minister for Lands.

Hon. G. Taylor: Moo-cow Angwin!

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Cows are being killed in the country to-day that should be kept for dairy purposes, and I assure the Minister that he can get cows the owners of which are not supplying cream to established factories.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 5—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

*House adjourned at 10.19 p.m.*

## Legislative Council,

*Wednesday, 26th August, 1925.*

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

### BILL—WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY CO., LTD., ACT AMENDMENT.

*Select Committee's Report.*

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into the Bill.

Report read.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON moved—

That the consideration of the report be made an Order of the Day when the Bill is in Committee.

Question put and passed.

### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Group Settlers Advances.
2. Land Tax and Income Tax Act Amendment.

Received from the Assembly.

### ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Lieutenant-Governor received and read notifying assent to the Supply Bill (No. 1), £1,913,500.

### MINING INDUSTRY—GOLD BONUS.

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

### QUESTION—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY DEBATE.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN (without notice) asked the Colonial Secretary: When does the Minister desire that the Address-in-reply debate should be closed?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: As I have mentioned to several members, it is my desire that the debate should close to-night. We have some important legislation awaiting consideration, and the debate has already extended over several weeks. It is not my desire to curb discussion in any way, but I think we should be able to close the debate to-night, and I ask the co-operation of the House in that object. Of course, the closing of the debate to-night could be obviated if we were to sit to-morrow night but, having in view the convenience of country members, I do not wish to sit to-morrow night.

### QUESTION—LIGHT LANDS, REPORTS.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN asked the Colonial Secretary: Will he lay on the Table the progress reports of Mr. L. A. Bostock on light lands?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The file containing the reports by Mr. L. A. Bostock on light lands is available for perusal by members at the Lands Department. It is necessary that the reports should remain in the department, as they are required for investigations by a committee when completed.