

may be fixed, providing that the dates shall be specified on the writs, fixing the time for nomination, polling places, hours of polling, giving the usual power to extend the times, and providing that the telegraph may be used in lieu of the post. I beg leave to move the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. W. Kingsmill): Under the Supreme Court Act there has grown up a difficulty which is not advantageous to the State. As members know, one of the Puisne Judges, Mr. Justice Burnside, has for some time, owing to illness, been absent from the State. This necessitated the appointment of a Commissioner of the Supreme Court; and practically the whole of that Commissioner's duty is to travel on circuit. One of his functions is to hear appeals from decisions of justices, either in minor criminal cases or in the local courts. It has been ruled by the Supreme Court that the Commissioner does not possess power to hear such appeals; and it is to vest this power in him that the Bill is brought down. As this is a matter of considerable urgency, I should like to see the Bill passed as soon as possible, because there are several appeals pending in the Kalgoorlie circuit, which should be disposed of by the court which commences to sit on Monday next. The Bill consists of only two clauses. One member complains that Clause 2 seems rather involved; but I can assure members that its only object is to bestow the power of which I have spoken—and a very proper power, too—on the Commissioner. There is considerable doubt in the minds of some legal men as to whether the Commissioner has not this power already. His commission endows him with all the powers of a Supreme Court Judge. But apparently there is a doubt in the minds of the Supreme Court Judges; because they have ruled that the Commissioner cannot without special legislation have the power it is now sought to bestow upon him. I beg leave to move the second reading.

Hon. G. RANDELL (Metropolitan): I do not wish to oppose the Bill; but I

must congratulate the Minister if he is able to understand Clause 2. I think the Bill may be characterised as "howsoever, heretofore, and hereafter."

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

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

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 12 minutes past 9 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 17th November, 1903.

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THE DEPUTY SPEAKER took the Chair at 2-30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Royal Commission on Public Service, ninth Progress Report. By-laws of Coolgardie Municipality. Gaol Regulations, Additions and Alterations.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

QUESTIONS (2)—RABBIT DEPARTMENT.

APPOINTMENT.

MR. JACOBY (for Mr. Thomas) asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Whether Inspector White's resignation was handed in to the Director of Agriculture on the 3rd November, and whether the Minister was aware of this. 2, Whether a man named Benzley and assistant were sent from Boulder or Kalgoorlie to inquire into the accuracy of Inspector White's report as to the existence of rabbits west of the barrier fence, without reference to the officers of the department. 3, What remuneration these men received. 4, Whether these men had any previous experience in rabbit trapping, and if so, when and where. 5, Whether Inspector White had previously recommended two competent men for the work, who had all their plant available to assist in rabbit destruction, and could have been on the scene of operations within three days, and were prepared to go on at £8 per week for the two, and find everything except traps and poison. 6, Where were the horses with which these men were supplied obtained, and on what terms. 7, What was the nature of Benzley's report.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes, as files disclose. 2, A special expedition was despatched, as recorded in files produced in Parliament. The information gained is deemed to have justified the investigations made. 3, Original expedition was estimated to cost £50, as files disclose. The actual cost was £54. Owing to Secretary, Rabbit Department, and Inspector White being *en route* to Starvation Boat Harbour, it was deemed advisable to send despatches and coincidentally make other inquiries. The cost of second trip, including incidental expenses, railway fares, etc., £64 6s. 4d. 4, Yes, throughout Australia. 5, No. Inspector White had no knowledge that an examination of this nature was being made. The expedition was sent to report; any trapping or ferreting being done as an experiment only. 6, Cannot say. 7, As read in Parliament from files produced.

RABBIT EXTERMINATOR.

MR. BUTCHER asked the MINISTER FOR LANDS: 1, Whether his attention

had been drawn to a publication describing a new rabbit exterminator, invented by Messrs. Parker Bros., of Victoria. 2, Whether he will secure the machine for use within the infested areas of this State.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The secretary of the Rabbit Department expresses the following opinion: "It is difficult to express an opinion on Parker Bros.' exterminator without farther information concerning it. In view of the extreme shyness of the rabbits we are now dealing with, and their nomadic habits, I hardly think the conditions are favourable at present for a fair trial of any machine (other than traps); but a suitable occasion may arise at any time in the future, and if it has proved itself more successful than the ordinary processes, it might become a valuable possession." They are so scattered at present, I doubt if it is likely to assist us much.

MR. BUTCHER: They can be caught by a trap if in no other way.

THE MINISTER: I will talk privately about the matter.

UNIVERSITY ENDOWMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I propose to make very few remarks, because I believe members agree with the principle of the Bill and are ready to indorse the action of the Government in taking some steps for the preparation of an endowment for the university which must come in the future. We are apt to think, in considering the question of the establishment of a university, that the conditions which exist in this State are, in relation to population and in relation to its being of so scattered a nature, so peculiar that the date in the future when we shall be called upon to establish a university in this State is a long way off. If members will bear in mind the facts in relation to the establishment of universities in the Eastern States, they will be surprised to find how many of them were established under conditions less favourable than now exist for the establishment of a university in this State of Western Australia. There will be no dissent to the statement

that, if we are to have, as we surely agree that we must have, a complete system of national education in Western Australia, we must have a university as the crowning arch. In Australasia there are four universities on the continent, and one in Tasmania, while in New Zealand also there is a university and examining body with four separate colleges where the teaching is done. One would think that for a population of four millions, that number of universities would be sufficient. Judging by English standards of the past no doubt it would, but judging by American standards and also by German standards, there is ample room in this State of Western Australia for the establishment of a university to bring within the reach of the young people of this State the same educational facilities as are now enjoyed by the young people in the Eastern States. I look upon the establishment of a university not as a luxury but as an absolute necessity. We want to establish in Western Australia a complete system of education, so that we need not be called upon to send those of our youths who need the higher branches of education to a distant portion of the Commonwealth for the purpose of gaining these final touches. It must be recognised that we must have a complete educational system. When South Australia established her university in 1876 there was a population of 225,000 people—a population less than we have to-day. Certainly the conditions which prevailed in South Australia then were not so urgently pointing to the need for a university as those which prevail here. In dealing with our educational system we must always bear in mind that while in the East one State is close to and connected with another State by a short railway journey, we here in Western Australia are separated at present from the Eastern States by a sea voyage of four or five days' duration, and that if our railway were built we should still be separated to a very serious extent. We have therefore a greater need to have a complete system in connection with our local educational matters than the Eastern States have, for there if one State does not possess the facilities provision is made for it in an adjoining State. In South Australia, as I said, there was a population of 225,000

people in 1876 when that university was established.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There was no railway then.

THE PREMIER: There was no railway then between South Australia and Victoria. During the first five years they had four professors in classics, English language and mental and moral philosophy, mathematics, and natural sciences. The number of students for the first five years was as follows: Six undergraduates and 52 non-graduates in 1876, 18 undergraduates and 29 non-graduates in 1877, 29 undergraduates in 1878, 35 undergraduates in 1879, and 44 undergraduates in 1880. Members will see that they began with a very small population, with a small staff and with a small number of students availing themselves of the university. Their receipts from the Government in 1876 were £2,400 subsidy and £2,948 by way of interest on endowment of lands.

MR. JACOBY: Was that accrued interest or interest per annum?

THE PREMIER: It was interest per annum. Those figures, of course, will include donations to the university and all sources of income other than derived from the Government direct. In 1877 the Government subsidy was £1,500; in 1878 it was £2,500; in 1879 it was £2,000, in addition to a special grant of £4,000; and in 1880 it was £2,000 and a special grant for buildings of £4,000. The receipts from other than Government sources, as I have pointed out, were £2,948 in 1876; in 1880 they amounted to £5,824. The expenditure in 1876 was £3,208; in 1877 it was £4,966; in 1878 it was £5,840; in 1879 it was £5,996, and in 1880 it amounted to £6,247. So members will see, dealing with these first five years (and I have taken these to be the most troublesome years when the university's usefulness was becoming known) that the Government subsidy did not exceed £2,500 per annum for all management expenses. In two years there were special grants of £4,000 in connection with buildings; but one may say that the Government undertook to pay and did pay an annual subsidy of some £2,000 odd. During those five years there were 326 students—undergraduates and non-graduates—who availed themselves of university courses.

The total cost for the five years was £26,000, and the total subsidies and other receipts £43,000. We turn to Melbourne, where a university was founded in 1855, when the population was about 129,000. That university began with four professors, and has at present about 13. During the first year there were 16 students, in the second 23, in the third 33, 15 in the year 1858, and 27 in 1859. For the first five years nothing was received from private endowments; there was an annual Government endowment of £9,000, a Government grant for buildings of £65,000, and receipts from students' fees ranging from £222 for the first year to £799 in 1859. For that period the expenditure for buildings was from Government grant £65,000, and from revenue £12,000, with a general expenditure of £32,000. There again, members will observe that in a country with a small population a university began on a modest footing, relying in the first instance entirely upon a Government subsidy. Beginning with only 16 students, that number four years afterwards had increased to no more than 27; but I am not including a number of law students who attended the lectures in the years 1857, 1858, and 1859. Let us take Sydney. Its university was incorporated in 1850, when New South Wales had a population of about 230,000. The annual endowment by the Government was £5,000 a year. A substantial grant of £50,000 was made in the first instance towards buildings, and there was a generous gift of land by way of endowment. The Sydney University began with three professors and four lecturers and readers. Now it has 15 professors and 61 lecturers and assistant lecturers. The number of students at the commencement was 24; and the early revenue would therefore consist of the Government grants, £5,000 a year, and the money received from any private endowments, gifts, and rents and profits accruing from the land. Tasmania founded its university in the year 1890, when it had a population of 151,000 only. The university was opened in the year 1893, and began with four professors and two lecturers. In the first year it had 28 students, increasing during the first four years to some 39; and now there are about 73 youths availing them-

selves of the educational facilities afforded by the university. These State universities are of course extremely useful, because they afford, by means of examinations, tests of educational acquirements; and we in this State are for that purpose holding examinations under the auspices of the Adelaide University. In Tasmania the Parliamentary grant was about £3,000 a year for the first four years for scholarships and ordinary university purposes. Receipts for the year 1892 were about £5,000 and the expenditure about £2,000; but the university did not get into active operation until 1893, when its revenue was a little over £6,000 and its expenditure a little over £5,000, the revenue consisting of Government subsidy, private donations, and fees from the students. This affords a striking instance of how backward we are in connection with our educational system. In 1890 Tasmania did not enjoy anything like the prosperity which we then experienced; but Tasmania, with a population of only 150,000, founded a university which has been doing useful work and gradually extending the area of its operations ever since. And the university was founded notwithstanding that Tasmania was so close to the State of Victoria, where there was an old-established and efficient university to which Tasmanian students could be sent if desired. The University of New Zealand is an examining body, and was established in 1874. There are four subordinate university colleges. One, known as the New Zealand Central University, was established in 1874. It has an endowment of £3,000 per annum, and a land endowment of 200,000 acres. There is the Otago University, founded in 1869, with an endowment of 21,000 acres of land. The Canterbury College, established in 1871, has an annual endowment of £3,000, also an area of land. The Auckland College, established in 1882, has an endowment of £4,000 per annum and 40,000 acres of land. The Victoria University, in Wellington, was established in 1900, and relies upon Government support. So there are really what one may call five university centres in the Colony of New Zealand; the first founded in 1869 at Otago, and the last established at Wellington in 1900. The example of New Zealand shows how highly it appreciates the value of a

university education; because, not content with the four university centres existing prior to 1900, the Victoria University of Wellington was established in that year. The position to-day, according to Cogblan's *Seven Colonies*, is that the Sydney University derives from its Government endowment £11,000 a year; it receives from fees £8,000, and from other sources £14,000, showing a total income of £33,000. This was for the year 1899. In 1898 the Melbourne University received £12,000 directly or indirectly from the Government, £15,000 from fees and £728 from other sources, making a total of £28,000. In Adelaide £6,539 was received by way of Government endowment, £6,597 from lecture fees, and £5,360 from other sources, giving a total revenue of £18,000. In Tasmania there was a Government endowment of £3,000, lecture fees amounting to £554, and an income from other sources of £65, giving a total of £3,819, being the cost of the University in Tasmania in the year 1891. At that time there must have been about 40 or 42 students attending regularly the ordinary university course in addition to carrying on the work as an examining body. The Adelaide University, in addition to receiving a subsidy from the Government, received a perpetual endowment of 50,000 acres of land from the Government of South Australia, and the income and profits of that land are included in the figures which I have already given. The University of New Zealand, which I have just dealt with, has a grant of £3,000 and an additional £2,500 for examination fees. That is the main university of New Zealand which confers the diplomas, and which in itself is a purely examining body, the teaching being done in the other five centres. The number of students who attended the lectures in 1889 was as follows:—Sydney, 482 matriculated, 37 non-matriculated, showing a total of 519; in Melbourne there was a total of 691, in Adelaide a total of 311, in New Zealand a total of 667, and in Tasmania a total of 35. If members will compare the figures for New Zealand with the figures for any other State, they will find the increased facilities given in New Zealand are reflected in the increased number of students attending the colleges and classes, showing that where the

facilities are extended the education is more availed of.

MR. MORAN: New Zealand has not spent money in buildings like the other States have.

THE PREMIER: The point I desire to make is that if we take the number of students availing themselves of the university system of education in New Zealand in proportion to the population, and compare that number with the students attending any other university on the continent in proportion to the population, we find the largest proportion in New Zealand; the facilities are most availed of, and I say they are most availed of because they are more in touch with those who need education.

MR. MORAN: Decentralisation.

THE PREMIER: Yes; decentralisation. On the other hand members must not forget that in America one finds a number of purely examining universities. We do not find there colleges where they not only teach but confer degrees. I refer to these figures to point out to members in every case, I think I am right in saying in every case, where universities are established they have been established when the States in which they have been founded had a population much less in number than we have in Western Australia. They began with small staffs and a small roll of students, they gradually extended their usefulness, and to-day no State is prepared to forego the system of university education it has established. Tasmania by its efforts for higher education shames us in Western Australia because of the small population they had and the less prosperous financial position they enjoyed when the university was established, in comparison with the position we enjoy to-day. And Tasmania had at its doors almost, the old-established and good university system of education in Victoria. Here in Western Australia we have no State so near to us as that and no means of giving to our youths the benefits of a university education unless we send them some distance to the Eastern States. Members will see that by the Bill we do not commit the State to the immediate foundation of a university; that must be dealt with in the future; that will rest with the Parliament when the university is to be established. What

we desire now is to submit to the House a case which justifies one in saying there will be a need for a university in Western Australia; that a university must some day be established. If we recognise that, surely our wise duty is to make provision for the endowment of that university, and not let land which may be given away for other purposes pass away from our control, and as a consequence leave us a heavier burden to bear when in the future we are called on to establish a university, not having the financial backbone on which the university can rely. I would like to see not only a university, but every other system of education having a good and strong endowment which would relieve the general taxpayer of the country. If in years gone by we had adopted such a system instead of giving away land right and left to every society, for we never thought of earmarking land, we could have been in a position to have relieved the future revenues of the State, and our future burdens would have been lightened by assisting education. Whatever we may regret in the past, we have the opportunity now of making provision for the future, and the Bill provides that the Governor may vest land in the board of trustees, who have the right to utilise that land and develop it. The Bill gives the right to trustees to hold money or land given to them for university purposes by private benefactors. In every State there have been private benefactors who recognise the value of a university education. I do not think that we in Western Australia shall be an exception in that particular. When the time comes to establish a university, we may have provided a sufficient fund to very much lighten the burden of maintaining the university. Members agree that we ought to take some steps to make provision. I move the second reading of the Bill feeling confident that whatever may be members' opinions as to the details, they will join with me in expressing the opinion that in Western Australia we should provide for a system of endowment to strengthen a university, and give it the sinews of war so as to lighten the burden which the finances of the State otherwise will have to bear when we are called on to establish a university.

MR. C. J. MORAN (West Perth): The Premier says this is an abstract principle contained in a Bill, and that we are not called on to discuss the propriety of making any grant of money. I do not know that it is altogether an acceptable doctrine that every separate State in the Commonwealth should have its own university. If the matter were looked into, it might be held by a large section of people who take an interest in educational matters, that one university would have done for Australia.

THE PREMIER: One degree-giving body.

MR. MORAN: The question of examining colleges is a means to an end, but if Australia had its history to go over again we, in the light of modern days, would consider whether it was not wise to have a great deal more attention given to technical education which fits the modern country for the battle of life, which is a commercial battle. I do not know if it is the policy of Australia to largely increase the ranks of the B.A.'s and M.A.'s, who float around Australia in large numbers, having no particular profession.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Without any visible means of support.

MR. MORAN: As the member for Cue remarks, without any visible means of support. It is a fact that in every part of Australia, one comes across a body of men who might come under Rudyard Kipling's famous description of "the legions that never were listed." One finds university men everywhere, and we do not find the modern university student pre-eminent in any large numbers in the walks of life over ordinary citizens of the State. It is not that education is not of prime value and importance to any enlightened country; but there has been a clamouring in Australia for a sort of all-round general education, the obtaining of degrees without any aim or object in life, and Australia was never able to absorb the expert services of university-trained men in what may be called the polite professions. All this leads us to consider, in forming a basis in Western Australia for higher education—a university if you like—whether we are not going to profit by the experience of the past by giving the university in Western Australia a marked characteristic of a technical

character. The Bill before the House is for the alienation of a large piece of land for the purpose of endowing what kind of university we may in future form. I notice the Premier expressed himself in favour of a system of giving large endowments to bodies of this kind. We are to a large extent alienating a big part of the public estate, and we should be careful not to build up too many close corporations having under their control large portions of the revenue-earning lands of the State. That is the only objection I have to this Bill. In granting an endowment we should not give extended powers to gentlemen who after all are not responsible to anybody. We can have an official body to administer the lands and the institution, without making it altogether independent of the public for whose use the university is established. First and foremost it is our duty to give every child in the State a plain, useful, primary education. That task in Western Australia is accomplished at greater cost than in any other part of Australia, and it will be so because of the area of our State and the fact that we have some little bits of settlement scattered about, and our intention and our desire is to give educational facilities to every handful of children. That is our first duty, and it is debatable whether our duty goes farther, but it is not debatable that this is our first duty and a very important one. I hold that next to a good primary education, all the teachings of modern times point to us that our duty is to give a technical education. As I said, it is not the duty of the State to provide a lot of men having letters after their names, many of whom, after all, are engaged in such occupations as dryblowing or are living in backblocks at Kimberley or other places. It is our duty first and foremost to provide primary education, and to make such arrangements that every child may get it; secondly we should take full cognisance at the present time of the necessity in this Commonwealth of turning the attention of our young people to semi-manual undertakings and all the modern uses of machinery in trades—one might almost call them professions. That is more our duty than the provision of examining bodies to confer the degrees of B.A., M.A., and all these other more or

less fanciful diplomas at the present time. I hope, therefore, the opportunity will not be lost of establishing a university; and when the time does come to establish it let us do so carefully and consider it in the light of all the information we can bring to bear from all parts of the world upon what basis we shall establish it; let us consider whether we shall not make it much more technical than classical. The Premier has pointed out that in New Zealand a greater number of students avail themselves of a university education *pro rata* than in any other State. From his figures that appears to be true. The reason is that in New Zealand in relation to this as every other governmental matter, there are four capitals instead of one. New Zealand has a great advantage over every State in Australia, in that she has four magnificently situated capitals, all of equal importance. Wellington is not more important than Dunedin, nor Christchurch than Auckland, and you never have centralisation in New Zealand. This appears to be a wise thing. The university in New Zealand can scarcely be called a university. When one talks of a university, 99 men out of 100 conjure up a magnificent building, but in New Zealand the building is non-existent. The university comprises an examining body, and there are colleges at these various centres; nothing very elaborate, nothing very large, but sufficient I believe for the purpose, and the examining body confers the degrees. The Premier might have carried his argument a little farther, by saying that if we are to be successful in Western Australia we have more need of decentralisation than even New Zealand. We are a larger country than New Zealand, travelling is harder and dearer, and we must consider the question of decentralising this university of ours and of establishing different places in the same way. It is much harder for a boy to-day to come from the North-West coast to a university at Perth than for a Perth boy to go to Adelaide. It is just as hard for a boy at Mount Magnet, Lawlers, or Menzies—and there are plenty there too—to come to Perth as for a Perth boy to go to Adelaide, and just as dear; and a boy who goes to Adelaide gets a change of climate, which does not do him any harm. All

these points have to be considered carefully in going into this question. The Bill before us now is for the appointment of a corporate body—a close corporation we may call it—with power over a portion of land we purpose alienating to that body. I would like to make just this statement, in conclusion. I hope the Government will be mindful of all branches of education in this State when they appoint a body to have control over the higher branches of education, and that it will be acceptable to everybody—those working under the State, and those doing equally important work apart from the State. A university should take no notice of anything except fitness, and the desirability of giving the student the advantages of education. It must be entirely free from everything sectarian. It must be entirely free from any preference for any particular education in this State; it must bestow its favours equally on all alike. Then it will be thoroughly representative of the people, and will be a blessing; but if we encourage in any way narrow-mindedness and cliquism, it will not be the blessing I would like to see it. I may mention that during the brief time I was Minister for Lands I had a report prepared by officers of the department showing the available sites for an institution of the kind within a certain radius of Perth. I think that report will be found in the Lands Department. It was my intention to ask the Government to consider the advisability of earmarking some of those sites for purposes of this character, and not alienate them without considering the importance of this rising agitation for a university in Western Australia. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill with these few remarks.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (Cue): I intend to support this Bill, although it is not in my opinion a measure of that first importance one would at first sight imagine. For years I have advocated the establishment of an agricultural college in this State, and I went so far during the little while I was Minister as to take steps to secure a suitable site for the establishment of such college.

MR. MORAN: The experience of Australia is against agricultural colleges, and for farms.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is not my experience, and not my reading. When I speak of an agricultural college I do not mean simply a place in which boys are taught the mere theory of agriculture, but a practical place where they can practise what they learn. Whitby Falls is the place I had my eye on as a suitable one for the establishment of that college. I think the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) has expressed very largely my own ideas in regard to the lines we should adopt as to education. Our first duty is to the children scattered up and down this State. In every place where there are children our system should follow them, no matter what the cost. Our children in the back country have the same claims upon us as our children in the larger centres, and our first duty is to put them in possession of primary education. We have simply to look at the matter from a common-sense point of view. If a boy has primary education, and possesses special talents which call for him to come forward for higher education, he will do so. I take it there are two great things this State has to give its attention to, after primary education. The first of these is to establish proper mining schools, mining colleges, schools of mines, technical colleges of that character; and the next is the agricultural side of our development. I say nothing against a university, but I think a higher duty rests upon us to establish some institution for technical education. We must remember that in our circumstances we are scarcely the kind of people likely to go in for high culture, scientific research, and classical endowments, but we are more likely to go in first for developments in mining and agriculture, and perhaps later on industrial pursuits. I think the Government will do well to give early attention to farther development upon these particular lines. Perhaps it is a wise thing that the Government should look forward to what I think must be ultimately a necessity in this State—a central university. They may do well to select suitable land for the endowment of that university. For that reason I support the Bill, and while doing so I desire to impress the necessity of those things which necessarily precede a university, and which will

reach a far larger number of students than can possibly ever come to a university, and which are quite as necessary for the development of those things needed for our own particular conditions. I do not know what locality the Government have in view in regard to this institution. To my mind we want to get, if we can, a locality that will be a change from our large centres; say, for instance, some nice site in the Darling Range or some district of that character, where we can have for our boys a distinct change of air, and they can enter into their college studies. The Government may possibly localise some position convenient to a railway, and no doubt the land itself might become a very large source of revenue, and be a centre for a mountain home to some extent, a place where people will go for a change. The value of the land will thereby be very greatly increased. A system of leasing that land seems to me a good one, by which people could get leases for 50 years, with perhaps some building conditions. The occupation of certain portions of land may become a source of very great value to the university in days to come. However, I suppose we shall hear more about this and the proposals of the Government later on. As far as I can read this Bill, it is simply creating a trust to take over certain lands which the Government will be disposed to give for a distinct purpose, and which they will ask the trust to take over and make the best of. With that in view, I think it is a wise step as far as it goes. I would rather have a Bill for the establishment of an agricultural college than this measure. In the absence of what I consider the better thing, I have every pleasure in supporting the Bill now before the House.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): Although, unlike the two members who have spoken, I do not see the immediate necessity for a university, yet I look forward to a period when we must follow the example of every other part of the world and have one established here. I feel that the Government are following a very wise course in making arrangements for the endowment of land for that university which has to come. And now the time is early they may do it, because we may be certain that unless a lot of

land now available is handed over to a board of trustees such as this, very much of the land will be sold, principally because the Treasurer will be very willing and anxious to add to his coffers. That has been the experience of other States, and it is well we should now take advantage of our opportunity by making this endowment at the present time. I listened very attentively to the Premier's speech in proposing the second reading of the Bill, and so far as it went I was in agreement with him, although I do not think he made a good case altogether in comparing our State with the other States and Colonies of Australasia. He pointed out how with small populations each State and Colony had established universities, but he did not tell us that at the particular time these universities were established not one of them spent anything like the amount we spend for other educational purposes.

THE PREMIER: That shows that we have a greater number of pupils coming along who need it.

MR. HASTIE: It also shows that most people now attach far greater importance to general democratic education than they did in those days, and that if those people had been of the same mind as we are at this time they would rather have extended their primary and secondary education than have started a higher university with the small number of students then available. However the time will come when we must have a university established here. The Premier has told us about the decentralisation policy of New Zealand, where there are four universities. He said four—it has five, I believe, for in Wellington there are two schools, the ordinary college and the examining body for the whole of the State. That system in New Zealand has been availed of to a very large extent; and I wish something of the kind could be done here. We have a much larger territory than New Zealand, and as pointed out very clearly by the member for West Perth the general tendency of a central university is to have great buildings and to keep up great style, to spend all the money that ought to be spent on university teaching on the university buildings. If some such course as that followed in New Zealand obtained in Western Australia, I

believe it would be much better for us than to follow the example of the other States of Australia. For instance, by the time we have a university established it is almost a certainty there will be a larger population on the goldfields. So far we have done well by establishing schools of mines; they will assist the mining industry to a very large extent; but it will be found impossible by a large proportion of the promising boys and girls of the goldfields to come and spend all their time in Perth. It would be much better if we looked forward, not to the establishment of a university in Perth—and I am right in assuming that is what is in the minds of most members at the present time—but to look forward to the time when we shall establish at least colleges in various parts of this State. At the present time it is true we are not very anxious to have a university established in our midst, but it is found in some stage of the development of the country that a university is essential. It has been so found in America and Germany, and almost everyone admits that it is the people who are best educated who get on best in life, not only as regards the individual but as regards the State at large. We must look forward to the time in this State when our primary industries cannot be entirely treated as our chief industries, and when we must go in for other things than gold-mining and farming. Therefore we should have a university at the earliest moment. Again I wish to congratulate the Premier on taking this action to endow a university with a large portion of land, and to express the hope that he will follow it up in other directions.

MR. T. BATH (Hannans): As this is merely a Bill for the setting apart of certain lands as an endowment for a university to be erected in the future, I suppose there can be little exception taken to such a proposal, because if we ever contemplate the erection of a university, it is necessary that at an early period we should make provision for the funds to carry it on. When speaking on this matter during the debate on the Address-in-Reply I stated that some new departure would need to be taken, if this university was to be as useful to the State as its promoters desired it to be, and also if it was to meet with the

support of the Parliament of this State. When the question arises as to the manner in which the university shall be conducted I anticipate there will be a debate of a very controversial nature. Our educational authorities will differ largely as to the methods to be pursued. The last word in older countries with regard to university education has not been said on the subject, and at the present time a war is waging between the methods of the newer country of America and those of the older countries such as Great Britain. In the recent dispute as to what has given one country pre-eminence above another, the fiscal question having largely entered into the matter, I think those who advocate the respective systems lose sight of the fact that education is a large factor in the progress of any nation. In Germany they seem to have solved the question of technical and practical education. In Australia we are liable to err on the side of making our education too technical, or in demanding that it should err on the technical side. So far as Germany is concerned, they have a university education which is as high as if not higher than any system in Great Britain. There the leaders of science pursue learning for learning's sake; but hand-in-hand with the universities they have the practical schools, so that the discoveries made in the realms of science by those who love its pursuit are turned to practical uses. In that respect Germany is outstripping many countries in education and other matters. In America they have universities endowed by private gifts where the higher university training is given, and where this is supplemented by a high degree of technical training. If in Western Australia we can combine these two things, a higher university training with a high degree of technical training, and if we can at the same time prevent the university from becoming a class preserve for a privileged few, we shall be placing education on an effective basis for Western Australia. I anticipate the time will be at least somewhat distant in Western Australia, because possibly the development of the State does not warrant the large expense that will be involved. Therefore, while I support this Bill for the setting apart of land as an endow-

ment to the university, I do not anticipate that the real question, the provision of a university, will engage our attention for a considerable time to come. When we do establish a university I hope it will not only be a credit to Western Australia, but a shining example to the other States of the Commonwealth.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ROADS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. H. Rason): In moving that this Bill be read a second time, it will be within the memory of members that last year a consolidating amendment of the Roads Act was passed. This Act has been found to work very well indeed, but none the less a considerable number of amendments has been proposed by the various roads board bodies. It has not been thought advisable to adopt the whole of these suggested amendments, but it has been thought advisable to bring down this short Bill which introduces many of the most desirable of them. It will be seen that Clause 2 of this Bill gives a different interpretation to the word "occupier." This has been found necessary, because it has been held in Court that the holder of a quarry concession or a timber concession is not an occupier within the meaning of the Act, and therefore not liable to be rated by a roads board. If this clause be passed, and I trust it will, it will enable roads boards to rate the holders of concessions of land for quarrying or timber-cutting purposes. I think the House will at once agree that, as regards timber companies at all events, there is not the slightest reason in the world why they should not pay rates to the roads boards, for undoubtedly they make great use of the roads and do more damage in that use than other people. I cannot imagine that there will be any objection on the part of timber companies themselves. However, that is the reason for the clause, that in some districts it was held that an occupier did not include the holder of a timber concession. Clause 3 gives the Governor power to remove a roads board from office. Under the existing Act it is argued that, though the Governor may supersede a

board, he cannot wholly remove the members from office; and in many cases it was found very desirable indeed, and members can well understand that circumstances may arise and do arise when it is desirable that the whole of the board shall be removed from office and a new board constituted. Clause 4 deals with section 25 of the principal Act passed last session, and really contains provisions which ought to have been included in the Act of last year. It will be remembered that on the motion of the member for the Swan provision was made for rating on unimproved land values. Although that provision was inserted, no arrangement was made for the division of the voting on unimproved land values. This clause now provides the number of votes proportionately to the annual ratable value or unimproved capital value according to the system adopted by the board. Clause 5 is consequential on Clause 4. Clause 6 amends Section 106 of the Act, and it deals with the rights of roads boards to remove stone or gravel for road-making purposes from private lands or from reserves. In actual experience it has been found that some roads boards hold that on reserves for road-making purposes within the boundaries of their respective districts they have the sole and exclusive right to the stone or gravel. On the other hand some roads boards argue that they have a perfect right to go upon private land and take such gravel or stone from that land as they require for any portion of the road, but not, as it should be, for the road in the immediate vicinity. This clause puts matters straight in that direction, and limits the powers of the roads board by preventing them from removing stone or gravel from lands without the written consent of the Minister. The next clause amends Section 107 of the Act, and is inserted here at the request of the Lands Titles Department. The reason will be obvious when I explain that a road may be declared through a location, and in the course of time that location may be subdivided and sold in small allotments. Ultimately the road declared is closed; and the question arises, whom does the land belong to, the original owner of the land or the owners of the allotments? The clause will set that doubt at rest by providing that where a road formerly declared is closed,

it shall belong to the owners of the land adjoining at the time of the closing; that is, each owner of an adjoining allotment will own one-half of the land, extending from the middle line of the road so closed to the boundary of his allotment. Instead of reverting to the original vendor of the land, the road will become the property of the owners of the land on each side of it. Clause 8 provides for the issue by the roads boards of a registration disc for camels. Members know that by the Act of last year camels had to be licensed; and this clause provides for a disc being attached to the neck of each camel, following out the principle laid down with regard to the wearing of discs by dogs. The clause provides also that every licensed vehicle plying for hire shall have a disc inscribed with the name of the district and the registration number, and requires every person in charge of every such vehicle, bicycle, tricycle, motor cycle, motor car, or motor wagon to keep the registration disc on some conspicuous part thereof. Sub-clause (31a) empowers the board to make by-laws regulating the use of sea or river jetties or bathing houses under the control of the board, and prescribing charges of admission to or for the use of the same. There are some roads boards who propose to erect jetties and bathing houses; and this clause will enable them to make by-laws for the proper regulation and conduct of such establishments. Clause 9 repeals Subsection 6 of Section 123 of the principal Act, which gives all police court fees to the roads boards. It is thought quite right that the roads boards or local bodies should have the fines inflicted under their by-laws for breach of any of their regulations, or inflicted under those Acts which specially provide that the penalties imposed thereunder shall go to the local governing bodies; but I do not think that it was ever meant—and if it was, then in my opinion it was a mistake—that there should be given to local bodies the penalties imposed for every breach of the Police Act. If this clause passes, local bodies will in future be entitled to fines imposed for breaches of their own regulations and their own by-laws only, and to the fines which certain Acts specify shall be theirs. The next clause is consequential upon Clause 2, to which I drew

attention, giving power for the rating of timber and quarry concessions. The clause provides the manner in which the valuation shall be made:—

The net annual value of any land belonging to the Crown, in respect of which a license or concession is held, with the right of taking any profit of the land, shall be such annual rent as might reasonably be expected to be paid for the exercise of such right.

Members are aware that for some of these concessions no actual annual rental is paid; therefore it is necessary to have a clause defining how, for the purpose of rating, the value shall be arrived at. This provides that it shall be estimated at the annual rent which might reasonably be expected to be paid for the exercise of the right. Clause 11 alters the wording in Section 126 of the principal Act by striking out the words "owner's estate or interest in any land," and inserting "the land in fee simple." Members will find in Section 126 provision for the method of rating; namely, that the rate shall be struck on the unimproved value of the owner's estate or interest in any land. That may obviously lead to considerable trouble. What the rate is struck upon is not the owner's interest in the land but the land itself—the land in fee simple. The owner's estate or interest in the land may be only a 21 years' lease; but that will not represent the value of the land for rating purposes. The unimproved value of the land is the unimproved value of it in fee simple. The clause will put that matter straight in the manner I have indicated. Clause 12 gives the board power to strike a minimum rate of 2s. 6d. upon land which has been subdivided, in such a manner as the board may think fit.

MR. STONE: If a man subdivides 100 acres into small blocks, will he have to pay 2s. 6d. on each block?

THE MINISTER: He may, if the board so decide.

[MR. STONE called attention to the state of the House. Bells rung and quorum formed.]

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The section as amended will read:—

A minimum rate of 2s. 6d. may be levied on any ratable land, or if the board think fit each of the several lots into which any ratable lands may be subdivided.

Clause 13 deals with the apportionment of rates which have been collected or

become due to a board which is afterwards divided into two boards. Clause 14 deals with Section 169 of the principal Act, by striking out the words "within a district to which this part applies;" and the section is transposed to Part IX., and its new number is 203. The section referred to deals with the right of roads boards to have subdivisional plans of land submitted to them before the land can be cut up into allotments and sold. Under the existing Act that section applies only to boards coming under the provisions of Part VII.; but there seems to be no reasonable objection to this power being given to all roads boards. If some roads boards have power to object to lands being cut up in a manner which they think detrimental to the best interests of their districts, why should not every roads board have the same power? The effect of the clause will be to give the same power to roads boards throughout the State. Clause 16 provides that whenever any person sells any ratable land he shall give notice in writing to the board, with a description of the land and the name and address of the purchaser. That is a necessary provision; because it is found by experience that roads boards are often not acquainted with the change of ownership, and that much confusion and trouble arise in consequence. [MR. HASSELL: And expense too.] Undoubtedly. Clause 17 gives power to write off arrears of rates due in respect of any ratable land, with the approval of the Minister; but such approval shall not be given until public notice in the prescribed form, containing a list of arrears intended to be written off, has been published. Those members who have had any experience of the working of roads boards know that in spite of every effort occasions do arise when it is impossible to collect some rates and not worth while going to the expense of getting a judgment. It is sometimes necessary to make a compromise, and to accept a moiety of the rates in full discharge; and difficulty arises in writing off any portion of the rates in circumstances such as these. The clause would be dangerous but for the protection given therein. The Minister cannot give his approval to the writing off until public notice has been given of the intention to apply to him

for permission to write off. The list of arrears, too, has to be published; and it is because I recognise the danger of the clause that it is safeguarded in the manner to which I now draw attention. Clause 18 gives the board of a district to which part VII. applies power to construct and maintain sea or river jetties and bathing houses, and to pay out of the general revenue the expenses incurred thereby. Clause 19 gives the Governor power to make regulations, and by such regulations to alter or vary any of the schedules of the principal Act and prescribe additional forms. In Clause 20 it is set out that in all future copies of the Roads Act the amendments made by this Bill shall be printed. This is a purely formal clause; but I think members will recognise how advisable it is that if possible we should adopt this procedure with regard to all Acts; because a man gets what is called the principal Act, and when he knows that Act thinks he knows the lot; but he afterwards finds that there have been two or three amending Acts passed, by which the law is totally altered. The effect of this last clause will be that future copies of the Roads Act will be complete in themselves. Hon. members will see this is a good and useful Bill; it contains no very startling innovations, but is rather giving effect to some of those amendments which have been suggested by members, and in other cases found necessary in the working of last year's Act. I have pleasure in moving the second reading.

[Sitting suspended for ten minutes.]

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): This is a necessary Bill. It appears to be the fate of a good many Bills passed by Parliament that we pass them one year and the next year amendments are brought in to make the original Acts work. It would be a great convenience to members of the House if these Bills were circulated earlier than is at present the custom. We have a good many instances where Bills have been prepared and printed and have not been circulated amongst members until the day of the second reading. It may lead to the saving of a good deal of time if Bills are circulated earlier amongst members, so that they can have an opportunity of

studying them and being able to discuss them properly when the time arrives, on the day of the second reading. [Interjection by Mr. ILLINGWORTH.] I should be pleased to see Bills circulated, as I believe is the custom in some parts of Australia, a considerable time even before the first reading. There are one or two matters in this Bill which will require a little consideration, and I think the Minister will be quite at one with those of us who would like time to look into them. As to these amendments in Clause 4, dealing with the unimproved value, it may be found that the actual form in which this is being introduced by the Government is not so workable or equitable as might appear, considering the short time we have had the opportunity of consideration. It may be far easier to arrive at the value of taxation on the unimproved system, or at least to arrive at the value of voting where the unimproved system is in force, by utilising the capital value instead of the unimproved capital value for that purpose. In our rate book we provide what shall be the estimated net annual value and the capital value. This would lead to simplification of the books. As now proposed we should require a column for the annual value, a column for the capital value, and a column for the unimproved capital value, also I presume a column showing the amount of rates on unimproved land. This is one of the things I am not prepared to go into. I think an opportunity should be given to the executive of roads boards, for instance, to look into some of these matters, and also it may be discovered on looking into Clause 16 that the provisions contained there are hardly workable, because I anticipate that pretty well in every case the board will refuse to take action if these notices have to be given. I believe that the time wasted by the secretaries of boards and various board officers watching people to see whether they send in a particular notice or not would be more than sufficient to allow them to go to the Titles Office and get the whole of the information there. I think that if there were an officer appointed by the Government in such a way that the Government would not take any responsibility whatever for the acts of that officer, or any of the provisions

he might make, that would be far preferable to the method proposed here. In connection with Clause 20 I would suggest that, instead of altering the printed copies and allowing a large number of printed copies to become useless when an amendment is brought in, it might be preferable to bind the amending Act with the original Act. If they were bound together and sold as one Act—

MR. HASSELL: It would be just as bad then.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: "In all copies of the original Act hereafter printed."

MR. JACOBY: I see. It does not matter much. I thought that would be a simpler way of getting over the difficulty. I trust we shall have a select committee, say some time next week, so as to get an opportunity for some of these debatable points being looked into a little bit farther.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

LAND ACT AMENDMENT BILL (PRIVATE, SALVATION ARMY).

SECOND READING.

MR. J. L. NANSON (Murchison), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said: This Bill deals with land held by the Salvation Army in the Collie district. It is no doubt within the recollection of members that several years ago the Salvation Army were anxious to establish a settlement in connection with what was known as General Booth's Darkest England scheme. With that object in view they entered into negotiations with the Government of the day, and the Government were willing in the first place to grant some 160,000 acres of land for the purpose of establishing a settlement of that kind. That land was to be granted under homestead lease conditions; but subsequently the Government thought better of their intention, and modified the scheme to a considerable extent. They stipulated that no immigrants were to be brought in from the old country, also that the amount of land the Salvation Army were to be allowed to take up be limited to 20,000 acres, and the land instead of being alienated under homestead lease conditions was wholly alienated as first-

class land, namely at 10 shillings an acre. The Salvation Army authorities were naturally at that time disappointed when they had to pay a higher price for the land, but rather than see their benevolent intentions in regard to neglected children in this State thwarted they agreed to the proposals of the Government and took up this land as first-class land. Before doing so they were shown over the land by an officer of the Government. The Salvation Army authorities who were shown over were not conversant with land conditions in Western Australia, were not familiar with the State, and were in fact so far as the laws of the country are concerned what are conversationally known as "new chums." By the best of tests, the test of experience, the authorities of the Salvation Army who have had to work this land have since found out that the greater proportion of it, something like 75 per cent., is only second or third-class, at any rate in their opinion. This Bill does not ask the House to agree to the Salvation Army surrendering this land they took up as first-class and to their being regranted it as second or third-class land, but merely asks that it should be classified by the officers of the Government. In that respect the Salvation Army are only asking for what is given to any ordinary selector who is applying for land from the Government. It would have been possible for the Army to have taken up this land in four blocks of 5,000 acres, instead of in one block of 20,000 acres. In order to permit of their taking it up in one block of 20,000 acres it became necessary in 1899 to pass a private Bill. It is perhaps hardly necessary for me to explain why the Salvation Army prefer to take up the land in this way. The land held by this religious body is held very much in the way land is held by the Roman Catholic church, by the Bishop for the time being. The land for the Salvation Army is held in trust for the Army by the General of the Army for the time being. However, by taking up this 20,000 acres in the name of one man, the Army deprived themselves of the privilege that would have been given to them if they had selected as ordinary selectors and if, instead of placing it in one name, they had placed it in four names. The evidence in support of this

Bill is before members. If members look at it they will see it makes out a very strong case indeed, not for giving land at either second or third-class rates, but for selling it according to the classification of Government officers, so that it can be shown whether it was originally sold at a value made by the officers. If not, the Army should get the land at a fair value. Every Minister for Lands who has had the application of the Army before him has supported it. Among the witnesses before the select committee was the present Minister for Lands, and he put the matter in a nutshell when in his answer to question 76 he said :—

The proposal is simply to ask the department to do for the Army what we do for every other selector, that is to classify the lands. The Army have 20,000 acres under a private Act. Four persons could have applied for that area as grazing leases of 5,000 acres each. Then we would have classified and have secured it subject to classification. In this instance the whole of the land has been classed as first-class.

Then we have the evidence of the Hon. G. Throssell, who was Minister for Lands when the application of the Army was first made. The evidence shows that at that time this Minister for Lands was entirely in sympathy with the Army, and was personally in opposition to the terms under which the land had been granted to that body. The Hon. G. Throssell points out in his evidence, in answer to question 101, "Without going into the *pros* and *cons* of the case, classification was at that time refused to the Army;" and that it was either a question of taking up the land at 10s. an acre or letting it go altogether and abandoning the scheme, the benefit of which is felt not by the Salvation Army but by this State of Western Australia, because the work at the Collie settlement is devoted solely to neglected children belonging to the State. The Army are really doing to the State what is a national work, taking neglected children, boys and girls, and giving them a practical kind of education, educating the girls for housework and country pursuits suitable for women, and giving the boys a good, sound education in farming. The member for Northam said in regard to this application :—

The Salvation Army having proved their *bona fides* are merely harking back to their old conditions, and asking us to do for

them what had been done for any ordinary settler—let them take up the land according to the quality. There never ought to have been any objection to this. I do not want to publish it from the house-tops, but Sir John Forrest had a great prejudice against these people, and I always thought he humbugged them. Indeed, I had a big row with him about it.

That is what this Minister for Land says. He gives some particulars about that row, but the end of the business was that the member for Northam, then Minister for Lands, was compelled to give way and allow the land to be taken up as Sir John Forrest wished, at 10s. per acre. The Hon. G. Throssell's opinion was given in the following words:—

Sir John Forrest called it a concession to make them pay 10s. for what I considered worthless land. In another part of the country they would have got such land at 3s. 9d. or 6s. 3d. at the present time.

That is the position so far as Clause 2 of the Bill is concerned. It deals with the question on classification. Clause 3 provides that the Minister shall have power to exchange waste lands held by the Salvation Army. If members will turn to the evidence they will find that this exchange relates merely to a small area of land of some 2,000 acres. The Salvation Army tried to rear sheep on their land at the Collie, but in the course of two or three years lost 3,000 sheep. They have no suitable sheep land, and they propose to exchange 2,000 acres of their present holding for 2,000 acres farther east. This land has been reported on by an officer of the department, and I have read the report, from which I gather that he is favourable to the exchange. There is one feature I should like to mention. If the Salvation Army are allowed to abandon the 2,000 acres close to Collie and take up 2,000 farther eastward, the lands so abandoned will be useful for sleeper cutting purposes. Of land of this character there is very little available at the present time. It is pointed out by the officer who deals with this land that there is a demand at Collie for land on which sleepers can be cut, and that if the Army are allowed to surrender the land which is of no use to them it will be available to the sleeper cutters about the Collie township. I do not know that there is anything more I need say with regard to this Bill. I

understand the Government are fully favourable to it, and indeed, if it were possible, they would have introduced it as a public measure, but as the original Bill was a private Bill it became necessary to have this amending Bill also private. The Minister for Lands naturally could give more information on this subject, as he has the matter at his finger ends more than I have; and the hon. G. Throssell, if he were here, could justify the *bona fides* of the application; but I venture to say, if neither of these gentlemen gives testimony while the motion for the second reading is before the House, their evidence before the select committee should be sufficient to carry conviction. There is no question that the Army are doing good work at the Collie. Under the original Act they were only compelled to spend £1,000 a year, but they have spent £20,000. If it were a question of doing a favour to the Salvation Army one might appeal confidently to the House to do them a favour, but it is not a favour. I put the matter before the House more as an act of justice than as a favour, that we should no more refuse to these people working for a public benefit the same provisions as to having their land classified by the Government officers, than we would refuse it to the ordinary selector. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): I would like to say a little about this matter. I was one of those selected to sit on the select committee to inquire into the merits and demerits of this Bill, and I believe the justification for the Bill is the need for reclassification of this land and the fact that the Salvation Army authorities, when being advised by an officer of the Government that this land would suit their purpose, were misled, and that the whole of the trouble in which they find themselves was due to the wrong advice given to them by the Government officer. I wish to explain one or two matters that occurred in connection with this select committee, if I may do so, to justify my position. The first meeting was a purely formal one and was held on a Wednesday. I did not consider it necessary to be present. The next meeting, the only one at which evidence was taken, was held on the following day; and I may say that no notice of this reached

me, so that I was unable to attend. When attending the final meeting, which was held on Tuesday, the 10th November, I was not in a position to express any opinion as to whether there was any justification for this Bill or not. No evidence was printed, but I was informed of the evidence that had been called. I asked that somebody with expert knowledge should be called to give the committee some description as to the land. Now there is considerable diversity of opinion still existing regarding the various qualities of land in this State, and my own experience has been such as to lead me to be very cautious in this regard. At Katanning we find lands now producing the heaviest crops which a very short time ago the most experienced farmers of this State deemed absolutely worthless. In my experience I was advised by one of the best farmers I know not to attempt to do anything with certain land I was then clearing on my own property. Now it is one of the very best portions of my orchard. I quote this to show that a good deal of the opinions expressed in regard to the lands of this State have been upset by experience. Having this in view I was naturally anxious, before I consented as a member of the committee to report in favour of the justification of this Bill, to have some expert evidence as to the value of the land from people who know this country and were used to operate on it. I was overruled on that matter, and the committee refused to call any farther evidence, pleading as justification the fact that evidence had been given by Mr. Suttor, who represents the Army, by Mr. Throssell, the late Minister for Lands, by the present Minister for Lands, and by the Surveyor General. I have yet to learn that any of these gentlemen is an authority on this particular part of the country, and although I am quite willing to accept the opinions of some of these witnesses with regard to ordinary agricultural country, I should require the evidence of people experienced in the working of this particular country before I satisfied myself and before I should be prepared to say it was absolutely worthless. I therefore requested that Mr. Ranford, who has lately been elevated in his position by the Government, and who originally reported on this country and induced the

Army to go there, should be called to give evidence. It was my intention to ask that committee to call witnesses who were used to operate in this particular part of the country, so that evidence should be given to show that there was ample justification for the committee bringing in a report favourable to this Bill. I take it that any report the committee brings in must be based on the evidence, and if the evidence is to be of value it must be the evidence of persons capable of giving an expert opinion on this class of country. Those witnesses whose evidence we have in the report are not such persons as would usually be called on to report as to the capabilities of this class of country. The evidence of those witnesses has just been placed on the table of the House, and this is the first opportunity I have had as a member of the committee of perusing the evidence given by those witnesses in my absence. Of course there should be no desire on the part of the committee to prevent any member of it calling such evidence as he thinks is desirable. My sympathies were and are in favour of straining a point if necessary to help the Salvation Army, because I am aware they are deserving of every possible assistance; but there is a principle involved, and if we are to start this system of picking out bad pieces of country in a selection, whether large or small, we do not know where this practice may end. If the Minister is justified in taking out bad portions of a large piece of country and substituting other portions in exchange, as is proposed in the Bill—[THE MINISTER: That is not intended, I think]—the Bill contemplates it, whatever may be the Minister's intention; and can it be said that if the Bill becomes law the Minister will not be inundated with applications from all parts of the country to grant the same terms as are proposed to be granted to the Salvation Army? There are heaps of cases that may be practically identical, and if you are to take out of a large piece of country the bad portions of it and exchange others, there will be many such claims from persons in different parts of the State.

THE MINISTER: The Army do not desire that, and I am sure it is not contemplated. The lands surrendered must

be in one continuous area, as members will see in the Bill.

MR. JACOBY: The same principle is involved, and I have no doubt that whatever the Minister may do in connection with this matter will be dictated by a regard for the interests of the State.

THE MINISTER: I will be advised by my officers.

MR. JACOBY: I am pointing out some of the pitfalls which may be expected if the Minister starts on this course; for there will be ample reasons for thousands of people in different parts of the State to ask for the same terms to be extended to them. I am anxious that no injustice shall be done to the Salvation Army, and I think it would be wise, if the report is not dealt with now, that an opportunity should be given to get some evidence that will justify this Bill, and I could suggest suitable witnesses who might be called. I am anxious to get some justification from outside sources in order to enable me to support the Bill. I have questioned many persons about the condition of the particular country, and I have heard great diversity of opinion respecting it; some persons telling me it includes some of the best land in the State, and others equally capable of judging informing me that a lot of the country is worthless. Therefore the proper course for the committee will be to get evidence in support of the Bill, if it can be obtained, and then I may be able to support the measure. At present I am not in that position, and I am only doing my duty in stating my objections to the Bill.

MR. W. ATKINS (Murray): The position is that when this area of country was granted to the Salvation Army, it was proposed to settle the country by bringing over some thousands of people from the London slums, known as the submerged tenth. The Army had tried to do the same in other States, but none of them were anxious to have this kind of settlement. When this piece of land was granted to the Army in Western Australia, it was considered to be out of the way of all other settlement at that time, and the Government were willing to grant to the Army a large block of land that would be out of the way of everybody else. It was not a healthy proposition that the Army should be

encouraged to bring in the submerged tenth from the London slums and locate them in Western Australia; but that was the proposition at the time, and those persons who were arranging the matter with the Government on behalf of the Army certainly thought they would be able to bring some thousands of poor people to settle on that land. That was the reason they were given this piece of land, and the understanding was that the Army would pay a good price for it, not because of the quality of the land, but because they were to be allowed to get a piece of land in the country at all for the purpose. The settlement, so far as it has gone, does not appear to have done the country any harm, but rather a great deal of good; and if these people can be helped to get on better than they have done hitherto—for they have done little or no good for themselves so far, though they have done some good in getting people on the land who might otherwise be a nuisance elsewhere—we should help them; but still, I cannot understand how it is possible to find 20,000 acres of good country in one block. There is a lot of ironstone gravel in that country.

MR. JACOBY: The most suitable land in the State for vine growing.

MR. ATKINS: But everybody does not want to grow vines in Western Australia. These people seem to have been doing good work; and although their original proposition may not have been carried out, I do not really see why the Government at the present should not try to help them to make a living. They are doing it now in a way that is of some benefit to the country, because they are growing vegetables and other produce to be sold at Collie, and their settlement is well out of the way. We ought to try to help them, and as far as I can see the Bill gives large powers to the Minister in that direction. I am not much afraid of the Minister in regard to these powers, and we may well let him try to devise some fair way of relieving these people in their position, because there is no doubt the land which has been granted to them is not first class.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. M. Hopkins): This is one of the questions on which any member might well have appealed to the sentiment of the House, if he so desired. Any person

who has been to Collie and seen the schools these people have erected there, and the good work they have done at the present time, cannot have other than the best wishes for any consideration that may be shown to them. That consideration cannot be shown in such a Bill as this, for I must point out that it is purely a business proposition, and is not a question of extending any philanthropy to the Salvation Army. There are 20,000 acres held by these people in one continuous area, and when they went there to settle they took 4,000 head of sheep, and to-day they have about 500. That is a reasonable indication that the land on which they have settled is not what can be called first class. Had any four persons in the State or any four members of this House desired to select 20,000 acres, each taking say 5,000 acres, the Government would not have waited for them to spend £20,000 on the land as the Army are supposed to have done, but the four persons would have made a formal application and paid probably a quarter's rent, and then a classification would have been made and the 20,000 acres would have been offered to those persons in accordance with that classification.

MR. HASTIE: Not in one block.

THE MINISTER: The land might have been taken up in one or more blocks as grazing leases, and assuming there might be in one block perhaps 1,000 acres of first-class land and 4,000 acres of third-class, the applicant would be allowed to take the land according to that classification. What is proposed to be done if the Bill passes, and in order to safeguard the interests of the State, is to request the senior inspector of conditional purchases and the chief inspector, Messrs. Thompson and May, two of the best business men in the service, to make a classification; and I will entirely abide by their classification, not introducing my feelings into the question, for I am acting purely in a business capacity on behalf of the State. As to having similar applications from other persons, I am not aware of any parallel case in which a person has applied for land and had it classified, except perhaps some small particular areas which had been removed from the operation of the grazing section in the Act; but this land was not removed from the operation of that section, and consequently it was

open for any person to apply for this as grazing land.

MR. STONE: Not at that time. It came into force afterwards.

THE MINISTER: The land has been open in that locality right to the first of this month, when we had of necessity to refuse to receive any farther applications for grazing leases until our arrears were cleared off. But I want to be perfectly clear. It is my intention, if the Bill passes, to instruct Messrs. Thompson and May to inspect that land and classify it, thus to have classification by two of the oldest officers of the service; and I intend to be entirely guided by their report, and by no means to back out.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If the land is reported to be first-class, you will charge for it as first-class?

THE MINISTER: Yes; but if there is a proportion of second and third-class land, it is only reasonable, fair, and equitable that these people should have the same consideration extended to them as we extend to every other selector of grazing leases within the limits of this State.

MR. JACOB: Would it not have been better to settle the reclassification before bringing in the Bill?

THE MINISTER: The hon. member is submitting a proposal to which I do not altogether agree. A feeling has sprung up in the minds of those persons who have endeavoured to work this country that they have not been fairly dealt with. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Hayward)—and no person, I suppose, knows the country better—says the Army are quite right in their contention. I do not want to go into the merits or demerits of the question at all, for I think that is beside the question. The Salvation Army ask for reclassification of their country, a reclassification we would extend to anyone else who applied for it under grazing-lease conditions. Why should we refuse it? The reason why Clause 3, which has been referred to, found a place in the Bill was that they discovered the country did not do well for sheep, and if they had some 2,000 acres of country in another spot they would be able to take their stock and by a change of country see them through the year. That is commonly done in all parts of the State. As far as that proposal is con-

cerned, the member for the Swan seems to be imbued with the idea that these people would cut off the bad portion of third-class land and reserve only the good land for themselves. If the clause read,

The Minister for Lands may grant to the transferee any waste lands of the Crown, not exceeding 2,000 acres, in exchange for any portions of the lands set forth in the said schedule which are surrendered by the surrender of one continuous area,

I think that would make the Bill fair; and members will know, apart altogether from whether this country is first, second, or third-class, that whatever is eventually done will be done strictly on those lines, and so far as I am concerned no question of sentiment will come into consideration, but I shall act only on the recommendation of the officers of the department.

MR. T. HAYWARD (Bunbury): I feel quite certain that the Salvation Army people were misled in the first instance by an officer of the Lands Department. They came here perfect strangers and took the report of this officer that the land was first-class, and acted accordingly. These people do not ask for more than I think they are justly entitled to, and I feel certain that members, after having read this report, will be of the same opinion. I went over that particular land more than 40 years ago, looking for a cattle run, and I would not take it then.

MR. JACOBY: It may be good fruit country.

MR. HAYWARD: I have been over it several times since, but not all over it since the Salvation Army have been there. It is stated that there were a thousand acres of first-class land; possibly so, but the first-class land is so scattered that it is absolutely worthless as first-class land. My opinion of the land is that there is a small proportion which is second-class land, but at least three-fourths of it is third-class land, and inferior at that.

MR. JACOBY: That is judging from a grazing point of view.

MR. HAYWARD: Any way you look at it.

MR. JACOBY: Good fruit country is not always good grazing land.

MR. HAYWARD: The land proposed to be surrendered is more valuable for timber than for any other purpose.

MR. BUTCHER: Would it keep rabbits?

MR. HAYWARD: I think rabbits about the only thing it would keep. My own opinion of the country—and I have had a good deal of experience in that part—is that the only good purpose to which the land could be put would be that of a cattle run during the summer months. In the winter months in the shade and wet, cattle will not do so well. It must be also borne in mind that this land is not like our land in the eastern districts. It would cost £6 or £7 per acre to clear it, and when cleared it would not be worth the money. I should value the land at about 4s. an acre and no more. Whatever the classification may be I do not know. Two different people settled on the land years ago and stayed on it for a time; one man put up a house and erected a building, and another did the same; so the land was tried years ago. One man named Pollard took up 100 acres, but he abandoned it and sold it to the Salvation Army for £100, that being a pound an acre, and he had spent a considerable amount of money. Another person was on the land and he had to abandon it and sold it.

MR. JACOBY: Is that the whole 20,000 acres they obtained?

MR. HAYWARD: Portions of it. People would not go there in those days and take the worst of the land, but what they considered the best.

MR. JACOBY: I want information about the land, and we have not been able to get it from the committee.

MR. HAYWARD: These people imported 2,800 sheep from Melbourne and bought 1,200 locally; they sold 100 and they have 500 left. The cattle have not done very much better. The sheep were of very good class. I saw them landed, and I told the people that the undertaking would end in disaster if they placed this quantity of stock on the land. As I said, it is only an act of common justice that this Bill should be passed to relieve these people from the very great responsibilities they are under at the present time.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): As the discussion goes on the more unsatisfactory it seems to me. If I understand rightly, we are at the present time putting a lot of people on the land; usually surveyors,

are sent out to survey the land, and in almost each case they pick out a piece of first-class land, very often a piece of second-class land, and then third-class land, and so long as there is a fair proportion of the first-class land the land is classified as first-class. That I understand has been the position with regard to this settlement of the Salvation Army near Collie. Now the Salvation Army come to us and say: "A large proportion of our land is not of the quality represented, and therefore we ask for reclassification." If that is done in this instance, it must be done in the case of every other settler in the State who has had anything like similar conditions. The Minister for Lands says there are no exactly similar cases. Although that gentleman has spent a large amount of time going over various parts of the State, I do not think he knows enough about the land to be quite sure of its worth. If an application of this kind were made by people within the State, I should have much more sympathy with it, and I believe members would have more sympathy regarding application for classification of land owned by people within the State than an application relating to absentees, who I notice by some means always manage to get greater privileges in an Australian State than any person residing in the State manages to obtain. The land in question is in the name of William Booth, of London, and if any profits are made on that land those profits will go, not to the people in the State, but to General Booth.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not a shilling.

MR. HASTIE: I would like to know what authority the member for Cue has for stating that. Everything owned by the Salvation Army is owned, not by a committee, but by William Booth himself, and no one else. It stands in his name, and in every case tried in the courts of Great Britain—and some have been tried—it has been found that General Booth and General Booth alone has a complete say in the matter. We can all remember the controversy which occurred here some years ago, when it was asked by the newspapers, and I think also by Sir John Forrest, that this land should be put in the name of a committee or even of the Army residing within the State; but that was disallowed, and I

think it was on account of that, to some extent, a special Act had to be put through this House. It has been said that in this case the people who took up the land were deceived; but from what I hear, hundreds of other people in this State have been deceived just as well, and they have just as good a case as the Salvation Army. When this case was brought on a select committee was appointed, and I and others thought the committee would go into the question thoroughly and see what was to be done. I have been looking over the report of the committee, and the committee seem to have never thought of calling the persons who classified that land. Why did they not do so?

MR. NANSON: Those people were refused classification.

MR. HASTIE: But it was classified in the first instance.

MEMBER: No; they want what would have been done in the ordinary course.

MR. HASTIE: Whatever technicalities were not gone through, certain land was taken up at a time when those people had every opportunity of examining it and of seeing whether they would get a fair bargain or not. No one wishes to penalise them any more than anyone else, and no one supposes they have not been treated just the same as any other settlers, with this difference, that they were allowed to take up 20,000 acres in one block, and I think I am right in saying they were also allowed to concentrate their labour on any part of the block they wished; all that was asked was that they should put up a fence round the land. That being so, I do not know what they have to complain of. It has been said that sheep have been brought into this country, that they did not do well, and therefore the land was bad. The Minister for Lands, like everyone else, knows there are many portions of this State where sheep have been put on the land and have not done well, yet the land has been good for many other purposes. In regard to Gippsland, a number of times big flocks have been there, yet they have never been successful, although the Gippsland country is the best country in the world. The presence of sheep is not a criterion, therefore, as to the quality of that particular land. I am surprised

at the unsatisfactory way in which the committee have gone about their work. The only men with expert knowledge who were examined were the Minister for Lands and the Surveyor General, and in both instances the examination does not show that those gentlemen have very carefully examined that land.

THE MINISTER: We intend to trust our inspectors with this classification as we do when they classify everybody else's land.

MR. HASTIE: What I complain about is that the select committee did not have inspectors who have been over that land.

MR. NANSON: We were not asked to classify this land.

MR. HASTIE: They were not asked to classify the land, but unless they can show it was held wrongly, and that the land was second-class land and not first-class land, they should not recommend us to pass this Bill. The committee were appointed to make out a *prima facie* case, but they have not done so; therefore we should not take the report of the committee as being very satisfactory. But the main thing that impresses me is, that if we give relief in this particular case, we must be ready to consider the application for reclassification from every other man who puts one in.

MR. GORDON: This is not reclassification.

MR. HASTIE: It has not been classified in the ordinary technical way, but these people have this land and have spent a lot of money on it, and hundreds of others, if not thousands, have spent large sums of money in this State in an unsatisfactory manner. I am more impressed with this because I have mentioned at various times in this House that we must expect this country to follow through a similar evolution to every other State in Australia. There comes a time when prices are low, and when people who have spent a lot of time, work, and money on land are not able to continue. That time may come soon, and if this Bill is passed, the House must be prepared to give to other people the same consideration that we are apparently willing to give to the Salvation Army.

MR. J. EWING (S.W. Mining): After the able manner in which the second reading was moved by Mr. Nanson, who

gave the early history in connection with the land being given to the Army, I think there is no necessity to go into these grounds again. It seems to me that the Army in the first instance were not treated well, and were simply asked to take up land under conditions worse than any ordinary selector might take it up. The member for Kanowna takes exception to General Booth holding the whole of the Army lands. The same conditions prevail in other denominations.

MR. JOHNSON: It does not follow that the principle is right.

MR. EWING: If members follow the work and actions of General Booth we shall find that the people who repose confidence in him have had it amply justified. There has never been an instance of land intrusted to him having been used for any other purpose than for the uplifting of humanity. I was working in the Collie district years before I came into this House, and I have a knowledge of every acre of the land there. I can honestly say that certainly no more than a thousand acres of this land is first-class land. I do not suppose there are more than 2,000 acres of second-class land; the rest is third-class.

MR. JACOBY: That is a condemnation of the whole district.

MR. EWING: The land surrounding Collie for a radius of about eight or ten miles is very poor country indeed. There is practically no agricultural land within that radius. It is a mining district, and the hon. member knows that the surrounding district is very seldom first-class land. For the information of the member for the Swan, I would like to say that 75 per cent. of this land is ironstone country, upon which very ordinary jarrah grows, not even first-class jarrah. Nobody can say it is good for agricultural purposes.

MR. JACOBY: There are valleys as well as hills.

MR. EWING: Unfortunately very little of it is valley land.

MR. TAYLOR: I thought it followed the Collie River.

MR. EWING: Yes; but the hills come so close to the river that there is but little area of good land.

MR. JACOBY: Does that go all the way to Narrogin?

MR. EWING: I have never compared this land with the land towards Narrogin. I will be prepared to meet the hon. member later on when that matter comes under discussion. It is said that the land is held by an absentee, and that there is no taxation on it. The sum of £20,000 has been spent on this land, and in the way of rents and roads board taxation the sum of £500 a year is spent. The Minister has said that if this Bill is to become law he will abide entirely by the classification of his officers. Nothing could be more straightforward than his statement. If we grant a right to other people to have a classification, I fail to see why that right should be withheld from the Salvation Army. It would surprise many members, if they went to Collie, to see the magnificent way in which the children are treated. The training is certainly to the greatest credit to the Army, and of everlasting benefit to the children of this State. The Army authorities have spent upon buildings the sum of £10,000, upon clearing £2,500, upon fencing £2,500, and upon stock and plant £5,000, making a total of £20,000. I hope this act of justice will be done. I feel sure that the Army are well worthy of the consideration of this House in the matter of the Bill now under consideration.

MR. A. Y. HASSELL (Plantagenet): I think when the Army took up this land they were certainly misled to a very great extent as to the quality of it, and it would be an act of justice to give them relief from the great burden placed upon them. With the information from the select committee and from members in the House regarding the money that the Army have spent, I think we should pass the Bill and give them an extra 2,000 acres, if necessary.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): Having been one of the select committee chosen by this House to go into this matter and report upon the necessity for this private Bill, I do not know whether it is a breach of faith or confidence for any member of it to make remarks in the House on what was done by the committee. I must certainly say that there was undue haste in framing the recommendation. I also say that I am not satisfied sufficient evidence was taken.

As one of the members of the committee who attended every meeting and was there while the meetings lasted, I make these remarks. We met first on Wednesday if I remember correctly; four members of the committee were present. We decided to summon witnesses and call for papers for the following day. That was done, and the same four members of the committee were present. We examined W. A. Suttor (the representative of the Army), the member for Northam (Hon. G. Throssell), the present Minister for Lands, and the Surveyor General (Mr. Johnston). As far as that evidence went one would certainly recommend the Bill, but I desired, in common with the member for the Swan, that we should have farther evidence. It was brought out in evidence that the recommendation to the Army people was made by the land agent of the Government, Mr. Ranford. I also gathered, I do not know whether it is here in print, that Mr. Ranford recommended the Army to apply for classification. I say "classification," because "reclassification" has been mentioned. I think I can say with perfect safety that this Bill is asking for reclassification, my ground being the evidence of the Surveyor General. On page 11 of this report the evidence of the Surveyor General will be found. I will read the whole of it:—

109, By the Chairman: You are Surveyor General?—Yes.

110, Have you visited this Collie settlement of the Salvation Army?—Yes.

111, What is your opinion of the land?—I am not acquainted with the whole of it, for I have only seen portions of it. It comprises alluvial flats along the watercourses, decidedly narrow. Away from the watercourses it is gravelly country and ironstone ridges.

112, From what you know of it, is the bulk what you would call first-class land?—No; it is not.

113, Is it second-class or third-class?—It is about second-class. It is understood that I do not know the whole of it. I only know a part of it.

114, What officers of your department have been over it to report on it?—Mr. Ranford has been over it.

115, But not to classify it?—It was classified by Mr. Thompson and Mr. Brazier.

So we see that the evidence of the Surveyor General goes to prove that the land has been classified. The evidence of Mr. Suttor, the representative of the Army examined by the committee, goes

to prove that the Army were perfectly satisfied with the land. I gather from the evidence of that gentleman that there was some hostility on the part of the then Government to the Army dumping down their "submerged tenth" in Western Australia, and I say rightly so. The member for Northam was very anxious that they should have land in Western Australia. His evidence goes to prove it. The member for Northam also brought pressure as Minister on his chief, so much so that in the end Sir John Forrest decided to allow the Army to have 20,000 acres under certain conditions, but not under the first conditions for the "submerged tenth." The Army took up the land perfectly satisfied with it. They have found out since that it is not as good as it was recommended. The then Minister for Lands (Hon. G. Throssell) says in his evidence that he did not think Mr. Ranford deceived the Army wilfully, but that he was an enthusiast, and that he led them astray. That may or may not be. It was desired by the member for the Swan and myself that Mr. Ranford should be examined as a witness, knowing as we did that he had recommended the land to the Army in the first instance; and he was still an agent of the Crown acting for the Government as a land inspector, who was doing as much to settle people on the land probably as any other agent in the country; and we desired to have his evidence so that we might learn why his change of front, in having first recommended the Army to take this land, and some five or six years later recommending them to ask for a re-classification. Two members of the committee desired that Mr. Ranford should be called as a witness; but the other three members, having the voting power, said "No." I have no hesitation in saying that when we were passing the report the bells were ringing for the sitting of this House to begin, and our work was therefore very hurried. But what need was there for this haste? I told the committee that if we held the report over for a week I would go myself to see the land, and would be back in time for us to decide before it would be necessary to report to the House. But no; the desire was to present the report speedily. As far as the evidence before

us is concerned, we can hardly oppose the Bill. Mr. Throssell, a witness who is an enthusiast in land settlement, accused Mr. Ranford of being an enthusiast, though I think Mr. Throssell is the greater enthusiast of the two, and I think their enthusiasm has blinded their judgment in this matter. I am not hostile to the Salvation Army, but I desire that the committee should have such evidence as will justify the report, and we have not got that evidence. The land extends over 30 miles of country, and it cannot be expected that the Minister for Lands, when he went to inspect it, could have gone over it thoroughly in the few hours which he is said to have spent there. About 60 miles of fencing is done, and the land is not all fenced; so if the Minister could inspect 20,000 acres in seven hours as is said, besides looking at the schools erected by the Army, it would pay the State better to put him in the position of an inspector instead of a Minister, because he would get over a lot of land in a short time. As a member of the committee, I think some evidence should have been called; and what made me curious was the undue haste and the amount of lobbying on the part of representatives of the Army. I may be blamed for my curiosity or suspicion being aroused, but when I see persons trying to shove things through without due investigation, I believe there is justification for a doubt in this matter. The Army have owned that in taking the land the officers did so with their eyes open; but I say with the Minister for Lands, that it is hardly reasonable to expect 20,000 acres of land in this State adjoining to be all first-class; and there is force in that argument. I should like to have examined Mr. Ranford, as I have said. It is proved in evidence that the land has been classified by Mr. Thompson and Mr. Brazier, and the Minister has emphasised the fact that on the classification of Mr. Thompson and Mr. May he intends to act if this Bill is passed. We have Mr. Thompson's evidence already, and it is only a matter of having the evidence of Mr. May. Hon. members have said much about the injustice to the Army; but we find that at Parkerville the State land is being sold at 25s. per acre; some of it steep ridges.

I do not know whether that compares favourably with the land on which the Army has settled; but in regard to price, one is charged 10s. an acre, the payment extending over 20 years, while the other is charged 25s. an acre, the payment extending over 12 months. I am informed on reliable authority that the 2,000 acres which the Army desire to exchange is situated about seven miles from the proposed Collie-to-Narrogin railway; and if so I can understand the desire for the exchange. No doubt the Minister for Lands, in moving the second reading of the Railway Bill, will tell the House that the line will open up some splendid agricultural and pastoral country; and the land being within seven miles of that proposed railway, I can quite understand the desire there is to secure this exchange. The evidence is that the reason is on account of the want of grazing land in the area occupied by the Army and on which it is said their sheep are dying. That may happen not because the country is bad or unsuitable for sheep, but solely from mismanagement or want of knowledge in managing sheep.

MR. BUTCHER: It will take good management to make it pay there.

MR. HASSELL: I do not think there is one acre of first-class land in that area.

MR. TAYLOR: The evidence shows there is 1,000 to 2,000 acres of land that is called first-class. I am not hostile to the Army, as I have said, but while desiring justice to the Army, I object to the recommendations in this report on the ground of the undue haste and not sufficient time to have evidence brought forward that would have thrown more light on the value of the land. We have the evidence of the present Minister for Lands and of the late Minister; the member for Northam being an enthusiast so far as the Army is concerned, and the present Minister having gone through this settlement of 20,000 acres in a few hours. The Surveyor General told us he knew practically nothing about this land. There were papers and plans before the committee, and the member for York, who was a member of it, grumbled at being unable to follow the indications on the plan as to the quality of the land. When we were finally deciding on the report the bells were ringing for this

House to commence its sitting. The member for Swan and myself opposed everything the committee recommended, and we did so with the object of having farther light thrown on the matter, so that we might not attach our names to the report without being thoroughly convinced that this was a straight-out deal. I would even now like to see farther light thrown on the matter, for if the case for the Army is good, those who are promoting it need not fear investigation, while if the case for the Army is not good, the investigation will be the worst thing that could happen for the promoters of the Bill.

MR. W. B. GORDON (South Perth): It appears to me that when the Army came into possession, they did not seek the quality of the land, but the area was the attraction, and it was that which guided them in taking up the property. I am in favour of reclassification of this land, whether it was previously classified or not. I am satisfied from the description given by several members that the land is not first-class. I know the jarrah country with ironstone rubble, and I should be sorry to pay a shilling an acre for it, let alone ten shillings. There is no object in the Government extorting from either a private individual or a company more than the land is worth, so I think they are justified in having the land revalued as the Minister suggests. As regards Clause 3 of the Bill, I think the principle is bad and I intend to oppose that clause.

MR. F. ILLINGWORTH (Cue): We thought that those two members of the committee who opposed the majority would oppose them in the House. In some phases of the question set before the House the matter has been decided as far as it goes. As to the haste, or apparent haste, that was caused by this—I am speaking for myself and I think other members of the committee—I was under the impression that the session would have been closed by now. I was not aware the Government were going to introduce half a dozen more important Bills.

THE PREMIER: We have not, either.

MR. JACOBY: The member for Cue would not object to more evidence, would he?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The evidence asked for is as to what kind of land this really is, but in my opinion that does not come into the question. If the classification proves that this land is first-class land, the present owners will have to pay for it as first-class land. What we had to provide was a *primâ facie* reason for classification, and the decision as to the quality of the land did not come within the scope of the committee, nor does it come within the scope of the Bill. Of course, if the committee had been satisfied there was no *primâ facie* reason for the Bill, they would necessarily have reported against it, but I think the report itself proves there was a *primâ facie* reason. The member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) has confessed he is certain, from the reports given, there is a *primâ facie* reason for going over this land again. Ridicule has been cast on the reference to the Minister going over the land in seven hours, and that was looked upon as if it were something marvellous. If it were a square block it would not be five miles by five miles. Of course the land is not that shape, but still the area is not increased. That has nothing to do with the inspection of improvements, but the object of the visit was to get a general impression as to the land itself. What I understood to be the duty of the committee was not to consider whether this land was first, second, or third-class land, but to settle whether there was a *primâ facie* reason for the classifiers to go over it. Those people say, "If your classifiers state that this is first-class land, that will settle the matter, and we will be content to abide by it; but if your classifiers say it is not first-class land, we will be content to take it up on your classification." The member for Kanowna has put forward an analogy or suggestion which is not relative or fair. He speaks of this land as being held by absentee owners, and he bases that remark on the fact that General Booth is the registered owner. General Booth is the registered owner of all the land owned in the world by the Salvation Army. He holds it in trust, and I believe I am absolutely correct when I say that anything which accrues from property is spent on the work in the district in which that money is raised.

MR. BATH: That is not true.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I think it is true.

MR. BATH: It is drawn into the central district.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I do not think a shilling goes out of this State. Supposing that be so, would members tell us where the £20,000 came from to expend in improving this land? Is it a matter of consequence who owns the land, seeing we desire to settle people on the land? Do people object to the class of settlement at this place? I contend they do not. But these are not questions which come into the present debate. We have simply to settle whether we shall or shall not allow surveyors to go over this block of land and say what kind of land it is, and in my opinion the request is reasonable. Before survey and classification this land was taken up. If it has been classified, it has been since it was taken up. The anxiety of the Salvation Army was to secure one block. The Minister of the day said "We will not give you one block except on your paying at the rate of first-class land." They were forced into the position and accepted it. This is what the Minister of the day says:—

They have far and away exceeded their promise to expend £10,000, for I think they expended nearly £20,000. They are creating what I consider an object lesson for the whole of the State. Of course they know much more than any old settler, and they are going to teach us a lot.

Evidently they were under the impression that they knew better than anybody else. The witness also says:—

I have no hesitation in saying, and from some knowledge of the place and the whole of the conditions, that the effort now being made is only a just one. We shall send our Government Surveyor, who will classify the land for them and correct the mistake of earlier days, and I hope that, when this is done, whatever the re-classification may be they will abide by it, and if the land is proved under the Act to be second-class or third-class, then as honest men we should give a recoup, not in cash, but by carrying the surplus they have been paying to the credit of future payments. That is what I would do for you or anybody else. I confess I am very favourable to these people; but only because they have proved their *bonâ fides* up to the hilt. I think the Government have had one or two examinations. These people have a noble institution there, and I think they have spent £20,000, or something like that, in hard cash. Why in the name of common sense should we treat these people

worse than Mr. Illingworth or George Throssell or George Taylor? I do not know why we should. Do you know any reason why we should treat them worse?

All we ask you is to treat them the same way as any other person, and that is to classify the land. There was no intention on the part of the members of the committee to hurry, other than to get the matter settled this session. We did not want evidence as to the nature of the land.

MR. JACOBY: Why did you call any?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We did not require any.

MR. JACOBY: You called your own evidence; that is what I complain about.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If the hon. member wishes to talk I will sit down till he has done so.

MR. W. J. BUTCHER (Gascoyne): I think we all agree that the only desire of members is to give justice. I consider the Salvation Army or society equally entitled to just consideration at the hands of this House as any individual who may wish to start upon the land—[MEMBER: Just the same, and no more]—no more. I feel certain it is only necessary for any person to see the work the Salvation Army have done, and the money they have spent, and their object, to come to the same conclusion as I did, namely that this is a society thoroughly entitled to the very best of our consideration. They are doing undoubtedly good and noble work, and it is our duty to assist them all we can. I have seen a very considerable portion of this land, and I feel quite justified in saying there is a very small portion even of second-class land. I can describe the country as being extremely rough and scrubby, and jarrah and ironstone hills, there being a continuation of it with narrow gullies or creeks running through it. These brooks drain the hills, and the land is soured by the enormous amount of water which lies on it, rendering it almost useless for agricultural purposes.

MR. JACOBY: Is the land not drained?

MR. BUTCHER: Yes; of course. Taking the narrow gullies from beginning to end, the percentage of good agricultural land is small indeed. If what I saw of it be a fair sample, and I have every reason to believe that I saw the best—I dare say the member for the

South-West Mining District (Mr. Ewing) would put me right in that respect—I feel justified in saying that not 10 per cent. of the land is first-class, and the balance is worse than third-class land. I think we are all desirous of doing what is a fair thing. Judging from the speech of the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), that hon. member desires farther evidence, and if we agree to that I shall be perfectly satisfied, but I know what the result will be. I am satisfied any farther evidence the committee can get would go to show the justice of the claim. I am certain I can say, on behalf of the Salvation Army, that they will be willing to agree to it. I only hope, for the satisfaction of those who wish the matter postponed, that it will be postponed.

MR. W. D. JOHNSON (Kalgoorlie): Am I in order in moving that this Bill be referred back to the select committee?

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is a provision in *May* that if a committee at the conclusion of their inquiry make a final report to the House, the sittings of the committee are assumed to be closed, and if farther proceedings are required it is necessary to revive the committee. I am not certain whether it is possible to revive the committee at this stage.

MR. JOHNSON: I must say this report is the most unsatisfactory report that has ever been recommended to this House since I have been a member. The report is all one-sided, and for one side it is a particularly good one; but we have not the other side; and it is particularly unfortunate for the Salvation Army that the other side of the evidence was not given. We find that those who gave evidence were all of the one opinion, that the claims of the Army were only fair. It must be borne in mind, however, that there were other men who should have been called by the committee, who would have given the evidence which we desire to-night. I know absolutely nothing about this land, but when this debate was started I was clearly led to believe that the land was not classified, and that the Army now wanted classification. As the debate proceeded, and when I looked into the evidence, I found that the land has been classified, that it was classified by the Government, and that these people are dissatisfied with the report of the Government agents and want a

reclassification. If these people have a right to be dissatisfied with the classification of the Government officers and to come to this House and ask us to pass a special Bill making it possible for reclassification of the land to take place, is it not equally just for any individual in this State to come and ask us to do exactly the same thing? This land was classified, as all the land in the State is classified. The Army are dissatisfied with the classification and want another classification.

MR. NANSON: They were not allowed to avail themselves of the classification. They would only be too pleased to take advantage of it.

MR. JOHNSON: The Surveyor General in his evidence says distinctly that there has been a classification, and I will take the Surveyor General's evidence in preference to that of the member for the Murchison.

MR. EWING: You are reading it in a wrong sense.

MR. JOHNSON: I am not. I shall not read the evidence through, as it has already been read; but it shows that the land was classified.

MR. NANSON: Not as first-class land.

MR. JOHNSON: There is no evidence to show that. A portion of the committee are dissatisfied with the report. I wish to do justice to the Army and give them a fair deal, but on this report and on this debate I shall vote against the Bill. I do not want to do so, because I am satisfied we have only got one side of the question, and that if we had all the evidence before us I might perhaps vote differently. I am not satisfied that all the facts are before the House, and I will vote against the Bill. If we had the full report we might vote for the Bill. It was my desire to refer it back to the committee so that we might go farther into it, and so that we might make up our minds properly. It is unfair to ask members to make up their minds on the evidence now before us. On the evidence we have the land has been classified, and the Army think that the classification is not a fair one.

MR. NANSON: You are wrong there.

MR. JOHNSON: I cannot read the evidence in any other way. Right through the evidence says "reclassification." Why refer to it as "reclassification?"

[MR. HAYWARD interjected.] I am satisfied that the land has been classified, and that they want reclassification. If the land has been classified, private individuals will want reclassification. Until the Army can put a better case before this House I shall vote against the Bill; but in order to give these people a chance of laying a better case before the House I desire to refer the Bill back to the committee for farther evidence. If I cannot do that I shall vote against the Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Standing Orders do not provide for this matter, but *May* says:—

If a committee at the conclusion of their inquiry make a final report to the House, the sittings of the committee are assumed to be closed, and if farther proceedings are required it is necessary to revive the committee.

A reference is given to the records of the House of Commons, which say:—

The following motion was moved: "That the select committee be revived, and that they have leave to sit again and report to the House."

I rule that it is possible to refer this Bill back to the committee; but a motion to that end must be moved by a member who has not already spoken, and be seconded by a member who has not already spoken.

MR. T. F. QUINLAN (Toodyay): I intend to support the Bill. I do not hold that it is a parallel case to that of a private individual. I support the second reading, knowing the objects for which this land was fixed upon in the first instance, and seeing that the organisation have complied with their portion of the contract, and that according to the evidence of Mr. Suttor they are agreeable to pay for what is considered first-class land by the officers of the Government. I think the Minister for Lands stated the case clearly when he said that he would authorise two competent men to classify the land, and that he would abide by their opinion. Seeing the good the Army are doing to the country, however we may differ from their methods, I think it is far better to support an organisation of this kind than to keep up an army of police. That is principally my object in supporting the second reading.

MR. P. STONE (Greenough): This debate has brought out some rather

serious points. The first is with regard to the quality of land on which we propose to spend something like half a million of public money for a railway to go through it to the Great Southern line. I am rather glad we have had the opinion of various members as to the class of country, for I was rather favourably disposed to the line until I heard the class of land it was supposed to benefit. Another point is with regard to the report of the chief land agent, who was the cause of misleading these people. I think these are serious charges which ought to be well considered. I should like to see the Bill referred back to the select committee for farther information, because I consider it is a matter which calls for farther consideration, and we would like to have farther information on it. Those on the committee who wished to get farther information could not get their way. I think it is right that all the information that could be brought to bear on the matter should have been got.

MR. T. H. BATH: I move that the select committee be revived, and that they have leave to sit again, and report on the 24th November.

MR. S. C. PIGOTT: I second the amendment.

MR. J. L. NANSON (in charge of the Bill): I desire to say a few words on the amendment. A great deal has been said in regard to rushing the investigation over this Bill through the select committee. The committee met on Wednesday, the 4th November. That was a preliminary meeting at which it was decided what witnesses should be called. At that meeting the member for the Swan, who is the chief complainant, was not present. We met again on the following day, when the witnesses it was decided to call were called and examined. At that meeting the member for the Swan was not present.

MR. JACOBY: I did not get a notice.

MR. NANSON: It was sent to the hon. member, but I suppose he was in some inaccessible place where it could not reach him. Notice was sent to him as to every other member of the committee. At that second meeting there was no request for any other person to be examined. Every member was satisfied with the evidence. At the end of that meeting arrangements were made

for all the papers and plans in connection with the question to be presented to the committee; and I believe that that afternoon the papers were on the table in the committee-room, where they were available at any time, not for hours but for days; and I have yet to learn that those two members of the committee who were in the minority with all their anxiety on the subject made any attempt to examine these papers. If we go on the evidence of their speeches we find that, instead of looking at the plans and papers submitted, they are to this moment in absolute ignorance of their contents.

MR. JACOBY: You took good care not to tell me they were there.

MR. NANSON: If the hon. member could not see a plan on the table as large as himself, and if he uses his eyes and senses to such an extent as that, he is very little competent to be on a committee. A great deal has been said on the question of classification. It has been attempted to be proved that there was a classification of this land. On the other hand there are those who say there has been no classification. I may endeavour to make clear to the House the exact position. So far as the Army are concerned there has been no classification. In other words they have not been allowed to avail themselves of whatever classification the Government officers made. They were told, "Here is this 20,000 acres. You may have the whole of it at 10s., or you must leave it alone."

MR. JOHNSON: That was based on the Government classification.

MR. NANSON: On the contrary it was not based on the Government classification. It is just on that point where the hon. member shows lack of discretion in rushing into a question of which he knows so little. The plan showing the result of the classification was before the select committee. It was before the members for the Swan and Mt. Margaret if they cared to look at it. I scrutinised that plan very closely, and I have no hesitation in saying that, if the Government were prepared to abide by that classification and description of the land as marked on the plan, no one would be more pleased than those who represent the Salvation Army; because if members will look at the land as shown on the map, they will see it is

designated as being of the very poorest description possible. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Johnson) in his irresponsible and complete ignorance tries to prove to the House that the Government classified the land as first-class. Nothing of the sort. The Salvation Army authorities never had the opportunity of taking up the land as any other than first-class, and therefore they missed the opportunity, not of making profit for themselves as individuals, but the opportunity of making profit for the better carrying out of the philanthropic work in which they are engaged in attending to the neglected children of workers and miners, to orphan children, and to children who, through the misdeeds of parents, have lapsed into crime; a work which the Army are doing at less cost and more beneficially than any such work is done by religious bodies and philanthropic societies. Yet where do we find the opposition coming from? We find it coming from the Labour benches, whose members are supposed to be in a special sense the champions in this Chamber of the poor, the poverty-stricken, and the afflicted: yet these are the persons who would deny to the Salvation Army a claim for proper consideration not on their own behalf, but for the waifs and strays of society, and the children of neglectful parents. The Army in this matter are doing a work that in ordinary circumstances would devolve on the Government of this State; and I do not think there is any member of the Government or any authority on the subject who is not ready to admit that the Salvation Army are more qualified to fulfil this duty for society than is any purely Government institution.

MR. HASTIE: Do not the Government pay the Army for doing this?

MR. NANSON: They get a grant undoubtedly towards the work they are doing, but viewing the cost of doing the work through their agency and the cost incurred by religious bodies in attempting to do such work, it will be found that the work done by the Army costs less and is better done. The question is that the Bill be referred back to the select committee; but what possible good can be done by referring it back? The committee can call Mr. Ranford, who went over the land before it was taken up by

the Army; and I suggested to the Minister for Lands that it might be well that a report by Mr. Ranford should be prepared and submitted to the House for the information of members. Remembering that this Bill is merely one to demand that the Army shall be given the benefits of classification of their land, I do not think any other evidence was needed to make out a *prima facie* case than the plan and the evidence in regard to it given by the late Commissioner of Lands and by the present Commissioner of Lands, also the evidence of the report of the Army; and the majority of the committee were perfectly satisfied with the case before them. It was not the fault of the committee that the member for the Swan (Mr. Jacoby) could not attend the first sitting or the second sitting; and it was not reasonable that the whole proceeding should be reopened when he did appear, merely because he had not been able to attend earlier. It was only at the last moment, when the majority of members had made up their minds, that we were asked to reopen the inquiry; and I do not think that was a reasonable course, for having called evidence and looked into the papers the majority of the committee were satisfied that a *prima facie* case had been made out. I hope the House will not play into the hands of those who want to delay the matter by referring the Bill back to the select committee, when the only result will be to strengthen the case by such farther evidence as may be produced. It must be clear that if the two dissentient members had taken the trouble to look into the papers and the plan they would not have had any difficulty in arriving at the same conclusion as the majority of the committee arrived at.

MR. S. C. PIGOTT (West Kimberley): The Minister for Lands has told us that he looks on this question purely from a business point of view. Against that we have the member in charge of the Bill, who dilates on the useful work done by the Salvation Army, and draws a pleasing picture of the great benefits to society resulting from the operations of the Army in this State. Remarks of that kind may have the effect of gaining a good many votes. The hon. member tells us that this land granted to those people on a business basis was a straight-out deal,

that the land was offered to them by the Government of the day, and the representatives of the Army were told that they could take it or leave it at a certain price. They took the land, probably knowing it was not good land, and they agreed to pay the price that was asked for it. To-day we are asked to go over that deal again, the request coming not from the Minister for Lands on behalf of the Government, but from the member in charge of the Bill. The Bill speaks of nothing more nor less than reclassification; yet we are told the land has never been classified. If the land has not been classified by the Government, I do not see the use of the word "reclassification" in the Bill.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not classified in behalf of these people.

MR. PIGOTT: Is the House to pass this Bill as being a just Bill, and to deal with the Army in a way that would be purely straightforward and justifiable? We are asked practically to cancel an agreement that was entered into some years ago, and to give these people the option of taking this land in present circumstances at a different value, and also to give them a right to exchange a portion of the land for some other land. For my part I do not agree entirely with many of the questions that have been put to us with regard to the procedure of the Salvation Army throughout the world. I do know that all that has been said this afternoon is not true. I know that in every case where lands have been granted by different Governments in Australia to the Salvation Army, those lands have been held in trust for the Army in general. That was proved in South Australia, where land was granted to the army and was held in trust in the name of a man who was a member of the Army and a leader of it, and who took possession of the land on behalf of the army. I am not acquainted with all the details, but from a rumour I heard I believe the Army have to buy back that land from that person in whose name it stood.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is wrong.

MR. PIGOTT: I have seen it published in the newspapers, and the statement has not been contradicted. In addition to that I have heard it since, and I believe I am correct in what I have

said. In regard to sending the Bill back to the select committee, I think the member in charge of the Bill can see that there was sufficient cause to have this Bill debated; but as the hon. member has told us the true facts in connection with the Bill, I would ask the hon. member whether, not being a member of that committee and not having the information those members have, and if he had seen this Bill and this report and formed an opinion thereon, he would not have said it did appear desirable that the Bill should be sent back to the select committee for consideration. We as members of this House were not to know the details of the case. Looking at the report, we see that four motions were made, that there was equal voting on each of the motions, and that the chairman gave his casting vote in each case in favour of the Bill and so carried the day. Therefore, I think that before the Bill goes farther the Government should produce to the House a report from Mr. Ranford. The member in charge of the Bill has told us he asked the Government to do that. Cannot we arrange matters so as to postpone the Bill until the report is produced?

MR. NANSON: It might be produced before the clauses are considered in Committee of the whole House.

MR. PIGOTT: If so, perhaps the member who moved the amendment will consent to withdraw it on that understanding. It will save the trouble of sending the Bill back to the select committee. If the Minister says he will act on the classification of certain officers he has named, why not take the simple course of producing Mr. Ranford's report? I regard this as a Government measure, seeing that the Government are in favour of it; and if so, why cannot the Government have a report on the land prepared and laid before the House? When was the plan made out?

MR. NANSON: Some years ago.

MR. PIGOTT: The idea as to classification of land seven or eight years ago will have altered very much by this time.

THE MINISTER: That would be to the disadvantage of the Army, surely?

MR. PIGOTT: It might be; but if the Lands officers go over the land and report on it, and if their report is favour-

able as to the quality of the land, the Bill will be useless.

MR. NANSON: There is sufficient information already available which can be laid on the table.

MR. PIGOTT: If so, I hope the amendment will be withdrawn.

At 6:30, the DEPUTY SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna): Before the tea hour I pointed out that the members occupying this bench did not take such a particular interest in the Salvation Army as to give them the special privileges it is proposed to bestow by this Bill. I would remind the member in charge of the Bill that no member of this House has said a single word against the work of the Salvation Army. All we are trying to put before the House is that the Salvation Army shall be treated just as we treat everyone else. No one has said that we should give them any special favour, and it is beside the question altogether to argue as to whether or not the Army do good. Not only this denomination but I think every denomination does a certain amount of good, and if this House is asked to give any special consideration to any company, syndicate, or individual, we always show that the syndicate or individual is going to employ a great number of men and will do good to the community at large just exactly in the same way as the Army do. I would only remind the hon. member farther that we have had a lot of experience of religious denominations in different parts of Australia. Here perhaps more than anywhere else large and valuable grants of land have been made to religious denominations for special purposes, and everyone of those denominations has acted precisely in the same way as every big landowner does. The policy of this State has been that we should not encourage big areas, therefore I do not think we should be blamed for looking at this matter in a very critical spirit. The hon. member criticises the member for the Swan for asking that this committee's investigations be continued, and he gives as a reason for that not being agreed to that the committee has already investigated so far as necessary, and that

it is not the committee's business to say what class of land the land in question is, but that it should empower the Government to have reclassification. But another member, the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth), tells us his sole reason for not going in for this idea was that he was afraid the House would close up and that it was necessary for the committee to close the investigation as soon as possible. That is very contradictory. At any rate, I wish to reiterate what I have said, and what many others have said, that the committee has not done what the House expected it to do. It is suggested that we should now have the Bill read a second time, that evidence should be put upon the table with maps and classification by officers, and that we should have an opportunity of studying this question. I think the object of appointing the select committee was that it should go into this, and tell the House exactly what to do.

MR. NANSON: We did, but we could not compel the member for Mount Margaret and the member for the Swan to read the evidence.

MR. TAYLOR: We should have a chance.

MR. NANSON: Three days.

MR. HASTIE: But the committee has not given us a report in the direction we wished. We wanted a lot more valuable information. In their speeches—especially the member for the Murchison—members have given us that, in this particular instance. I only wish to say in conclusion that this land was let or given at a price of 10s. an acre a number of years ago when the population round about the Collie district was small, and if it was worth anything like that a few years ago, it seems to me it would be worth more at the present time. In spite of the information we have obtained from the member for the Murchison and others, I am still unable to see why this particular organisation and this one alone should be able to get special advantages. I hope that whatever is done the State will see that everyone is treated with equality so far as the land is concerned, and that this organisation, which I understand is paid by the Government for the boys in the establishment, shall get no particular advantage.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (on the amendment): I understand there are some members who are desirous of having classification by Mr. Ranford; but that will be impossible, because Mr. Ranford, who has been in the city, is returning to Katanning, and he will have to clear off certain arrears of work. At the end of the month he hands over the Katanning office to Mr. Starr. He will be fully occupied till then, and I do not think any officer could be found to classify 20,000 acres of country by the end of this month. I think members will find all the information they desire if they will only go through the file, and if the second reading is passed and the committee stage fixed for Tuesday next, members can in the meantime peruse the file.

Amendment put and negatived.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BOULDER TRAMWAYS BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. C. H. Rason): In moving the second reading of the Bill, I do not think it is necessary to say a great deal. Members know that the Kalgoorlie Roads Board Tramway Act of 1900 provides for the extension of the tramway with which this Bill deals. On the motion of the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran), then the member for East Coolgardie, a clause was inserted in the Kalgoorlie Roads Board Tramway Act providing that when the municipality of Boulder required this tramway to be extended to Boulder, the promoters of the Kalgoorlie Roads Board Tramway should so extend; or failing their making the extension, that the municipal authorities of Boulder should make the extension themselves at the expense of the promoters. When the promoters of the Kalgoorlie Roads Board Tramway wished to make this extension, the people of Boulder desired that the tramway should be controlled by the municipal authorities. Since then, mainly I think because there was some difficulty in raising the necessary funds, but from whatever reason it may be, the people of Boulder have altered their opinion on the subject and are now very desirous that the tramway

should be extended to Boulder by these people. I have in my hand a telegram from the Mayor of Boulder as follows:—

The residents unanimously carried at the annual meeting of ratepayers last night that the Premier, the Minister for Works, and the Minister for Lands be wired to urging Parliament to speedily confirm the Provisional Order for Boulder tramways.

The length of tramways set out in this Bill will be about five and a-half miles. By affording quick and ready means of transit from the mines to the municipality of Boulder it is claimed, and I think with some reason, that many of those workers on the mining leases who now live on these leases, and whose surroundings are not too happy and comfortable at present, will be able to remove from these leases and reside in a more elevated position near the Boulder racecourse or upon the grounds set aside as residential areas by the Government. That would be a very desirable change to bring about, because these workers will not only be brought under more healthy conditions, but also under the control of the municipal authorities, which will have a beneficial effect in many directions. The main object I have to consider in questions of this kind is to see that the safety of the public is safeguarded, that the tramway proposed to be built is of a proper nature, that it can be safely used by the travelling public, and that the rates proposed to be charged are fair and reasonable. If members will look at the Provisional Order attached to this Bill they will see that provision is made there that a time-table has to be arranged which meets with the approval of the local bodies, and that the fares to be charged are the fares set out in the Provisional Order, which says:—

(a.), From any part of Boulder municipality to any other part of it, 3d. (b.), From any part of Boulder municipality (excepting only that portion of Lane street and the Federal road route to the north of Burt street) to any place within the Kalgoorlie roads board district, 6d. (c.), From any part of Boulder municipality to any part of Kalgoorlie municipality, 9d.

MR. JOHNSON: Why that 9d.?

THE MINISTER: The local authorities have agreed to that price. We will see that from any part of Lane Street and Federal Road to the north of Burt

Street in the Boulder municipality to any part of Kalgoorlie roads board district the fare is 3d. All these fares have been agreed to by the local authorities, and I have seen that the provision inserted at the instance of the member for West Perth, then the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran), that if these extensions were made no higher rate was to be charged, is strictly given effect to in this Provisional Order. Provision is also made that workmen and children are to be carried at half rates. It is my duty to point out also that at first there was some opposition to this Bill by the Kalgoorlie roads board, who feared that some of their privileges were being interfered with. Their mind in that direction has been set at rest. They are perfectly satisfied with the Bill. So are the Boulder people. Another question was raised as to the use of T rails in some portion of the road instead of girder grooved rails. My engineer has assured me that in some portions of the road where it is proposed to use these T rails they could be used safely, but provision is made that the Minister for Works can at any time order the promoters to substitute girder grooved rails for the T rails. I am informed also that the promoters do not intend to use T rails at all, and that the whole route will be laid with girder grooved rails. I have already pointed out that this Bill does no more than give that extension which was provided for in the Act of 1900, when the people of Boulder desired it to be made. The safety of the public and the interests of the public have been safeguarded in every possible direction, and I have every confidence in moving the second reading of this Bill.

MR. T. H. BATH (Hannans): Seeing that this tramway concession has received the support not only of the Boulder Municipal Council, but also the referendum of the ratepayers, it would be idle to offer any objection to it; but I certainly think that members of this House should express some opinion with regard to the fares that may be charged on the tramway. In item (c) we find that from any part of the Boulder municipality, with the exception of Lane Street, to any part of the Kalgoorlie municipality they can charge 9d. The highest charge on the Perth tramways by a system of

transfers from one part of the city to another is 4d., making the Kalgoorlie-Boulder charge 125 per cent. higher. There may be some difference in the cost of upkeep in the Boulder district over that of Perth, and there may be some difference in the rates of wages, but I do not think there is such a difference as to justify us in passing a Bill which will allow a charge of 9d. to be made. I think the House should take this matter into consideration and make a maximum of 6d. as a fair charge.

MR. C. J. MORAN (West Perth): I presume that this Bill will be referred to a select committee to glance through it. It is a wise thing in a case like this to do so, for it is not competent for this House to go into details as to routes, etc. In 1900, when the concession was going through for the Kalgoorlie Roads Board Tramway Company, I had a provision put in the Bill making it compulsory on the company to construct the Boulder trams. I regret that Boulder was badly advised on that occasion, and that it has lost three years before taking advantage of the provision. I always thought it was impossible to apply municipal ownership in a case where the whole concern could not be controlled. Kalgoorlie and Boulder are practically one centre now. The time will arrive when the people will consider the advisability of creating one city, as may be done in Perth. I am glad to hear the Minister say that the provisions put in the old Act are embodied in this Bill. In 1900 Boulder could have done better than it is doing now. Had it taken the advantage of what was on the boards then, it would have had £2,000 handed to it for the concession, and would have got a better deal than it is getting now. I rejoice that Boulder is now to have a tramway service in keeping with the sister city of Kalgoorlie, and that people will have free access to every part of the city. I trust exorbitant charges will not be provided for in this Bill. Surely the amusements of these people are small enough. If they can get cheap amusement by means of this Bill we should give it to them. However, if the people of Boulder have agreed to the charges put in this Bill, I should not lightly try to alter them, but I hope the Bill will be referred to a select com-

mittee. Being largely interested in Boulder, I have an interest in the place besides the interest of being its old member; and I rejoice now that the advice I gave the city three years ago is being carried out.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Select committee appointed by ballot, comprising Mr. Atkins, Mr. Bath, Mr. Ewing, Mr. Wallace, also Mr. Moran as mover; with the usual powers, and to report on the next Tuesday.

COLLIE-NARROGIN RAILWAY BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. M. Hopkins), in moving the second reading, said: The Bill of which I now have the honour to move the second reading may be said to mark another era in the onward progress and prosperity of this side of the Commonwealth. It proclaims at the same time that whilst the Government are prepared to accept the pleasures of office, they are also willing to accept the responsibilities which are attached to a full development of the natural resources of the country. The population of the State continues to increase; and whilst we find the Eastern States loudly proclaiming their regrets and their sorrow at their departing population, we fortunately, I believe, are the only State in the Commonwealth that is able to-day to pronounce a continued increase in the arrivals over departures. That is the happy position which has placed Canada on the high wave of prosperity which she to-day enjoys; I believe it devolves on the Government of this country to offer not only to the people of the Eastern States who do not find congenial homes and employment within the limits of those States, but also to the people of the old world, every facility and every opportunity to come to these younger countries and seize the opportunities which are being offered. The mining resources of this State are as good as ever; and it almost seems a matter of gratification that Nature has so successfully hidden the treasures that, bearing in mind the wealth they bring under all the difficulties which surround the extraction of gold from our mineral ores, these very

difficulties are going to work in harmony for the full development of our agricultural resources. The revenue of the country is so buoyant as to warrant the Government in proceeding with the policy of development, which must bring nothing but prosperity to the country. Were I to announce that this railway is going to open up the richest land within the limits of this State or even of the Commonwealth, it would probably be said I was pulling the long bow; and in order that hon. members may not be misled by any picturesque statements I may choose to offer, all I ask is that they will give a fair and reasonable consideration to the reports of our expert officers as to the quality of the land which it is proposed to open by this railway. In bringing this railway proposition before the House, I desire to do so if possible on clear-cut business lines; and I cannot do better than quote the opinions which the officers have formed after careful inspection of the country which we hope to develop. The Bill itself is very short, and if I may in passing direct the attention of hon. members to certain points, this course may save farther reference at a later period. Clause 2 is for the construction of a line of railway from Collie to Narrogin. Clause 3 provides for a deviation from the existing proposal, either one way or the other to a distance of ten miles. I think it is most desirable we should have that provision, and if members will direct their attention to the plan on the wall they will see the route marked red on the plan running through the Bannister Area, which was the original proposal. At a later period I made it my business, at the wish of the Premier and my colleagues, to go to that district and traverse a large portion of the country through which this railway is to pass; and in doing that I was struck with the fact that the proposal was to run as it were from the Collie Boulder mine into the town of Collie, back again for a similar distance to what may be termed inferior country; then on to the east branch of the Collie River over towards the Williams, and thence on to Narrogin. Members will see, if they refer to the plan, that at the outset we were traversing by that proposal two sides of a triangle; and I submitted as an alternative whether, when farther investigations

were made, it would not be advantageous to join the Collie Boulder on to the Collie railway, continuing thence in an easterly direction along the east branch of the Collie River. I am glad to say that Mr. Muir, the Engineer for Railway Surveys, and the other officers of the department have gone through and examined the country, and have come to the conclusion that the proposal I submitted is the one best suited to the requirements of this particular railway. Turning to Clause 4, we give power to the Governor to compulsorily purchase land within 12 miles of this railway. As to the period within which this land may be purchased, it is set out that "at any time after the passing of this Act and until the expiration of 12 months from the publication of notice in the *Government Gazette* declaring the railway open for traffic, the Governor may, with the object of encouraging the cultivation and settlement of the land, compulsorily purchase any land situated within 12 miles on either side of the line of railway." That is a new provision, but it has been introduced with the object of giving the Government power, if necessary, to resume some of the large areas of land which are not developed, and which may probably lie undeveloped even after railway communication is provided, unless some safeguard such as this is introduced in the interests of the State.

MR. MORAN: There is plenty of land you can get without building another line.

THE MINISTER: The amount of purchase money will be determined under the Public Works Act of 1902, with which no doubt members are familiar. Clause 6 provides that the Governor may require surrender, etc., to be made. Under Clause 7 it is provided that "all such land shall be dealt with under the provisions of the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, 1896, and the purchase money may be paid out of any moneys authorised to be raised and expended by that Act, or as therein prescribed." That directs attention to the Bill, which is itself a brief and simple one, but I believe its simplicity is only equalled by the development likely to follow on the construction of that railway. One feels called upon to consider this question as one would consider it if he had to deal

with a large tract of country of his own. We look to the large development which has taken place, it may be along the Midland Railway, along the Great Southern Railway, along the Eastern Goldfields line, and more particularly Meckering, which at one time was thought to be discarded and only useful for grazing, whereas we have had growing there crops of wheat and oats averaging about 6 feet in height, the estimate of wheat being 30cwt. to the acre.

MR. MORAN: It will be a long time before we have another season like this.

THE PREMIER: We shall be asking, where are the croakers?

THE MINISTER: The presence of Sir John Forrest in the State suggests the necessity for some one to rise and condemn, with the vigour he was wont to use, the croakers on the other side of the House.

MR. MORAN: That is where they are, on the other side of the House.

THE MINISTER: I venture to say the people of this country are beginning to recognise that when members come into this House there is an obligation cast upon them, if not to aid the Government in all their propositions, at least not to condemn propositions for the opening up of the country when they are not in possession of those facts which will enable them to come to a conclusion on such proposals. We have too much of this continual wrecking, wrecking, wrecking; I am getting most sick and sorry of listening to these futile attempts to wreck. No doubt members sitting on the other side of the House feel at times how much better they could carry out the various duties that devolve on the Government, if they were over here.

MR. CONNOR: Who were the croakers when Sir John Forrest was carrying out his works policy?

THE MINISTER: I think the member for East Kimberley was not amongst them.

THE PREMIER: No; he was a shadow.

THE MINISTER: I believe that when it comes to a vote on this railway, the member for East Kimberley will be one of its staunchest supporters. I have yet to learn, too, that the member is going to follow the tactics of others who have thought fit to condemn this railway before they are in possession of the facts.

MR. JACOBY: In this House?

THE MINISTER: In this House. The hon. member indorsed a remark which fell from the member for West Perth, that this railway when built will not pay for axle-grease.

MR. JACOBY: Did I say that?

THE MINISTER: That was the remark made, and the hon. member may correct me if I am wrong. The member for the Swan called "hear, hear," to the proposition.

MR. JACOBY: I hope your railways are better than your accuracy over this matter.

THE MINISTER: From the observations made, it is evident there is to be opposition and hostility to this railway proposal; not against the proposal from a railway point of view, not because of the scope of Crown lands which will be settled, not as to the building of this railway, not because the railway will not within a reasonable period pay, but on the other hand for one and one reason only, and that is political juggling. Members know it full well.

MR. MORAN: Why do you not deal with the railway?

THE MINISTER: I will deal with the railway, but sometimes it is necessary to deal with those persons who seize the opportunity of endeavouring to throw speakers off the trail and interrupt them as far as possible.

MR. JACOBY: Explain the Bill and leave us alone.

THE MINISTER: Yes; I will be very pleased to deal with the Bill, and if members will only leave me alone it will save me the necessity of dealing with them also.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is not fair.

THE MINISTER: In dealing with this portion of the State, I have to direct particular attention to the climate which is enjoyed in that particular locality, and to the copious rainfall, averaging from 38 inches at Collie down to 17 inches at Narrogin. These are matters which, viewed in connection with agricultural development, must be accepted as primary features, and when members direct their attention to the plan itself they will see the number of rivers the route traverses. There are the Upper Blackwood, the Arthur, the Balgarrup, the Hillman, the Williams, and I think

the Beaufort River. There is not the slightest doubt that the first essential to a cheaper food supply for this State will be the development of the agricultural resources. At one time it was believed that the agricultural land of this country was of an inferior quality, and that opinion gained ground principally because our railways ran as it were through the poorest country. In most instances comparisons were made between land of this State in its virgin condition and the lands of the old and improved areas of the Eastern States. In connection with the agricultural possibilities of this country I have been accused of changing my mind, and on this point I am very willing to admit I have changed my mind. With the advantages I have had of travelling through the State and judging the country, I do not hesitate to say there are very good reasons for changing my opinion of the agricultural possibilities of Western Australia.

MR. CONNOR: A thousand golden reasons per annum.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member may be very correct in his estimate in his own mind, but I would like to say we are not discussing that phase of the question at the present time. We are discussing the prospects of opening up a large belt of country which, at least in the opinion of the expert officers of the Government, will warrant the construction of the railway under notice. It has, as I assert, been said that I have changed my opinions. In connection with that I will admit I have done so, and when I changed my opinions perhaps that was rarer than a change on the part of some members, consequently more attention was directed to it; but if I were a lightning-change artist with some of the kaleidoscopic turns we have had from some members, there would have been less reason to wonder at my change of opinion. The one cry which we hear from every agent in the employ of the Crown at the present time is for land in close proximity to the railway system; and whilst we have a record in land settlement going on I believe, as do the officers of the department, that there is no other railway which offers such a prospect of development of the State as does the railway which is now proposed from Collie to Narrogin. I wish to sub-

mit to members, if I may, the opinion of Mr. Ranford and the opinion of Mr. Brockman, both of whom are surveyors, and also that of the railway engineers Mr. Thompson and Mr. Muir. Speaking more particularly of our land inspectors, these men know the country. I think Mr. Ranford was surveying this country 13 years ago; he knows the State and has been employed I believe in the public service for a very long period, ranking in seniority either along with or next to our present Surveyor General. He has surveyed the State from Albany, to (I believe) the Kimberleys in the north, and there is very little he has been over in respect of which he is not able to express a thoroughly capable opinion. Mr. Ranford's estimate is that 500,000 acres of land will be settled by this railway, within ten miles of either side of it, by the time the railway is constructed. I am sure members can appreciate what an advantage it means to the consumer if the construction of this line will lead to the successful settlement of half a million acres of country. If we assume for one moment that the average farm should total 500 acres, that will enable us to support a very large number of persons upon this country. The various figures giving the total number who will be actually settled will be expressed in the opinions which I will read to members directly. Following on the successful settlement of this country which it is my belief the railway will settle, there must of necessity spring up along the route work for the artisan and the labourer, and openings for professional men which to-day do not exist. These are all reasons which point towards the wisdom of the construction of the railway, and which I believe are justification for my asserting that, within a very few years from now, that country which in the past has been idle and undeveloped will probably carry a population of 3,000 to 5,000 people, aiding in the supply to the consuming portion of the State of the farming products which we so largely import, and the importation of which from the Eastern States was one and three-quarter millions of pounds sterling last year. The bulk of this country being well watered the area is deemed to be highly suitable for dairying and other kinds of mixed farming, which must lead to supplying

some of the more urgent wants of the consumers in this State. If I direct hon. members' attention to the report of Mr. Ranford on this railway it will probably do more to convince them than the views which I may express. In 1902 Mr. Ranford was asked to report on the proposed railway, and in his report he said:—

In accordance with your instructions, I beg to hand you the following report with reference to the land that could be opened up by the construction of the proposed Collie-Goldfields Railway so far as the first section is concerned, extending from Collie to the Great Southern Railway line near Narrogin. As the annual rainfall at the Collie is 38 and at Narrogin 17 inches, it is needless to say that this route passes through country where the water difficulty is unknown. This in itself is a great recommendation.

Then he enumerates the rivers which will be crossed, which I have already mentioned to the House. He says:—

The first 40 miles of this line, starting from the Collie, passes through very sparsely-settled country, chiefly due to the fact that at present the locality is so difficult of access, and that although much of the land is fertile it would not pay to cart the produce such long distances to market. The land is suitable for the growth of vegetables, fruit, fodder-plants, and cereals and for the breeding of cattle, horses, sheep, and pigs. Evidence as to the productiveness of the soil in this locality can be obtained by an inspection of the Collie farm at the Salvation Army settlement, where on new land a return of two tons of hay per acre was harvested last year; Michael Pollard's old farm, on the Bingham River (Loc. 613); Henry Hignett's garden on Loc. 819; and William Lavender's selection at Coolaking (Loc. 100). Very excellent crops of fruit, vegetables, hay, and corn have been grown at these places. It is a surprise to the casual observer to note the good effect that clearing timber has upon the growth of indigenous grasses. Where very little grass is found in the natural state I have seen, after clearing, a thick heavy sward, knee high, that could be mown and used for hay.

I may add now that at Darkan, half-way between the Collie and Narrogin, an agricultural area was established, the bulk of which has been selected; but as soon as it was announced that the Government intended to construct this railway an area of 800,000 acres of country was reserved until such time as a determination is arrived at. In going through that country myself I was surprised to see the excellent land it appeared to be in comparison with other areas I had seen

where cultivation was taking place. It seemed to me to indicate that the whole of this country is adapted for all kinds of cultivation for which it may be used. Continuing Mr. Ranford says :—

The climate is so cool in summer that, to my knowledge, several families living on the land referred to have made excellent butter throughout the year without any special appliances ; and as during 1901 we imported butter to the value of £247,808, it seems desirable to assist settlement on land where this commodity can be profitably produced.

MR. JACOBY: Is it timbered country too?

THE MINISTER: If the hon. member will direct his attention to the plan I can tell him that, starting from the Collie-Boulder and going eastward, there is about seven miles of timber country to the Cabbage Trees, where we may say the good land begins. The first portion of the country for six or seven miles is very inferior country covered with jarrah.

MR. ATKINS: Is not that the Salvation Army place?

THE MINISTER: No; that is on the other side, away to the north-west. For the first six or seven miles the country is inferior. One strikes the East Collie branch about eight miles from the terminus of the present railway. From the country on the East Collie branch right to the Darkan Agricultural Area the country improves every mile traversed.

MR. MORAN: Are there many people living on it?

THE MINISTER: No; very few.

MR. MORAN: One would wonder that such good land close to Collie was not settled long ago.

THE MINISTER: We will deal with that directly. Mr. Thompson, the senior inspector, directed my attention to several valleys running north and south from the East Collie branch, and his statement was verified afterwards by several residents, that these valleys run back for six or seven miles, and are timbered with wando and white gum, and in numerous instances with jam timber. I believe that this country along the East Collie branch will be largely settled. Going into the Darkan Area I met persons who came from the Eastern Goldfields and settled on the land forty miles from the railway. They were highly delighted with the results achieved. It is a reasonable inference that, if they can do well

there and cart their produce 40 miles, it augurs well for those who, following on the construction of the railway, will settle there. Mr. Ranford, continuing, says :—

On the first 20-mile section of this proposed Collie-Goldfields Railway line, besides being well watered by deep permanent pools of fresh water in the rivers by springs and swamps in every direction, there are about 200,000 acres of land absolutely free from poison plants. The country is patchy, as far as the quality of the soil is concerned, including rich black swamp land and loamy flats, as well as ironstone ridges. For the last 40 years or more sheep, cattle, and horses from the York, Williams, and Bunbury districts have been depastured in large numbers on this area, principally during the summer months.

In fact I understand people in these districts frequently run out of water, and that they seize the opportunity of putting their stock in the better watered country along the route of this proposed railway line.

MR. TAYLOR: Have they leases?

THE MINISTER: If the hon. member will look at the map he will see that the great bulk of this land has been held as pastoral leases. While looking at the map we can see that where recently there was no settlement the land has been taken up by conditional purchase holders, and that the whole of the country covered by the railway, except within six or seven miles from the Collie, will, I believe, compare more than favourably with the country already settled. Mr. Ranford says :—

The condition of stock running on this land in the year 1897 very favourably impressed Commandant Booth, and taken in conjunction with other evidence, materially assisted him in the selection of a site for the Salvation Army settlement. Pigs have been grown and fattened on the Bingham River, solely fed on indigenous plants to be found along the various water courses in that locality. The bacon, pork, and ham industry could be successfully prosecuted in this district, as nature has provided suitable food for pigs allowed to run loose, rich soil for growing the necessary corn for fattening large numbers, and a climate unexcelled for the curing process. During 1901 nearly £105,000 was sent out of Western Australia for hams and bacon. At a distance of 40 miles from the Collie, approaching the left bank of the Williams River, quite a different class of country is reached. The jarrah, red gum, flooded gum, and blackboys have given place to the York and white gum and jam.

I wish to say that I myself must have travelled over 15 or 20 miles of jam

country after we left the agricultural area, and travelled to what is known as Coolaking Brook. Mr. Ranford says:—

The land now right up to Narrogin, a distance of a little over 30 miles, is more open, easier to clear, and more adapted to the growth of cereals. Gull's estate of about 9,000 acres on the Williams River, which has recently been purchased by the Government, lies immediately on the proposed route of this railway line, and would have a frontage to same of a little over two miles. A very large amount of settlement has taken place between the Williams River and Narrogin. Several goldfields selectors, among whom Mr. J. E. Clayton may be mentioned as the most progressive, have secured large holdings, and will provide much traffic for this line.

Those hon. members who have been in my office during the last day or two could have seen a sample of wheat, oats, and barley, not picked but cut from the ordinary crop, grown by Mr. Clayton, and sent as a sample of what can be grown on these 500,000 acres of country which Mr. Ranford estimates will be taken up and settled out of the 800,000 to be opened up by this line. Mr. Ranford continues:—

The Lower Williams and Bannister and Upper Murray River country will be opened up for settlement if this line is decided upon. As along the Great Southern Railway line northward of Mount Barker serviceable jarrah is not available, a large demand will exist, as long as settlement continues, for this timber, which can be obtained in unlimited quantities from the Collie River, north and south of this proposed line and extending about 10 miles from Colliefields in an easterly direction. A reasonable estimate of the vacant land suitable for settlement within 10 miles of either side of this line would, in my opinion, be 500,000 acres. Genuine settlement will speedily follow the opening up of this vast tract of well-watered country by the construction of this proposed railway line. Practical farmers, with their wives, families, stock, and implements, are steadily turning their steps westward from the Eastern States of Australia. The proposed Collie-Goldfields line, if carried out, would prove a strong incentive for a still farther advance in the progress of the land settlement policy of Western Australia.

Now I want to say something in regard to a statement made by a member of this House the other evening, that it was one thing to settle people on the land, but that in all probability when they were settled there they would starve. In travelling I have had ample opportunity of meeting those persons recently settled on the land of this State, and I have gone through similar country to this

from Katanning out to a place called Carrolup, in connection with which I believe it was rumoured in Perth that Mr. Ranford was settling people on the land to ultimately starve. I believe some anxiety developed as to whether the Government would not have to charter a boat to return these people to the States from whence they came to prevent their starving, which anxiety culminated in the then Minister (Hon. G. Throssell) travelling through the Katanning country, which is similar country to that proposed to be opened by this railway. I believe that after travelling some 340 miles by road the hon. member (Mr. Throssell) returned to Katanning and wired to the then Premier, Sir John Forrest, that from an agricultural point of view the Eastern Districts were not in it in comparison with that part of the State. I do not want to make any statements of that kind. My reason for referring to it was to indicate that other persons had seen fit to change their minds with regard to agricultural portions of this State. Mr. Thompson, one of the railway engineers, in dealing with the question from a railway point of view, directed more particularly attention to the question of gradients, which I wish to bring under the notice of hon. members. As they will see on the plan, the easiest grade is on No. 2 route; and that route has been chosen by Mr. Muir, by Mr. Brockman, and by Mr. Ranford. The only other route chosen by a responsible officer was the Wagin route, which was chosen by Inspector Thompson; and he states in his report that the land ten miles south of the classification made by the officers of the department is some of the richest land within the limits of the State. I suppose if I made that statement, hon. members would perhaps think I was stretching somewhat. Mr. Thompson I believe is an officer in whom those who have come in contact with him have every confidence. In dealing with the question of grades Mr. Thompson, referring to engines known as Class K, points out that an engine would draw a load of 300 tons up a 1 in 60 grade at a rate of 15 miles an hour, whereas on a 1 in 40 grade it can pull only 210 tons at the rate of 13 miles per hour. I wish particularly to direct attention to this aspect of the question, because if

the mineral traffic which we may expect to pass over this line when constructed will require the easiest grade—and I believe those members who have any ideas of railway propositions, and particularly those who made reference to this Bill in the debate on the Address-in-Reply at the beginning of the season, will agree in that opinion—then a grade of 1 in 80 for this traffic should be adopted. There are other distinct advantages to which Mr. Thompson directs attention in regard to the construction of this railway. I believe there is a very reasonable and good prospect of a very large amount of coal traffic being carried over this railway; and on this point, after giving figures showing the comparative saving of the better grades, Mr. Thompson says:—

Allowing that a halfpenny per ton per mile is a barely payable rate, this route (Narrogin) would practically lessen the cost to the department by 2s. 5d. per ton, and deducting the 3d. per ton less freight received, the Commissioner (Railways) would be benefited to the extent of 2s. 2d. per ton; besides, the train would be made up for once and all at Collie, instead of having to be remarshalled at Brunswick, Bellevue, and Spencer's Brook. These remarks also apply to timber transported from Collie to the goldfields.

With the introduction of the new class of engines and the heavier loads they will be able to take on the lower grades by this railway, not only will a large amount of coal be consumed on the eastern goldfields, but the price of firewood for mining and household purposes must increase. Mr. Thompson goes on to say:—

Taking therefore the cost of the proposed railway including rolling-stock at £3,500 per mile, as already stated, or a total of £270,000, the annual cost of the line would be:—

	Expenditure.	
Interest on £270,000 at 4 per cent. ...	£10,800	
Working expenses at say 5s. per train mile ...	17,520	
Total annual cost ...	£28,320	
Probable Traffic—	Revenue.	
Coal, allow 100,000 tons at 3s. 2d. per ton ...	£21,666	
Timber, allow 6,000 tons at 9s. ...	2,700	
Agricultural produce, average 20,000 tons at 4s. ...	4,000	
Passengers, allow 10 at 2s. per day, or 3,000 annually ...	300	
	£28,666	

Indirect Returns—

Saving on timber and coal, 106,000 at 2s. 2d. ...	£11,483
Agricultural produce sent over existing lines, credit one-third of £6,666 ...	2,222
Increased State revenue, giving settlers credit 5 per cent. on £10,000 ...	500
Credit railway with sale of land, interest on £250,000, say ...	1,000
	£15,205
Total revenue ...	£43,871

Probable balance of revenue over expenditure ... £15,551

On these figures Mr. Thompson remarks:—

One halfpenny per ton per mile being a barely workable rate in the past, I have allowed nothing for the loss of revenue to the working railways because equivalent working expenses are transferred to the new line. For coal to replace timber fuel at its present cost it would be necessary for the former to be delivered at the mines for about 30s. per ton; deducting £1 1s. 8d. carriage via Narrogin would leave the cost at the pit's mouth at 8s. 4d., which should be a reasonable price, and probably before long the collieries will find that it is to their advantage to turn out coal at such a price. With the above reduction, together with the rise in firewood consequent upon the gradually increasing distance of the source of timber supply from the mining centres, the consumption of coal would rapidly increase not only for the mines but for household purposes.

I assume it is a reasonable proposition that firewood must rise in price on the eastern goldfields, inasmuch as the firewood is daily being taken from those portions that are nearest to the centres of consumption. Mr. Thompson concludes:—

It is therefore probable that a railway line from Collie to Narrogin would prove a source of benefit to the State, and except during construction, and perhaps for a short time after, it would not prove a burden to the Treasurer.

I think that is a very reasonable statement. It shows to my mind that Mr. Thompson is fully impressed with the fact that this railway may not pay during its first year; but after all, if Parliament is not going to build a railway until it has before it definite and direct assurances that the railway will pay during the first

year after construction, I ask hon. members to tell me where they are going to find that railway. There has not been one such railway built in this State or in any other part of Australia, in regard to which a guarantee could be given by those responsible for it that the working expenses and interest would be paid in and from the first year after construction. In regard to the Great Southern Railway, does any hon. member say that after it was built and worked by a company the Government ought not to have purchased and taken over the working of that railway because there was no assurance that during the first year after its purchase it would pay working expenses and interest on cost? Another point which has been taken into consideration is that probably at some distant date—though no provision is made for it now, nor is it at present contemplated, though the time is coming when it will be necessary to make provision—this railway will have to join the Eastern Railway at a point either at Hine's Hill or some other station along that country. The enormous area of salmon-gum country, all wheat country or agricultural land, to the eastward of the Great Southern Railway and within the limit of rainfall, is a justification for the construction of this railway. I am speaking here from verbal advice and information given me from time to time by the officers of the department, who are surely capable of expressing an opinion. Mr. Muir has also been called upon to report on the route of this railway, and in dealing with it in a report written, I think, in 1892, his estimate with cost of rolling-stock was then £140,000. In that report he was speaking of a purely agricultural railway; and running out his figures on that proposition the capital cost (including rolling-stock) would amount only to £1,800 per mile, or a total of £140,400 for the line. The annual cost would be:—

	Annual cost.
Interest on £140,000 at 4 per cent.	£5,600
Train service at 5s. per mile on £23,400	5,850
	<hr/> £11,450

The probable revenue being—

	Annual revenue.
Agricultural produce (average), 20,000 tons at 4s. ...	£4,000
Passenger fares, allow 10 daily at 2s. (3,000 at 2s.)... ..	300
	<hr/> £4,300

There were certain indirect advantages which would also apply in either case; so the comparison between the two projects was that an agricultural railway would run out at a loss of about £7,000, as against a timber (or mixed traffic) railway showing a profit of about £300 per annum. As to the routes, Inspector Thompson was asked to report; also Mr. Ranford and Mr. Brockman. I do not know that it is advisable for me to direct attention to the whole of these reports in detail. They can be laid on the table, and members will be able to peruse them and make their own extracts in order that they may have the additional information which these reports contain. Speaking on the question of Mr. Brockman, I would like to explain to members that we have had in this country the severest winter and the heaviest rainfall I believe which has been recorded during the last 20 years. During this heavy rainfall, owing to the exigencies of Parliament Mr. Brockman and Mr. Muir were called upon to make an inspection, Mr. Muir from the railway standpoint and Mr. Brockman from that of land settlement. The disadvantages were that the country was in a wet, sloppy, and boggy condition; in fact, in many instances a great deal of the classification work had to be done on foot. It was necessarily hurried, and altogether it has been a distinct disadvantage to these officers to have to carry out their work under such unfavourable auspices. Speaking in his report—I may make just one or two quotations from it—Mr. Brockman says:—

This, with the exception of a large proportion of the land selected as poison leases, may be generally considered as first-class land, capable of a high degree of development, and likely to produce a considerable amount of freight along the line of railway adopted.

The unalienated land, of which I consider 50 per cent. suitable for selection as first and second class, if provided with a railway, is coloured brown upon the plan.

This plan will be placed on the table. Speaking of No. 2 route he says:—

Within the twelve-mile limit from this line there are no poison leases. The unalienated land contains about 180,000 acres, and the area suitable for selection I estimate at 75,000 acres, making a total available for development of 255,000 acres.

I wish members in dealing with Mr. Brockman's figures to bear in mind that is within the 12 miles limit. We have ample indication at the present time that settlement does extend to a distance of 25 miles, and sometimes 30, 40, and even 50 miles from our railway system, provided, of course, that the roads are pretty good. From his estimate, which I accept as being the most conservative of all, carried out under the most unfavourable conditions, there are 255,000 acres of land which can be settled within 12 miles of No. 2 route. I have also a return prepared by Mr. Brockman showing that in connection with the route to Wagin 104,000 acres has been selected other than poison lease; on No. 2 route 130,000; No. 3 route 175,000; No. 4 route 138,000. The area selected as poison lease is in the case of No. 2 route nil, and in the case of the others it varies from 24,000 acres up to 140,000 acres; so that if the question of developing poison lease enters into consideration there is none on No. 2 route, which is the route recommended by the Government. The area suitable for selection and in a proper state for development on the No. 2 route is, according to Mr. Brockman's figures, 255,000 acres, as I have already stated. The conditional purchase inspector, Mr. Thompson, in dealing with the question strongly favours route No. 1, and in order that members may have the opinions on that particular route papers will be laid on the table, and they may make their own notes.

MR. ATKINS: Leave the marks in them.

THE MINISTER: Yes; I will do that. Inspector Thompson epitomises his report dealing with these routes. Dealing with No. 1 route he says:—

It is the shortest route. There is a large amount of good land to be selected. There is better land and more farmers settled along this route for 30 miles west of the Great Southern Railway. There is a good supply of permanent water for stock and other

purposes. There would not be any immediate necessity for a railway between Bridgetown to Katanning, as this line would serve the purpose for some time to come.

Mr. Muir's report is not a very lengthy one, and in consequence I will read it in order that I may be able to quote from some of the returns which he has prepared, and which in a measure will have to be taken into consideration in connection with the propositions as submitted by Mr. Thompson. Dealing with route No. 2, Mr. Muir says:—

—that is the line having a combination of red and blue lines—connects Collie with Narrogin; its length is about 86 miles—

That is the information I think some members were asking for just now.

—and the probable cost of construction is £225,000.

So that after closer investigation made by Mr. Muir he is able to reduce the original estimate made by Mr. Thompson, the railway engineer, from £270,000 down to £225,000.

A ruling grade of 1 in 80 against the load, and 1 in 60 with it, can probably be obtained. Referring to route No. 4, Mr. Muir says:—

Connects Collie and Pingelly. The length is about 100 miles; probable cost £300,000, and I am doubtful if a better grade than 1 in 50 can be obtained.

So members will appreciate the difficulty when they compare a railway from Pingelly with a 1 in 50 grade, as against a railway to Narrogin with a 1 in 80 grade against the load.

MR. ATKINS: Which does he call against the load; is that going towards the fields?

THE MINISTER: Yes.

MR. MORAN: But 1 in 50 is not such an awful grade, after all. It is used all over Australia.

THE MINISTER: But when you compare it with a 1 in 80 you will see the disadvantage of having a 1 in 50 grade. Continuing, Mr. Muir says:—

In the case of this proposal the extra length would, in the event of this railway being extended to the goldfields system, be counterbalanced by the shorter length of the extension. The above estimates include rails and fastenings, station accommodation and water supply, etc., but do not provide for rolling-stock nor land purchase. In view of the probable development of a large coal traffic over this proposed railway in the near future, it would, I think, be well to consider the bene-

fits that would be derived by adopting the route on which the easiest grade can be obtained. To enable a comparison to be made in this respect Appendix C is attached. This statement shows the loads that can be hauled over 1 in 60 and 1 in 80 grades respectively, the advantage to be gained by adopting the 1 in 80 grade, and the probable cost per ton for conveying coal from Collie to Kalgoorlie. This statement is based upon information supplied by the Chief Mechanical Engineer, Mr. T. F. Rotherham.

I wish to direct the attention of members to the table showing the grades, lengths, and estimated cost of the various routes proposed. Grade: No. 1, to Wagin, 1 in 60; No. 2, Collie to Narrogin, 1 in 80 against load, 1 in 60 with load; No. 3, Collie to Narrogin, alternative route, the one originally suggested, 1 in 60 against load, 1 in 50 with load; No. 4, Collie to Pingelly, 1 in 50. Approximate length: No. 1 route, 84 miles; No. 2, 86; No. 3, 81; No. 4, 100. Estimated cost, exclusive of rolling-stock: No. 1, £220,000; No. 2, £225,000; No. 3, £240,000; No. 4, £300,000. Approximate length through length to Boorabbin: No. 1, 321 miles; No. 2, 314 miles; No. 3, 309 miles; No. 4, 321 miles. I have another appendix showing the cost of hauling coal over a 1 in 60 grade and over a 1 in 80 grade. With a ruling grade of 1 in 60 a Class F engine would only be able to haul 235 tons as against a load of 300 tons with a grade of 1 in 80. With a grade of 1 in 60 a proposed new heavy goods engine (drawing No. 1010) would haul 360 tons as against a load of 450 tons with a grade of 1 in 80. The estimated working expense per ton mile with a Class F engine is 0.51d. with a grade of 1 in 60, or 20s. per ton for carriage from Collie to Kalgoorlie, $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of capital cost being allowed; with a Class F engine and a grade of 1 in 80, 0.40d. or 16s. 4d.; with a proposed new heavy goods engine (drawing No. 1010) and a grade of 1 in 60, 0.33d. or 14s.; with a proposed new heavy goods engine (drawing No. 1010) with a grade of 1 in 80, 0.27d. or 12s. The estimated cost, exclusive of rolling-stock, is set down at £225,000, and the rolling-stock at £43,000; the total being £268,000 sterling. The items have all been very carefully made up, and members can seize another opportunity of going into them. So far as the railway is concerned I know of no

other railway proposition in the State, nor do the officers in my department, which it is believed will offer the same inducement to land settlement as this railway. We are now in the happy position at the present time of daily having people coming from the Eastern States, all searching after land. To show you how the other States are feeling the exodus which has taken place through the people coming to settle on the lands in this country, I may state I have seen an important advertisement in the *South Australian Register*, and I cannot for a moment think that any private individual has gone to the trouble or expense of paying for that advertisement unless he is more of a patriot than I judge the average South Australian to be. This big advertisement intimates that the farmers should not be deceived by Western Australia, and that they should remain in their South Australian homes; it is also stated that the figures given in regard to Western Australia wheat yields are as delusive as a mining prospectus. I have not the slightest doubt some of our South Australian friends are as good authorities on mining prospectuses as are people anywhere. I would not like to say the Government inserted that advertisement, but I do not suppose there are many patriots in the habit of inserting advertisements of that kind. I am at a loss to know who would publish it.

MR. MORAN: The paper itself.

THE MINISTER: Perhaps. These people coming from the Eastern States are surprised to find the class of country available and the facilities that are provided. Only recently we had some settlers here from Queensland, for bringing whom I believe the member for West Perth was responsible. They have selected land with their eyes open, and have already expressed the opinion that the land which they were able to secure in this State will compare favourable with anything they saw in the Eastern States. The principal advantage we have to offer is the uniformity of yield which we get over here. If I am not wearying members I will compare the yields of the States, and surely on the subject of an agricultural railway this is an aspect of the question that should not be forgotten. The wheat yield in Western Australia last year was

10·58 bushels per acre; in South Australia, 5·9; in Queensland, 3·28.

MR. MORAN: You don't call that a fair average.

THE MINISTER: I shall quote others. In Victoria it was 1·29, and in New South Wales 1·2 bushels per acre. These were the figures last year. I do not mean to champion this country at the expense of the other States.

MR. THOMAS: These figures are pretty unfair.

THE MINISTER: I am quoting distinctly and clearly the figures for last year.

MR. MORAN: Why not take ten years?

THE MINISTER: The hon. member can quote the figures for ten years. I shall now quote for the year preceding.

MR. TAYLOR: What is it this year?

THE MINISTER: We have not got this year's figures yet. I do not want to be unfair in my comparisons, but I give the figures I have at my disposal.

MR. MORAN: They are unfair. Take ten years.

THE MINISTER: They are not unfair for my purpose. I am quoting these figures for an express purpose. New South Wales had a wheat yield in 1902 of 10·64 bushels to the acre. Of course that is in excess of ours, which was 10·54 for last year, but Western Australia again came out at 10·10 in the previous year. The yield in Victoria in 1902 was 6·91, and in South Australia 4·60. When the Premier of South Australia was down in the Katanning district he heard people complaining of drought, and he asked them what their wheat yield was. They told him 10, 15, and 20 bushels to the acre. He said: "If that is what you call a drought, I wish Providence would send one to South Australia, and send it regularly." It is this regularity we have to which I wish to draw attention. We have not got those excesses they have in the other States. I do not mean to say that the agricultural lands are richer in this State than they are in the other States. I have seen land in Victoria with which I do not think anything in this State will compare, country where most magnificent English grasses grow all the year round. This is not the aspect of our country. It is its uniformity which gives to the farmer his return and his annual profit.

What profit is it to harvest 20 bushels to the acre this year, and next year to have next to nothing? Our agricultural land does not compare with the richer areas of the Eastern States, but we enjoy a milder climate. Stock do not get the set-backs they have in the Eastern States, and we are not snow-bound as they are in Canada.

MR. MORAN: They do not get a set-up here.

THE MINISTER: I met a farmer of 50 years standing who has farmed in every State in the Commonwealth, and he said that it has only been within the last five years, since he has been in Western Australia, that he has earned an independence.

MR. JACOBY: Not through stock.

THE MINISTER: I have heard men in the Katanning district say that when the country is ringbarked it will carry one sheep to the acre. Though there is better country in the Eastern States, a large percentage of it cannot carry one sheep to the acre. Turning to potatoes, the yield was 1·50 tons to the acre in the other States, while in Western Australia we exceeded that figure and reached 3·14 tons to the acre. When these things are taken into consideration, and when we recognise, as we must do, that Western Australia has a large population coming to its shores to-day, are we not going to strain a point to offer to these people facilities to settle on the land? Let us assume that Mr. Ranford is right in his estimate when he says that 500,000 acres will be selected if this railway is built. This will mean approximately a quarter of a million of land revenue for the country. If we build the railway with the proceeds of the sale of that land, the revenue the country would derive, and the advantages to the State which would be derived through the increased population on these agricultural areas, are in my opinion adequate reasons for the construction of the railway. I have very much pleasure in moving the second reading of this Bill.

On motion of MR. A. E. THOMAS, debate adjourned.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Resumed from 11th November; MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair.

Clause 24—agreed to.

On account of the indisposition of the Minister for Railways, on motion by the PREMIER progress reported and leave given to sit again.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from 12th November; MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair.

LANDS DEPARTMENT (HON. J. M. Hopkins).

Lands and Surveys, £52,920 16s. 8d. (general discussion continued) :

After a pause—

MR. THOMAS: In view of the serious statements made on Thursday evening, one would expect that the Minister for Lands would have a statement to make to the House.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Dundas had made a serious statement on Thursday evening, and was good enough to place at his (the Minister's disposal) certain notes in connection with the Rabbit Department. These notes were handed to the Director of Agriculture, who had since gone through the files of the Lands Department, which files were now in this House. The answers, so far as the records would show, were also embodied in the files. The hon. member was desirous of having the whole truth and nothing else, and if he was desirous of having this matter cleared up lucidly, which was all he (the Minister) also cared about, the hon. member would see that it was better to allow the discussion to proceed on the other items. In the meantime the hon. member and the Director of Agriculture and Inspector White could go through the files. If any document was missing from the files it would be his (the Minister's) duty to ascertain why it was missing. Some of the statements made by the hon. member were correct. Others admitted of another interpretation. We should go on with the Estimates until we came to the Rabbit vote, and the hon. member could peruse the files as suggested. This course would do much to clear away the difficulties that existed at present. He (the Minister) had had a great deal to do during the last few days, and had no time since the

files were handed to him by the Director of Agriculture during to-day to ascertain the nature of the statements made by the member for Dundas. When we reached the Rabbit vote we might postpone it.

MR. FIGOTT: Was Inspector White in the service?

THE MINISTER: No. Inspector White tendered his resignation, affirming at the time that the fence was in an unsatisfactory condition. On that resignation being received, he (the Minister) immediately by special messenger ordered the dismissal of Inspector White and the other supervisors responsible. The member for Dundas and the leader of the Opposition would agree that he had no alternative.

MR. THOMAS certainly could not agree to that.

THE MINISTER: In doing what he did in Mr. White's case, he was acting on the information then before him.

MR. MORAN: About the last action any man should take without inquiry.

THE MINISTER: There was no objection to Mr. White seeing these papers. Mr. White ought to have justice, of course. It appeared to him (the Minister) that communications had been written which had gone in some instances to the department, though to what extent he was not prepared to say at present. In other instances those communications did not come before him.

MR. JACOBY: Did the Minister ask for that information before sacking Mr. White?

THE MINISTER: What he did was to request the Director of Agriculture to ask Mr. White to report on certain contracts and on the presence of rabbits. The Director of Agriculture stated that Inspector White refused to see him (the Minister), that he had said the fence was bad, that the specifications had not been complied with, and he made other statements which were, to say the least of them, discreditable. He also tendered his resignation. He (the Minister) learnt since that Inspector White desired to withdraw his resignation. He almost regretted that Mr. White had not done so. Mr. White came to see him on Sunday last, and asked if he might withdraw his resignation and submit to an inquiry.

MR. THOMAS read to the House the letter of the Director of Agriculture, and said there was nothing in that letter about the condition of the fence or the contracts.

THE MINISTER said he would hand over to the hon. member the minute he (the Minister) wrote on the dismissal of Mr. White. [Paper handed over.]

MR. MORAN: Did the Minister say that Mr. White offered to withdraw his resignation.

THE MINISTER: Mr. White asked him on Sunday if he might do so.

MR. MORAN: Was not Mr. White approached first by the Director of Agriculture?

MR. WALLACE: Was Mr. White dismissed, or did he resign? If dismissed, what effect would the withdrawal of his resignation have on the dismissal?

MR. MORAN: The question under discussion, when the Committee resumed this evening, was the general administration of the Lands Department; and the Rabbit Department in connection therewith was referred to particularly, upon the case of Mr. White's dismissal. The Minister now showed he had been acting not on information but on the absence of information, as some papers were missing from the file. This was rather like the Minister's action in denying there was any outbreak of swine fever, and admitting in the House four hours later that he had received reports on the subject which practically confirmed the information as to the outbreak of swine fever. The Minister told us the other evening that he saw a wave of opinion which convinced him that he had acted rightly in dismissing Mr. White, that he saw another wave which indicated that he ought to have gone farther—which meant that he ought to have sacked the Premier and dismissed the rest of the Cabinet in their night-shirts. If the Premier and Ministers generally were fair-minded men why did they not reinstate Mr. Inspector White? If any doubt existed in regard to the justice or the injustice of Mr. White's treatment, the instant dismissal ought to have been withdrawn, the officer reinstated, tried on his merits, and dealt with severely if found guilty; but not dealt with on the principle of hanging him first and trying him afterwards. If these missing reports were taken off the

file and used by somebody else, and a faked special report made up from them, one did not wonder that Inspector White resigned; but the Minister said that in order to forestall resignation he sacked Mr. White. Now, the Minister said Mr. White wished to withdraw his resignation. He (Mr. Moran) denied that Inspector White did ask leave to withdraw his resignation.

THE MINISTER: That was untrue.

MR. MORAN said Inspector White's version was that he was asked to withdraw his resignation. Did the Minister mean that he (Mr. Moran) was telling an untruth. He insisted on this matter being cleared up. The Minister had accused him of telling an untruth. He asked the Minister to explain.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Minister did not accuse the hon. member. The Minister said the statement which the hon. member reported from Mr. White was untrue. That did not charge the hon. member with telling an untruth.

MR. MORAN: That charitable construction would be put on it by members. He knew the Chairman was always inclined to be charitable, and this instance was only another illustration of the hon. gentleman's charitable mind. Inspector White's resignation was never accepted, therefore it could never have been withdrawn. This dismissed man was requested in writing to come back and discuss the rabbit question with the department, and was to be put in charge of departmental files and find something which others could not find. He (Mr. Moran) believed it was pointed out to Inspector White that if he liked to withdraw his resignation the case would be considered; but how could a man who had been dismissed withdraw his resignation? Was not the only natural step to take to cancel the dismissal first, and if Inspector White had wished to withdraw the resignation he might have done so afterwards? The fact that Inspector White had been requested to come back made it appear the Minister was willing to admit there was something in what had been put forth by the member for Dundas. There must be a suspicion that Mr. White had been a victim. Reference had been made to a bushman who went to look after Inspector White, but this wonderful bushman had to follow the line

where there were gangs of men along the fence, whereas Inspector White, who was severely dealt with, had been in that part of the country before there was a fence, and for years he had been doing hard work. The fair and obvious thing was to give that man an inquiry, so that he might have been asked where his letter-book was and whether he communicated about sub-inspectors and asked for their removal. If he could do all that was asked of him, it would show that he had very narrowly escaped being a victim of a bad conspiracy. Inspector White had intended to hold a meeting on Saturday, his idea being that he could obtain no redress from the Government. He came to him (Mr. Moran) in connection with the meeting, and was advised not to hold it. He (Mr. Moran) said to him, "Don't take the case out of the hands of this Parliament yet. My experience of this Parliament and all other Australian Parliaments is such that I do not think any man who has a good case need have any fear of bringing it before Parliament." One thought it would have been a disgrace for a person to have to appeal to the public. For the last 12 or 13 years he had never known a civil servant wrongly dealt with by the Government without finding a member willing to take the case up. The Minister had been a victim of bad information. One did not say that any particular disgrace, shame, or maladministration attached to the Minister, if what the inspector said was correct; but when doubt arose in the hon. gentleman's mind that the inspector had not been fairly dealt with, one would have expected the Minister to order an immediate inquiry into the case. The Minister admitted that the matter bore an entirely different aspect from the information he had received. This was one of those illustrations to show that all was not satisfactory in the Lands Department. There should be a select committee to inquire into the whole of the Stock Department. There were men with time to thoroughly inquire into this case, and report to the House before the prorogation. Weeks ago he gave notice of his intention to move in this House for a select committee in relation to the Stock Department in connection with diseases in stock. That ought to have been granted, and it ought to be granted now, for there

was an additional case. In regard to this matter of Inspector White there should be a select committee, before which White, Wilson, the sub-inspectors, Mr. Crawford, and everybody else should be haled, and we could then sift the truth of the matter. We did not wish this dragged before a public meeting. Let the public first see what Parliament would do.

MR. WALLACE: It was rather a pity the Premier was absent from this Chamber the other evening, seeing the wonderful influence his presence had over the Minister for Lands to-night. Had the Premier been present, the hon. gentleman would probably have agreed with the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) on the question of the dismissal of Mr. White, and all this time would have been saved, and we should have been going on smoothly instead of as at present—owing to the impulsive temperament of the Minister for Lands—finding the question inquired into by every member in the Chamber. Apparently the Minister had discovered the very serious error he made in taking the impulsive and drastic step he had done in dismissing this officer and other officers of the Rabbit Department. If the Minister recognised that he had made a mistake, and instead of handing over the files would make an admission, time would be saved; but if the hon. gentleman was going to keep his seat and let members desirous of seeing justice done to those officers thresh the matter out, a lot of time would be taken up. There was apparently a feeling on the part of the Committee that so far as the Minister was concerned Mr. White had been wrongly dismissed. We had been informed the Minister knew of Inspector White's intended resignation and forestalled him by dismissal, yet the hon. gentleman spoke of the resignation as debarring Inspector White from reinstatement.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Nothing of the kind was conveyed by him.

MR. WALLACE: Both sides should be set forth before we supported the Minister's action in dismissing Inspector White from the service and branding him for the rest of his life as an incompetent and most unworthy officer. Throughout his connection with the department and the various occupations held under it,

Inspector White had done nothing to justify either dismissal or even censure; but he was a most worthy officer, and anyone who had bush experience would have assured the Minister that this officer was the right man to be appointed for dealing with rabbits. He (Mr. Wallace) asked the Premier to use his influence with the Minister, to see if this officer could not be reinstated. One did not know that the Minister's friend, a gentleman of independent means with bush experience, was any better than Inspector White; though he (Mr. Wallace) would be quite as pleased to see that gentleman in the position if proved to be more qualified. But he understood this gentleman was not more qualified; so he trusted that the error of the Minister would be rectified, and Inspector White be reinstated.

THE PREMIER: It was to be regretted that in dealing with the general discussion on the Lands Department we should be devoting the greater part of our time to considering the position of one particular servant or ex-servant of the department. However, the debate had gone in that direction, and instead of devoting our attention to the best means of stopping the rabbit incursion, we had been dealing with matters which did not show the best means of grappling with the difficulty. It struck him, from reading the debate, that a great number of people were prepared to criticise what had or had not been done, but very few were prepared to place before the House some means by which the difficulty could be overcome and the advancing incursion stopped. We seemed to be losing sight of the importance of the main issue, and to be going on to side issues. So far as Inspector White was concerned he (the Premier) had met him once or twice, and liked him very much. The inspector seemed to be a hard-working, good sort of a fellow, one who would work hard in the discharge of his duties, and who possessed a great deal of bush knowledge. However, the Minister for Lands was justified in taking strong action, because the inspector did not respond to his request as he should have done. It was advisable that the inspector should come to Perth, because the position was of so grave importance, and the Minister had a right

to insist that the man in charge of the fence should at once come to the head office and report, so that the exact conditions could be ascertained.

MR. JACOBY: The inspector reported several times

THE PREMIER: It was a matter of indifference whether the inspector reported once or a hundred times. The Minister in charge had a right to expect the officer to attend in Perth when called upon. The officer could not dictate to the Minister in this matter. The more important the matter, the more urgent it was that the officer should obey the summons. It was admitted that, because the officer did not come to Perth, he was dismissed.

MR. THOMAS: It was not admitted that the officer was dismissed in June.

THE PREMIER: The officer was not dismissed in June.

MR. THOMAS: Then no provision was made for him on the Estimates, which was equivalent to the same thing.

THE PREMIER: Why should the hon. member not say what he meant? The inspector was not dismissed in June, and one did not know that he complained of being dismissed. He (the Premier) only saw Inspector White twice, once some months ago, and once since June when the inspector called to see him in Perth. The inspector said: "I am leaving the department. No provision has been made on the Estimates for me. Have you got a "down" on me because I have been reporting your brother?" He (the Premier) said: "If my brother is not doing his work, bundle him out. Don't let the fact of his being my brother influence you." After a chat the inspector went away quite satisfied. He (the Premier) then spoke to the Minister for Lands on the matter, and understood that there was some misapprehension on the matter of the provision of the inspector's salary on the Estimates. Reference was made in the debate to the fact that Sub-inspector James was his (the Premier's) brother, but he (the Premier) did not mind it.

MR. MORAN: Who made the reference?

THE PREMIER: The reference was made by the member for West Perth. Sub-inspector James might have been careless, but his honour was unchallenged.

He (the Premier) would stake his reputation on the boy's honesty, whatever might have been said by members.

MR. MORAN: The Premier was getting a bit hysterical.

THE PREMIER was not one bit hysterical. So far as he was concerned if his brother was careless he should be dismissed, and he was glad his brother was dismissed if he was careless. That, however, did not exonerate the inspector responsible. The main responsibility must rest on the head of the inspector. When members complained of the treatment of Inspector White, they must bear in mind that the head of the department was always held responsible. In a Government the head man was held responsible. The inspector must not try to shelter himself by saying he did not dismiss the sub-inspector who was negligent because of influence.

MR. MORAN: The inspector did not have the power to dismiss. He reported the sub-inspector.

MR. NANSON: If the inspector reported the sub-inspector, did the responsibility still rest on the inspector?

THE PREMIER: That all depended on how the sub-inspector was reported. The head of the department must be held responsible.

MR. THOMAS: Then Mr. Wilson was responsible, as he was the head of the department.

THE PREMIER: If Inspector White made a report to somebody else, and on that report someone ought to be dismissed but was not dismissed, clearly the officer was to blame. After all, this was largely beside the question. The rabbits could not be considered to have got on this side of the fence because of the faulty construction of the fence.

MR. PROCTOR: The Minister said so.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The complaint against the officer was that the fence was not in accordance with the specifications.

THE PREMIER: The gravity of the position was not because the fence was defective, but because the rabbits were on the west of the fence; and it was on that account that the Minister thought Inspector White should attend in Perth to see what should be done. Inspector White was an officer of whom he (the Premier) had a great opinion. He did

not have a less opinion of him now, and would be very glad to assist him, and the Minister was also desirous to put things right as far as possible. He did not say for one moment that the inspector had not been guilty of very reprehensible conduct. If rabbits were so far west there ought to have been a more emphatic statement on the point by Inspector White. The fact was not brought sufficiently prominently to the notice of the proper persons. The Committee seemed to be getting away from that point. The question of the construction of the fence was a subsidiary point which could be put right. The Government were anxious that care should be taken to place the responsibility on the man in charge of the fence. There was too great a risk of carelessness and of the matter being ignored, and of disastrous consequences following, to allow a matter like this to pass without some action being taken. The fence had to be continued, and other fences might have to be built, so that it was wise on the part of the Minister to let it be clearly understood, in connection with the construction of the fence and with the care of rabbits, that we depended so much on the individual actually in charge who ought to see what was going on. The Government would exact personal responsibility, and that principle would be applied to all the individuals directly concerned in the construction of fences. There must be no Government red-tape business with one man placing the responsibility on other persons and no possibility of getting at the right man; but there must be direct personal responsibility, because by that means alone could we secure the efficiency so essential in the construction of the fence. The workmen were miles away from control and supervision, and their faults and mistakes were difficult to discover. Whatever might be the merits of this particular case, the Minister has done good work by insisting upon the principle, because it would apply to the future extensions of the existing line or to any new fences that might be erected. The men on the job were after all the only persons able to see that the work was being done properly, and to advise the Government of the advance of the rabbits. They should have a sense of responsibility

cast upon them for whatever was done by their subordinates, and side by side must rest with them the question of appointing those under them. So far as Inspector White was concerned, he was entirely wrong in not responding to the summons of the Minister. It was beside the question to tell him there was the information available in a previous report, and that by going to the Minister for Lands as requested he could not give greater information. His duty was to go to the Minister when asked to do so. He believed Mr. White to be a hard-working, conscientious man and a good bushman, who did not spare himself in trying to make his work a success.

MR. PIGOTT: If the Premier had been present at the last sitting when this matter came up, probably a different tone would have prevailed on the Ministerial bench. The question was brought prominently before the Committee by the Minister himself; and after hearing his speech he (Mr. Pigott) said it was almost impossible for any man to have spoken in a more condemnatory way of the administration of the department than the Minister himself had done. During that speech the Minister chose to give to the Committee full details with regard to the rabbit fence and the dismissal of Mr. White, and gave members to understand that he did not allow Inspector White to resign, but forestalled him by dismissal.

THE PREMIER: If the inspector had turned up as he ought to have done at the Minister's office, that would have been avoided.

MR. PIGOTT: The Minister said that Inspector White had probably heard that the Minister obtained information from other sources, and so thought he would forestall dismissal by resigning.

MR. WALLACE: Information obtained from the Minister's personal friend, sent to spy out the work.

MR. PIGOTT: What the Minister said was that he had heard information from outside, and that he sent out a friend to investigate.

MR. WALLACE: Would not that break down the loyalty of any public servant?

MR. PIGOTT: The member for Dundas gave the Committee some information which did not support the version previously given by the Minister, and documents were read showing that the

Minister's information was not full or was not correct. The Minister gave us to understand that he would make inquiry into the matter, and members expected he would do so; but what had happened since? The Minister this evening said he had gone through the matter, and did not think it necessary for him to do any more but hand over the papers to the member for Dundas to look at for himself, with Mr. White to assist if he chose, and with the Director of Agriculture also to assist. It was not in the province of any Government to shelve the matter in this way.

THE MINISTER: It was not shelved by a long way.

MR. PIGOTT: The onus of finding out what had occurred was to be thrown on a private member of this House.

THE MINISTER: No. He wanted that member to be in possession of the facts, and offered the papers to him for that purpose.

MR. PIGOTT: The Minister had contradicted himself many times over on this question. First he said he dismissed Mr. White, and to-night he said Mr. White had since asked to be allowed to withdraw his resignation. If Mr. White was dismissed, his resignation could not have been accepted; therefore it was not possible it could be withdrawn. We heard now from the Premier that the responsibility of this matter must rest on those who were directly overlooking the work. Was it to be Inspector White, or Mr. Wilson, or the head of the Agricultural Department, or the Minister who was to be held responsible? Ministers of course were responsible to this House; therefore it was their duty to go into this matter fully and report to the House.

THE PREMIER: On what point? On the dismissal of Inspector White?

MR. PIGOTT: On the whole question of the rabbit-proof fence. The annual report of the Rabbit Department had been laid on the table, and it did not support the statements of the Minister in regard to two important points. Was Parliament to accept that report as being correct, or to accept the statements of the Minister as being correct? The Government were to be blamed for not having given the fullest attention to this question.

MR. MORAN suggested that the most urgent question to-day was that of dealing with the invasion of rabbits. It was of far more importance than the question of constructing an agricultural railway, because it would protect people on the land while the railway was to induce more people to go on the land. As to offering suggestions, he had suggested that he would pursue a certain policy, being the same policy as he had placed in detail before the Cabinet of which he was a member two years ago. He still adhered to that policy. If the first line of fence was not effective, he would erect a second; he would divide the country into rabbit boards; he would fence it not only longitudinally but latitudinally; and to recover some of the expense he would place a tax on the land, utilising in the meantime any money available from loan or revenue. This was the most urgent of all works in this State. A select committee should be appointed to investigate the truth of this case and the matters connected with the Stock Department; and members should be appointed who would do justice where justice was loudly called for. He inferred that if the Government still refused the inquiry he had asked for in regard to the Stock Department, there must be something which Ministers wished to hide. The inquiry could be conducted without hampering the Government in dealing with the rabbits, and he again appealed to the Premier to allow this inquiry to be made. There was room for inquiry, particularly in regard to the dismissal of old and distinguished civil servants, who ought not to be allowed to go undefended. This matter could be gone into fully in a fortnight, and the inquiry would cause the blame to be sheeted home to the right people. If Inspector White were wrong, we would blame him, and if not we would vindicate him; but in any case we would see who should bear the blame, even if it had to rest on the shoulders of the Minister. If the Government so desired, let three members of the select committee be chosen from their side of the House, and let there be two from the Opposition side.

MR. WALLACE: The Premier had made a remark about the responsibility being placed upon the officer in charge of

the work. If an officer had to be held responsible, he should be allowed to choose his own machinery, to choose the officers under him.

MR. THOMAS: Having gone through everything available to him that consisted of letters the inspector held in his private book, and having verified every statement he made in the House last Thursday, he asserted now that this evidence would be accepted in any court of law. Presumably if these letters were copied amongst others, they were despatched to those to whom they were addressed, to the chief or to the secretary of the Agricultural Department. If these letters were missing from that file, someone was to blame and should have the sack.

THE MINISTER: Would the hon. member expect him to go through that in 24 hours?

MR. THOMAS: No. Next day he would go through it himself. Last Thursday he asked that the papers might be put on the table of the House so that he could go through them on Friday, and other members on the Saturday and Monday and Tuesday; but the documents had been away from the Lands Department, therefore a member could not verify the letters, copies of which appeared on the file or the originals should be there. The Premier had said the Minister was perfectly right in dismissing Inspector White because Inspector White was at the head of the work and ought to take the blame. Secretary Wilson was, however, at the head of the department, and if any man was to be sacked for the incompetency of sub-inspectors, and the person to be sacked was the responsible head, why was not Wilson sacked instead of White? If, as stated by the Minister the other day, Inspector White was sacked principally because Contract No. 3 was in a bad state, and because he had signed the progress payments, he (Mr. Thomas) would point out minutes which appeared on the file. One minute dated the 11th November read thus:—

Will you please have the following questions answered by Mr. Wilson: (1) When I recalled Inspector White to Perth, was he not under instructions to proceed north to report on timber, water, etc? (2) On whose certificates have the progress payments been made on fence contracts?

In reply to that it was stated that most

of the payments were made on Inspector White's certificates. The Minister then went on to severely blame Inspector White for signing those progress payments, for signing them when here in Perth, and for signing them under the direct instruction of his chief.

THE MINISTER: That was denied, and would have to be inquired into.

MR. THOMAS: At any rate, Inspector White signed them in Perth.

THE MINISTER: That was denied.

MR. THOMAS: That was the chief reason, as far as he could understand, for the dismissal of Inspector White. There was a minute, dated the 13th November, signed "A. Crawford," which read thus:—

Mr. Wilson.—On page 15, File No. 25/03, you state that Mr. Cocking's payment was made in September on the authority of Mr. Sub-inspector James. The form shows that you certified as to its correctness. Will you please explain how this discrepancy occurs?

The following, dated the 14th November, was signed by Mr. Wilson:—

Although Sub-inspector James did not certify on the face of the voucher (not having the necessary form), the particulars appearing therein were certified to by him in his report (File 44), which I take it is equally binding. To secure the payment which the contractor insisted was most urgent, I signed on the strength of my officer's certificate.

Mr. Wilson signed a progress payment on the certificate of Sub-inspector James; but because Inspector White, a subordinate of Secretary Wilson, did the same thing the Minister sent out a special messenger to dismiss him. One wished to know what action the Premier and the Minister for Lands intended to take, seeing the drastic steps which were taken in the case of the other officer.

MR. CONNOR: Against the unconstitutional and unjust manner adopted in relation to an inquiry held in Perth a short time ago in connection with the Stock Department, he entered his protest. With some knowledge of this question, he asserted that the Chief Inspector of Stock was dismissed unjustly, and in his opinion that officer did not get a fair trial. He had never had much to thank Mr. Morton Craig for, but he, like every other member, wished justice done to the civil servants. When the Government ordered that an inquiry should take place it was supposed it would be before a

Judge of the Supreme Court. The Government found it convenient that it should not take place before a Judge, and then an arrangement was come to that it should come before Mr. Roe, now Mr. Commissioner Roe, who surely was qualified to carry out that inquiry, which would certainly have been impartial. He (Mr. Connor) went to the Minister and advised him not to undertake this inquiry, but to let Mr. Roe take it. He thought the Minister made a huge mistake in not taking that advice. He believed the hon. gentleman did what he thought was right for the time being, but certain influences must come to bear in cases like this, for all were human. The Premier did not want this inquiry to take place. When the Chief Inspector of Stock knew the form in which the inquiry was to be held, he went to Mr. Septimus Burt, and tried to engage him as counsel in the case. Mr. Burt agreed to appear for Mr. Craig. He (Mr. Connor) was informed, but he was not sure on the point, though he would challenge contradiction, that Messrs. James & Darbyshire then tried to secure the services of Mr. Burt, and that Mr. Burt told them that he was engaged by Mr. Morton Craig. In the next day or two we found that the Government decided there should be no counsel. We could only infer that this was not British or Australian fair play. When the inquiry was being held, he (Mr. Connor) gave evidence, and again he was sorry to have to bring in anything that was personal in connection with this matter. He said at the inquiry "Are there any shorthand notes being taken, or any reporters here?" The reply was "No." He said "What a farce this is," and the Minister said "Would you like to sign your notes of evidence?" To which he (Mr. Connor) replied "I certainly would." Had he known what a hole-and-corner inquiry it was he would not have given evidence. He was the first to sign the notes. Had he not done so no evidence would have been signed.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was agreed between all parties that each person as he gave his evidence should sign it, and that was long before the hon. member came upon the scene.

MR. CONNOR could only contradict that statement because he was the first

who did sign his evidence, and it was after he protested against the hole-and-corner inquiry that the Minister said "Perhaps it would be better to sign the evidence." He (Mr. Connor) was informed on reliable authority that files came back to the Inspector of Stock with papers missing. Was that a proper state of affairs? He would not say the statement was correct, but the late Chief Inspector had told him that files had left his department and gone to the Lands Department and to the Attorney General's Department and been returned with papers off and missing, which had never appeared on the files again. These were the things we desired to stop. We wanted them properly put before the public in the best possible way. At least that was what he desired. This was an absolute fact in connection with the Stock Department, and it might seem startling to members that there was an individual in this country who could get things done in the Stock Department no other person could get. That individual was Mr. Samuel Copley. If Mr. Copley wanted cattle out of quarantine he could get them where no one else could. He (Mr. Connor) knew it to his cost. Nobody could come in but Mr. Copley. He (Mr. Connor) had made application personally to get cattle out of quarantine or to let them be dipped, but had been refused. Mr. Copley could get them out first, others could come afterwards. He (Mr. Connor) would not have spoken on this question were it not for the taunt of the Minister for Lands in saying that members on the Opposition side of the House were croakers croaking about nothing. There was no croaking about these statements. They were solid absolute facts. What happened? Mr. Craig was dismissed; Mr. Stevens was dismissed. Why was Mr. Stevens dismissed? Could the Minister tell us? Though he (Mr. Connor) did not believe it, he had heard it said by people who ought to know that a nominee of the Minister had taken Mr. Stevens' place.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: No person had taken Mr. Stevens' place. The position had never been refilled.

MR. CONNOR had not believed what people said. The Minister would not descend to such a step; but it was better to have these things out, because the

public talked about them. The Premier came into the House and lectured members on the Opposition side for taking up so much time on the rabbit question, but the Premier talked about absolutely nothing else. The Government were evidently to run the show on their own. We should have a brass plate put up in St. George's Terrace, "Ministers made here." There was no reason why the House should not grant a select committee on the Stock Department as asked for by the member for West Perth. It was necessary that the statements made in the House in connection with the Stock Department and the Rabbit question, and in connection with the whole of the Lands Department generally, should be cleared up. If the Government went before the country without having them cleared up, they were going with a soiled escutcheon, and the people of the State would not stand it.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Now the hon. member had done his turn, he (the Minister) desired to correct certain statements. As regarded the evidence taken at the tick inquiry he asserted, and left it to those persons who took part in the early stages of the inquiry to prove, that it was agreed before evidence was taken that every person should sign his evidence. The records would show this was true, and the manuscript evidence on the table of the House showed that numerous witnesses signed their evidence before the hon. member gave his. With regard to the missing files he declined to believe that the statement was correct. The statement with regard to Mr. Copley's cattle was also untrue.

MR. CONNOR: The hon. member should withdraw.

THE MINISTER would withdraw the statement in the way he had stated it. The hon. member might wait until he had finished.

MR. CONNOR: The Minister should withdraw without qualifying. What he (Mr. Connor) said was right, and he could prove it to the hilt. The Minister had no right to say the statement was untrue, and should withdraw.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did the hon. member say that the Minister had charged him with stating an untruth?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member accepted it that way, he

(the Minister) withdrew the remark. No advantage had been given to Copley or any other stockowner that was not at the same time extended to others. No person engaged in the stock trade knew better than the member for East Kimberley how he (the Minister) on all occasions had gone out of his way to aid those persons engaged in the trade. But the difficulty was this, that whilst these persons joined together when their joint interests were at stake, there was a deal of rivalry between one another, and this he believed gave rise to a feeling of jealousy between the individual firms, who watched one another as a cat watched a mouse, believing that something would be gained by one which was not given to another. To illustrate this matter about Copley, when he (the Minister) went into the Lands Department there was a question as to the accumulation of the rent of a lease. There had been a sort of practice in the department that when a person was called on to pay rent the jacket was sparred about here, there, and everywhere; but he (the Minister) gave Copley seven days' notice to pay the rent which had accumulated on the property, and Copley paid the rent without any demur or protest, although the jacket had been running about the department for a period of twelve months. As the hon. member stated, some cattle had been dipped. He (the Minister) never knew whose cattle were dipped first, but the first report of the dipping handed in informed him (and the report was read to the House next day) that some of Connor & Doherty's cattle were dipped and some of Copley's. There was no reason for any person engaged in the live stock trade fearing that advantage would be given to one which was not given to another. He (the Minister) had gone out of his way on all occasions to aid the persons engaged in this trade, and he found that the more he strove to meet their wishes the more evident it became that the persons wished to carry it beyond him. Mr. Stevens was dismissed, and his position had not been filled.

MR. CONNOR: The Minister had brought to mind something which took place in connection with the administration of the Lands Department as to the payment of rent. A short time ago here was a survey made of the bound-

aries between Western and South Australia. There was a strip of land taken up, which the survey showed to be West Australian country, but the correct survey shifted that line something like eight miles back, leaving a strip of land on the South Australian side belonging to the owners of the country in Western Australia. What happened? This was very peculiar. Buchanan and Gordon Bros., of the far North, had to go back on the border and take the country on part of Ord River Station in which Copley was interested. They did not actually shift the boundaries, and they were asked by the Lands Department, would they take this strip of country up? Was that justice in the administration of the Lands Department? It was the truth, and it was a nasty pill for the Minister to swallow. He (Mr. Connor) did not blame the Minister personally, but it was a nasty pill for the Government to swallow if they could not explain it. People who had been paying rent for 10 or 12 years and who were the first to stock the country, Buchanan's, had to take the country and pay rent for it when it was of no use to them. He asked the Minister to contradict that if he dared.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The papers, as far as his knowledge went, had never been before him, and if the hon. member wished those papers laid on the table they would be to-morrow.

MR. CONNOR: That went to prove that the Government were not doing what was fair if they did not grant the select committee to inquire into the working of the Lands Department.

MR. HASSELL: To clear up the statements made, the Government should grant the select committee; but the Government seemed afraid to have the committee appointed. He, as a disinterested party, challenged the Government to grant a select committee.

THE MINISTER: The House had better get another Government.

MR. MORAN: The more one went into the question, the more one saw the necessity for an inquiry. No satisfactory answer had been given in regard to the dismissal of Mr. Craig. If every witness brought up at the inquiry did sign their evidence, why was the Premier of

the State solicitor for one of the parties in dispute? We were entitled to a committee, and to affirm that he moved that progress be reported.

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

Ayes	...	...	13
Noes	...	...	14

Majority against ... 1

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Atkins	Mr. Bath
Mr. Butcher	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Connor	Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Hassell	Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Moran	Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Nanson	Mr. Gordon
Mr. Pigott	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Quinlan	Mr. Hayward
Mr. Stone	Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Taylor	Mr. James
Mr. Wallace	Mr. Phillips
Mr. Yelverton	Mr. Rason
Mr. Jacoby (Teller).	Mr. Reid
	Mr. Higham (Teller).

Motion thus negatived, and the debate continued.

MR. MORAN: It was now 11 o'clock. The other evening, in the midst of an important discussion, the leader of the Labour party (Mr. Hastie) moved at 9.30 that progress be reported, and was supported by the member for Mount Burges (Mr. F. Reid). To-night at 11 o'clock, in order to get a proper inquiry into maladministration, the same member voted with the Government and against adjournment. On the former occasion the "closure" was applied at 9.30; to-night an adjournment was refused at 11. The circumstances of the Lands Department demanded a halt. The Minister was unable to inform the House whether he had done an injustice to Inspector White. The Premier frankly and honourably admitted that Inspector White was a zealous officer, but said White had acted rashly in not returning at the command of the Minister. Even so, that should not blast White's whole career, nor be a ground for his dismissal. Allow a few days to elapse, and the Government would probably place the motion for a select committee prominently on the Notice Paper, and the selection of committee-men need not occupy more than five minutes. Would not the Premier now report progress?

THE PREMIER: In fairness, did not the hon. member think the question had been sufficiently ventilated? The Min-

ister had promised to look into the matter.

MR. MORAN: Members could not avoid discussion, if the Government intended to use their majority to burk inquiry.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could again discuss the question when dealing with the Stock estimates.

MR. MORAN: Better finish the general discussion now, and get an independent inquiry. Why should the Government refuse this? In view of the charges made by the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor), the personal characters of the Premier and the Minister for Lands were in some way implicated. The Premier was solicitor for one of the parties to the Stock inquiry. He (Mr. Moran) had never heard the Premier's personal character impugned; but none could deny that the Premier was acting in a dual capacity, as solicitor for one of the parties to the dispute and as Attorney General for the State, or the Premier's firm were acting as such solicitors.

THE PREMIER: Since he became Premier, to his heavy financial loss he had never touched private practice, and had never been near his private office.

MR. MORAN: But did not nine men out of ten say that James & Darbyshire were solicitors for one of the parties, and that the Premier was the head of the firm?

THE PREMIER: A man who regarded such sayings ought not to be in politics.

MR. MORAN: A member of Parliament engaged in private business must not do business with the Government, but apparently a solicitor could. That phase of the question was not absent from people's minds.

MR. FOULKES: Had any distinct charge been brought against the Premier on the ground that he was a member of this firm?

MR. MORAN did not intend to charge the Premier with being a member of the firm of James & Darbyshire. He (Mr. Moran) asserted that Mr. Morton Craig had been wrongfully dismissed, and that an open inquiry was essential. The Minister was not entitled to make the inquiry he had made into his own department; in fact, the Minister had

acted wrongly in both cases. The justice of the present demand for an inquiry was proved by the fact that if the Minister had had his own way the country would never have known of the existence of pneumonia in cattle and of swine fever. Both facts had been brazenly denied and soon afterwards admitted. What statement had the Government to make? They had asked Mr. White, the dismissed officer, to go through the files. He (Mr. Moran) moved that progress be reported.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not move that again.

MR. BATH: On the preceding division he had voted against the motion to report progress, because it was on a specific point—for the appointment of a select committee. Members might as well ask for a select committee to inquire into the working of the universe, as one to inquire into the flimsy charges made here to-night. No more contemptible method could be adopted than to make charges and say at the same time, "I do not believe them to be true." To hear some members, one would think they had been parading their desire to stem the rabbit invasion in this State for years and years, and that it was only because they had been stirred to desperation by the failure to do it that they came forward to make the statements which they had now uttered. He had been carefully through the records from the very beginning of responsible government, and the only members who had taken this question in hand and entered an emphatic protest had been the member for Cue, next to him probably the member for Beverley, and the member for Plantagenet. Apart from those no effort had been made to stem the tide of rabbit invasion in this State from 1891, 1893, and 1894.

MR. THOMAS: The member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) moved the adjournment of the House on the subject.

MR. BATH: The hon. member moved the adjournment of the debate. Those in charge of the administration repeatedly said there was no cause for alarm and no reason to take the matter up. It was only done in 1902, after the report of the Royal Commission, which was secured on the motion, he thought, of Mr. Burges.

MR. THOMAS: There was the report of a Royal Commission in 1899.

MR. BATH: The commission reported on the question and suggested the erection of a rabbit-proof fence, which suggestion was acted on. As far as administration was concerned there was a necessity for integrity and honour amongst the public servants, and since he had been in Parliament he had found there had not been a wish on the part of members of this House to secure such honour and integrity from public servants as was desired. We found members meeting civil servants accidentally, and in the course of cursory conversation finding out certain things, and bringing them up in Parliament. Instead of defending the State against what he had referred to, members actually supported and abetted civil servants. The State could become a model employer in many things, but not unless we had a certain amount of public spirit among the servants employed. As to this rabbit question, the Minister for Lands did right in putting his foot down to root out those he considered responsible for the trouble. Members had made suggestions to deal with this evil, and any member who knew of suggestions would be failing in his duty if he did not bring them up for consideration.

THE PREMIER: When the last motion to report progress was made, it was done with the object of obtaining farther discussion, and for the particular purpose of expressing disapproval of the action of the Government in connection with the question.

MR. CONNOR: Then it was a very close thing.

THE PREMIER: The member for East Kimberley admitted that, by his interjection. That being the case, members on that (Opposition) side could hardly expect him (the Premier) to vote with them on that occasion. This matter had been discussed long enough to-night, and, as members wished farther time to consider it, he moved that progress be reported.

Motion (progress) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	17
Noes	...	...	...	14

Majority for ... 3

AYES.

Mr. Bath
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Ewing
Mr. Ferguson
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Gordon
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hayward
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. James
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Rason
Mr. Reid
Mr. Higham (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Atkins
Mr. Butcher
Mr. Connor
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Holman
Mr. Moran
Mr. Nanson
Mr. Pigott
Mr. Stone
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Yelverton
Mr. Jacoby (Teller).

Motion thus passed.

Progress reported.

THE PREMIER moved that the Committee have leave to sit again on the next day.

MR. MORAN: The question before the Committee was important. The Government were tampering with the question, and playing with it by seeking such a short adjournment. What could the Minister do to throw farther light on the matter as to the rights and wrongs of the Rabbit Department between this and to-morrow? It was a matter for Cabinet consideration as to whether the Government were to make a definite announcement. What could be done between this and 2-30 to-morrow to inquire into this matter? By adjourning the matter until Thursday, members would have time to consider the position and peruse the files. The Government could bring the whole strength of their party to bear on the question to burk inquiry. They had won by a single vote once to-night, and then two members of the Labour party voted with them. That was the party against which the Premier the other day sought to arouse the combined strength of everyone in Western Australia. We then heard a learnedly historical research by the learned, deeply-read on one or two subjects but poorly on others, the member for Hannans (Mr. Bath). He probably forgot the remark of Pope:

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing;
Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring.

MR. BATH could, at any rate, correct the hon. member's quotation.

MR. MORAN: The scheme for preventing the incursion of rabbits would be found recorded at length on the files of the department, and was only modified by the fact that it was now more urgent. If the first fence was partly ineffective, the second line of defence remained.

THE PREMIER: What had this to do with the time for resuming the debate?

THE CHAIRMAN: It did not appear to have anything to do with it.

THE PREMIER: This was deliberate obstruction, deliberate waste of time.

MR. MORAN denied that entirely. He had during the whole night been pleading for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into this matter. It was to be hoped members would not be gagged or bullied out of their rights. The date of the adjournment was put in the Standing Orders for discussion, and such question had been debated hour after hour in other Parliaments, or why was it put in the Standing Orders? He had suggested to the Government that they should get the Estimates through, but the dismissal of Mr. White should be placed on a satisfactory basis. The Government could not possibly inquire into this question by to-morrow at half-past two. What could the Government give that was fresh? The Minister for Lands admitted that he could find no evidence on the files of the letters supposed to be adduced in evidence by Mr. White, and the panacea which he gave for getting over the evil of the inquiry was to bring Mr. White in to make the search for himself. Supposing Mr. White consented, what time was there to elucidate this matter before half-past two to-morrow? A charge had been made to-night by the member for Hannans in a blithering, blustering way about the civil servants and that members advocated cutting off civil servants without an inquiry.

THE PREMIER: What had this to do with the matter? It was deliberate obstruction, a gross scandal.

THE CHAIRMAN: It had nothing to do with the matter.

MR. BATH said he would support an inquiry into some of the hon. member's conduct, which would be interesting.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member was at liberty to do what he liked, and do it where he liked. This member might resort to the tactics he did previously, being afraid to meet him (Mr. Moran) face to face, but shot at him from behind a hedge with a *nom de plume*.

THE CHAIRMAN: This had nothing to do with the question.

MR. MORAN: No; it had not. He apologised.

MR. BATH: Did the hon. member say "*nom de plume*"?

MR. MORAN: The plume of a half-grown rooster, if the hon. member liked. He had done with the hon. member, as he did not want to import anything personal into this question. He would only ask that hon. member to support him (Mr. Moran) in getting a full inquiry. But could the matter be looked into before half-past two to-morrow? He (Mr. Moran) did not know Inspector White, had never seen him in reference to this rabbit business, but what led him to take action was the Minister for Lands coming down and stating that he had dismissed everyone whom he had come across. Then he (Mr. Moran) thought the Minister was dealing in a similar manner to that in which he had dealt with the Inspector of Stock. He (Mr. Moran) was here in his place ready to listen to the grievances of any civil servant who came to him, and the civil servants did come to him.

THE PREMIER: Come back to the motion.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was only repeating over and over again what he had commenced with. If the hon. member had a motion to make, why not move it?

MR. MORAN: It was his intention to move the adjournment of the debate until Thursday.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was only repeating over and over again the words he had commenced with.

MR. MORAN: Members had been invited to go through the file of papers on the table. How could members go through the files before the time of meeting to-morrow? The Minister had had these papers for the last month, and he had not gone through them. One knew that no Minister of the Crown could hope to go through all the files in his department; but when members were invited, before a discussion came on again, to go through papers which were on the table, it was a palpable farce. It was to enable members to look at these files that he moved the adjournment until Thursday.

THE PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition desired that the Estimates should come on early to-morrow; that was why he had placed them early on the Notice Paper. The member for the Swan knew that.

MR. MORAN: That was news to him. This heated discussion should be allowed to pass over for a day. If the Premier had been in the House all the time he would have known that he (Mr. Moran) had stuck to the question at issue. If the debate was adjourned until some later period more moderate counsels might prevail. He would approach the Minister for Lands and point out that he had nothing to fear from an inquiry, but that he had everything to fear from burking an inquiry. He would point out to the Premier that the best interests of the country would be served by delaying the matter for some time. What harm could result from delaying the Estimates for one day? The debate should be adjourned for a week; and this need not prevent the department from fighting the rabbits. The other night the Minister said he saw in members' countenances a growing proof of the correctness of his statements; yet when the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) finished speaking, the Minister admitted his own ignorance of certain important facts. Since then Mr. White had been approached by the department. Thus, but for the discussions in this Chamber, Mr. White's good name and the subsistence of his wife and family would have been taken away. From the Premier we learned to-night that Mr. White saw him and reported one of the sub-inspectors, the Premier's brother; yet the Minister for Lands had assured us that White never reported any sub-inspector. But for the discussions here not one atom of this evidence would have come forth. Hysterical action like that of the Minister was bound to defeat justice. He (Mr. Moran) moved that the debate be adjourned until Thursday next.

Amendment negatived, and the motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:45 o'clock, until the next day.