the maximum. This clause is directed against the possibility of men setting out on a trip through the country on the pretence of looking for work, and £20 is not too high a maximum for such an offence.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—agreed to.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 9.55 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 6th October, 1925.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon. J. W. Kirwan), in the absence through illness of the President, took the Chair at 4.30 p.m.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the undermentioned Bills:—

1, Real Property (Commonwealth Titles).

2, Plant Diseases Act Amendment.

3, Transfer of Land Act Amendment.

4, Land Tax and Income Tax Act Amendment.

5, Public Education Endowment Act Amendment.

6, Ministers' Titles.

7, Roman Catholic Geraldton Church Property.

BILL—CITY OF PERTH.

Read a third time and returned to the Assembly with an amendment.

BILL—AUCTIONEERS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: The amendment to the Act that it is proposed to effect by this Bill is a very simple one, and should commend itself to the support of the House. It is sometimes overlooked that under the Auctioneers Act of 1921 a restriction was placed upon the holding of auction sales of every description, with the exception of the sales of freehold or leasehold lands, or shares in any incorporated company, or wool. Section 11 provides:

> No person shall act as an auctioneer after sunset or before sunrise on any day except for the purpose of selling freehold or leasehold lands, or tenements or shares in any incorporated company, or wool included and described in a catalogue issued prior to and for the purpose of the sale of such wool: Penalty, £50. Provided that this section shall not apply to sales by auction held, with the approval of the Colonial Treasurer, at a bazaar or sale of gifts for charitable or church purposes.

This restriction has been found to work a certain hardship in connection with the class of conveyance which has become very popular during the last few years, namely, motor vehicles. It has been recognised that the exemption provided in the case of the selling of lands and wool, and of shares in companies, might for very good reasons be extended also to the sale of motor vehicles. With that object this Bill should commend itself to members. Clause 2 provides—

> Section 11 of the principal Act is hereby amended by inserting after the words "incorporated company" the words "or motor vehicles."

The exemption provided for this particular class of property would, by the passing of the Bill, be extended also to motor vehicles. The measure has not been introduced without the various associations or bodies concerned having been consulted. I have here copies of letters from the Chamber of Automotive Industries of Western Australia, signed by the honorary secretary, and from the secretary of the Auctioneers, Land and Estate Agents' Association of Western Aus-

tralia, Incorporated. The letter from the Automotive Industries of Western Australia reads as follows:—

At a meeting of the above Chamber held the 2nd June, the matter of holding auction sales of motor cars in the evenings was discussed, and the following motion was carried unanimously:—"That this Chamber would approve of auction sales of motor vehicles being held after sunset." I have much pleasure in conveying this motion to you, and trust it will assist you in obtaining permission to hold night sales.

The other letter was from the Auctioneers, Land and Estate Agents' Association of Western Australia, Incorporated, and was as follows:—

Further to our letter dated 1st instant, with reference to your proposed amendment to the Auctioneers Act, 1921, my council were unanimous in their approval of the amendment, and that the words "or motor vehicle" be inserted in the amended Act.

Since the Bill was introduced, several other people have become interested in the matter and applied to me for information as to the effect of the amendment. After I had explained it to them they were, in each instance, perfectly satisfied. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. H. A. STEPHENSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.46]: I have just seen the Bill for the first time. The proposed amendment does not appeal to me by any means. Wool and land are in a very different position to motor cars, especially second hand cars. Wool can be inspected days before a sale and every prospective buyer may examine the various bales, make notes regarding them, take the numbers of the bales and put his own price on them. Therefore, it makes no difference whether that wool is sold by daylight, in the dark or under electric light. The same applies to land. The sale of the land is advertised and the blocks can be inspected by the prospective buyers who thus have every opportunity of ascertaining any defects regarding the property for sale. The amendment is intended to apply largely to the sale of second hand motor cars of which there are very many in Perth to-day. If there is any vehicle that requires inspection before purchase it is a second hand motor car. I oppose the proposal to allow cars to be sold after sunset or before sunrise and oppose the second reading of the Bill.

HON. G. POTTER (West) [4.48]: I cannot understand the objection raised by Mr. Stephenson to the Bill, particularly on his own argument, because prospective buyers of even second hand motor cars would have every opportunity to inspect the cars beforehand.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: They might not get the opportunity.

Hon. G. POTTER: Then they would not be buyers. Most decidedly any person intending to take action along these lines would inspect the car in daylight. If anyone intended to buy a second hand motor car he would get an expert motor mechanic to examine the car before he considered purchasing it. Cars are not bought on appearances!

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: They are, in 99 cases out of a hundred.

Hon. G. POTTER: If anyone were so foolish as to buy a second hand motor car on appearances, it would be his funeral.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: It may be sold by an Israelite.

Hon. G. POTTER: Mr. Stephenson has not given us any valid objection to the Bill.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: You have not been an auctioneer as long as I have.

Hon. G. POTTER: I have not been an auctioneer at all, but I do not think any auctioneer would endeavour to induce a buyer under false pretences, to purchase something the individual was not satisfied would suit his purse and serve his purposes.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan—in reply) [4.50]: In raising his objection to the Bill Mr. Stephenson has overlooked the important fact that in connection with auction sales, unlike private sales, the usual procedure is to advertise. Unless the advertisement is widely circulated and proper time is allowed in order that people may inspect the cars to be sold, there will be no attendance at the sale and therefore no business. The whole success of the sale depends upon a good advertisement, and in every instance where sales are advertised, buyers are invited to inspect the cars and that is best carried out by the prospective buyers themselves or some one with a mechanical knowledge. Those inspections would be carried out by daylight before the sale was held. If you, Mr. Deputy President, or I wished to attend such a sale after sunset we would not depend upon our own knowledge.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: We are not all Scots!

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We would inspect the cars beforehand to ascertain whether one or other of those to be sold met with our requirements. It is true that the bales of wool are marked but motors are also marked, because a number is stamped on each engine and there are numbers affixed to cars as well. Thus the position regarding wool coincides with that relating to motor cars. The man who inspects wool in daylight has the same chance of getting what he requires as the man who inspects a motor car in daylight, if both wool and car be sold at night. Seeing that numbers are affixed to the engines of motor cars it is impossible for one car to be substituted for another.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: You could take the engine and leave the case behind.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: After the explanation I have made, I trust Mr. Stephenson, who evidently overlooked this point, will support the Bill. I have old friends in the country who have written to me asking if there were opportunities of securing good motor cars in Perth and if they could come down in the evening to get one.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: Did you read the report of the case in Kalgoorlie where a man bought a motor car only to find it was different from what he thought when he got it out?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That happened under the law as it stands to-day and perhaps more care will be taken in the light of the alteration I suggest in the Bill. This proposal has met with the concurrence of those concerned in the trade and I trust the Bill will be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 23rd September.

HON. H. SEDDON (North-East) [5.0]: When the Bill was introduced last session it was with the idea of assisting the Government in the direction of raising their revenue. This House thought fit to limit the period of operation of the Bill to the end of that financial year and no longer. The proposal in the present Bill is to make the alteration to the principal Act practically permanent. Before we do so, however, it is desirable that we should go into all the aspects of the position of the forestry industry, because it is quite possible that after doing so we may see the desirability of extending the provisions governing the amendment. The Minister pointed out that the revenue of the Forests Department has been steadily increasing during the last few years. That is correct, but it should be stressed that the increased money the department is receiving does not occur so much from the increased activity of the industry as from the fact that the fees have been raised since the parent Act was passed. We have to recognise that the operations of the Forests Department have been in vogue for only a few years and consequently they have not attained the full scope that was intended when the parent Act came into operation. It might be well to refer to certain remarks made by the Conservator of Forests in his last report. He said—

> It is a matter of considerable regret that so little progress can be reported on the most important question of the dedication of State forests. Although increases are tabulated hereunder, progress is deplorable slow. It has been necessary to stress so frequently the need for action leading to the early dedication of prime forest country as State forests that there is a danger of the matter being treated as an obsession on the part of officers of the department and having little or no practical importance. On these grounds alone there would appear to be justification for briefly referring to a controversy which arose during the past year in connection with certain jarrah country in the Bridgetown district. An area of some 11,570 acres, including portion of a State forest under the Land Act, 1904, and adjoining country which Lands Department officers had some months previously reported unsuitable for settlement, was mapped out during March, 1924, and reforestation operations commenced on a small scale. A working plan was prepared and received the approval of the Governor-in-Council on July 30, 1924. Some five months later group settlers were sent to the area and took possession of blocks which had meantime been surveyed over the major portion of the working circle, and which included land in which regeneration work had been started.

Further down the Conservator has this to say—

> As, however, that region of the State commonly referred to as the South-West extends over at least 8,000,000 acres, and as the area which it is desired shall be dedicated as State

forest is only approximately 2,500,000 acres, there should be little or no conflict of interests.

On an area basis there should be ample land for the dairy farmer to produce the amount of butter referred to above, and much more, without encroaching on the limited prime forest region.

By early and adequate reservation of forest country the timber industry, which, in addition to supplying the local market, provided an export commodity last year valued at £1,492,000, can be made a permanent asset; but it must be realised that the railway system in the South-West has been built up almost entirely on the timber industry. In consequence, existing railway lines penetrate into prime timber country and, in many cases, stop there.

It is quite evident from the report that the Forests Department has not yet attained the scale of work to which it is aiming and to which it is necessary that it shall attain in order to put the industry on a sound footing. Therefore although the revenue being received now is more than ample for requirements, we must recognise that by extending operations they will find themselves in the future in the position of being considerably handicapped for want of funds. The revenue of the department will decrease materially during the next few years and before we make any allocation of funds from forestry revenue, we should make sure that we are not allowing to go into Consolidated Revenue any money that may be urgently required. The House therefore should review the position. It has been pointed out that what has been derived from sandalwood is far in excess of requirements. But after all we have to consider the Forests Department from the wide angle point, and consequently the extra sandalwood revenue that has come from the increase imposed for sandalwood licenses, could well be retained to develop the other avenues of activity in which the department is engaged. For these reasons I suggest that the House should continue the operation of the provision that was introduced last session.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.7]: I have compared the Bill before the House with the Bill of last session, and if it passes as it stands, it will be bound to put us back to the original position that a sum of money will be ear-marked for sandalwood reforestation. Last session I took exception to the passage of the Bill from two standpoints. I am not going to enter into a lengthy discussion on the machinery that brought about an abnormal growth in the department's revenue, and the strenuous opposition that was advanced at the time by the Government now in power against the proposals of that period, nor shall I refer to what was then done, being used as a lever to put them in the position they occupy to-day. The regulations that were then passed are still in existence, and though the people were told that there would be reversion to the old standard, those people are still in the air. I view the question of reforestation seriously. For many years this country had no Forests Act. In 1918 it was decided that a Forests Act be placed on the statute book. In that session Parliament specifically laid down what should be derived from the forests and that that money should go into Consolidated Revenue. It was also stipulated what should be received by the Forests Department. There is no doubt that the increased price now received for sandalwood is somewhat in the nature of a windfall. The fact remains that the existing position will not always continue. It must be a disappearing factor, just as will be the revenue that is now being received from other branches of forestry. If there is one industry in this country that should have a concrete policy it is that relating to the forests. It is safe to say that Western Australia has to-day one of the biggest hardwood forests in the world. Year after year, however, it is gradually being depleted and therefore the revenue derived from the sale of the product must decrease. One can take a hasty glance at the forests of the other States and find that they have gone the way of many forests in older countries. That is to say, the future has not been provided for. It is unwise to depart from the policy laid down in 1918, and it is wrong to assume that the money that has been at our disposal from year to year is more than sufficient for the work being done. What is wrong with the building up of a forests fund? If we do that in the years that lie before us, as our forests are gradually decreasing, we shall carry out the plan that was contemplated in 1918. I can see nothing wrong with the principle of allowing the Government of the day, year by year, to appropriate this revenue, or a portion of it raised from the royalties on sandalwood. But it is a vastly different thing to pass an Act that will bring about what is an expediency for the time being. I hope the House will agree to amend the Bill and bring it into line with the Bill passed last session. It has been said that only half the money

set aside for the regrowth of sandalwood last year was actually used. As a matter of fact it has yet to be demonstrated that sandalwood can be satisfactorily and economically grown. Personally I think it would be wise to use more money in the direction of establishing pine plantations. This subject is a hardy annual of mine, and I advocate it because there are places in the State where I know the pine can be successfully grown. I refer particularly to that part of the State from Esperance towards Ravensthorpe on what is known as sand plain land, but which is not actually sand plain. The whole of that country is admirably suited for the growing of pine. Experiments carried out there have demonstrated that pines can be profitably grown. If there is any money at the disposal of the department I hope it will be used in the direction of extending pine-growing activities in that part of the State. There are millions of acres of suitable land there and the rainfall is adequate for pine growing. The cost of preparing and clearing would be trifling. Pines could also be planted with advantage in the north of Esperance, and there they would provide in years to come a wind-break for the agricultural lands higher up. Anyone who has been in that district knows that the removal of the natural growth tends towards violent blows of winds. In planting pines we shall combine the useful with the practical. Last session I urged, and I urge now, that that policy be adopted. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [5.16]: I hope that if the Bill gets into Committee, it will be amended as suggested by the previous speaker and in accordance with the amendment which has been placed on the notice paper. The fact that only half the revenue derived from sandalwood is being expended in reforestation shows we are not pushing on with that work as we should be doing. The revenue from sandalwood last year was considerable, because owing to the monopoly created under the existing Act it has been a highly profitable business to scour the country from one end to the other and ship every possible stick of sandalwood to China while the price was huge. However, the position in China became complicated, and the result here is that while the royalty has been paid the sandalwood remains stacked at Fremantle and elsewhere in Western Australia. The royalty on that sandalwood has inflated the revenue, which will not continue to come in from year to year as in the past. Mr. Cornell mentioned lands at Esperance and elsewhere as suitable for pine planting, but there is no need to go to Esperance for that purpose. I understand that the late Conservator of Forests, Mr. Lane-Poole, had a scheme for planting all the coast lands between here and Geraldton with pine. I should say that is a feasible proposition, because in my travels through the country looking for land I have found a species of pine growing; and when in the course of inspecting land one sees that species of pine one turns off, being satisfied that the land is not worth inspecting and must be of the poorest class we have. If pine belonging to this State will grow on that poor land, it is surely on such land we should plant pine of a better class, in order that we may have a commercial asset. The only other point I am anxious to make is that in some countries—Russia, for instance—there is a practice of branding every tree, indicating that it will be marketable in such and such a year. No tree can be touched if the brand on it shows that it is not suitable for turning to commercial use in that particular year. If we go on here as we have been doing in the past, we shall soon find ourselves in a difficult position regarding timber supplies. Our best course is to hang on to as much revenue as we can for the promotion of reforestation. In Committee I shall support the amendment of which notice has been given.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [5.19]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned to the next sitting of the House.

Motion put and negatived.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I did not move the adjournment of the debate because I wished to make a lengthy speech on the Bill, but because I understand that the Conservator of Forests will appear before a select committee the day after tomorrow and that then certain information bearing on this Bill will be available from that officer. A request was made to me therefore to obtain an adjournment of this debate. However, we can proceed with the discussion in the meantime, and the information from the Conservator will be available before the completion of the Committee stage. I was never particularly keen on the altera-

tion which this Bill proposes to make permanent. When the parent Act set aside for all time a sum of money for the regeneration of our forests, I regarded it as an excellent thing for the State. The whole of the money not being spent, an alteration was made by Parliament enabling the fund to be placed in the Consolidated Revenue. In my opinion £5,000 is too small a sum for reforestation purposes. The State could well spend a much larger sum in replanting sandalwood in particular. Then there is also wandoo, in my opinion perhaps the finest timber we have in this State. Experiments have shown that wandoo is the most suitable timber for the construction of railway trucks, and the supply of it is limited. Large areas should, therefore, be reserved for wandoo reforestation. We have been too tardy in making reservations generally. Throughout the agricultural areas immense quantities of timber have been destroyed. The trees have been burnt, and their place has been taken by crops. This is good so far as it goes. However, there are large areas covered by poison scrub, which are much more valuable from a timber point of view than in the agricultural sense. We could make large reservations of such areas by destroying the refuse timber on them and so enabling the young growth to mature into sound trees. Many jarrah areas remain untouched so far as grazing is concerned because of the existence of poison plant on them, and they could be made into good reserves.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: I must ask the hon. member to connect his remarks with the Bill before the House, which deals exclusively with sandalwood.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I have always understood that the funds to which this Bill refers are obtained directly from sandalwood royalties, and that they are to be set aside for the regeneration of sandalwood and other timbers. The sum of £5,000 per annum which is proposed is totally inadequate. In America large reservations for regrowth have been created by medium of prison labour. Our Government might well give consideration to the use of such labour for the reforestation of sandalwood. However, even with the use of prison labour £5,000 a year would be inadequate. There would be wisdom in planting large areas of timber by prison labour so that persons who have been doing harm, and therefore must be kept under control, may apply their efforts to something which will result in good to the community. The persons in question would be benefited also. If the full amount of money has not been used up to the present—and I understand that such is the case—we should apply the whole of the revenue in question towards the regrowth of sandalwood, wandoo, and other valuable timbers which are becoming scarcer year by year. As mentioned by Mr. Holmes, we have very large areas of poor land that could be planted with pines, as is done in European countries, thus turning them to profitable account for future generations and at the same time enriching the soil. I will support the second reading.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [5.32]: One member said he had expected I would give details as to what reforestation had been carried out last year. I placed on the Table the report of the Forests Department for 1925, containing all information as to the activities of the department, and so, naturally, I did not see any necessity for giving a rehash of what can be gleaned from a perusal of that report. Also I submitted the scheme of expenditure from the reforestation fund for 1925-26. From Mr. Hamersley's tone, I conclude he still thinks that three-fifths of the revenue from sandalwood should go to the reforestation fund and be used for the regrowth of other timbers. In 1918, when the Forests Act was passed, the revenue from sandalwood was only 5s. per ton, the total revenue from sandalwood for the year being only £2,368. For that reason Parliament laid it down that the sandalwood revenue should be included in the ordinary revenue of the department. But the revenue from sandalwood has since increased to £53,508 per annum, of which £5,000 goes into the reforestation fund. Mr. Hamersley said that £5,000 a year was a very small amount for the purpose. But that was the amount fixed by this House after I had quoted notes supplied me by the Conservator of Forests to the effect that it would be many years before he would require £5,000 for the purpose.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Then he cannot be doing very much in the matter.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: On account of that statement, probably, the House decided that he should have the £5,000 straightway. If the Bill had not been passed last year, we should have had

£130,885 in the fund on the 1st July of this year, after spending £65,497 in regrowth. Fancy leaving a fund like this to accumulate to £130,885 when money is so badly wanted for schools and hospitals and other purposes! As to the propagation of sandalwood, I have grave doubts of its success. I remember that 30 years ago, when the Forrest Government were in power, experiments were repeatedly made in the propagation of sandalwood, but so far as I know without any practical results.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are we not cutting sandalwood on country supposed to have been cut out 30 years ago?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Yes, but that is the natural growth. I do not think there has been any growth to speak of as the result of artificial planting. Last year only £2,539 was spent. Yet, so far as I know, there is no restriction on the Conservator of Forests; he has a free hand, and the Premier himself is enthusiastic for reforestation. But a number of experiments have been made on a safe basis. In the propagation of sandalwood it is necessary that the area where the nuts are sown should be fenced and, in order to complete the success of the experiment, it may be found necessary to appoint caretakers. That seems ridiculous. At all events, as the result of experiments made 30 years ago, there has been nothing definite achieved. The ex-Premier, Sir James Mitchell, publicly stated that in his opinion funds for the propagation of sandalwood, and for the planting of soft woods, should come out of loan, that if the work done were paid for out of loan the timber would be ready for sale in time to repay the loan. There is a good deal to be said for that policy, but I think that during the experimental stage revenue should be used; then, as soon as the experiment proved successful, the expenditure should come out of loan funds. Certainly, in respect of sandalwood, before the loan would fall due we should have a splendid asset, for it takes only 30 years to mature that timber. The amount spent on reforestation last year was £65,497, the largest sum expended in any year since the Forests Act came into existence: indeed we have had nothing approaching it, except in the year before last. The average annual expenditure on reforestation has been £30,000, and during the last seven years the total expenditure reached £205,146. I think the State has done very well to spend that amount out of revenue. On the 1st July this year there was a credit balance in the fund of £82,377. Later on, if more money be required, it will be provided by the Treasurer, a special item being placed on the Estimates. But there need be no fear for this year, there being abundant funds in hand.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan in the Chair; the Chief Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Continuance of Act No. 31 of 1924:

Hon. H. STEWART: I move an amendment—

That in line six "repealed" be struck out, and "amended by striking out '1925' and substituting '1926'" be inserted in lieu.

In effect, the amendment will authorise the Government to carry on and have a certain amount of money not provided for in the Forests Act for another financial year, without permanently amending the Forests Act. The Minister has told us that the Forests Department has more money than it can use. He said also that Sir James Mitchell had declared that reforestation should be done out of loan. In 1918 Parliament laid down a policy of reforestation. The Bill contains a vital alteration of the principle in the Forests Act. We should continue to provide the Government with revenue for this year, and review the position next year.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I cannot see the object of the amendment. If repeated in many instances it would entail trouble and delay in the passage of various forms of legislation. If the amendment were carried the Bill would have to be printed again next year, submitted to another place and this House, involving several days of debate, and with probably the same result.

Hon. G. W. Miles: I do not think you will get the Bill through without it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I do not see any necessity for the amendment.

Hon. G. W. MILES: I support the amendment. I hope it will not be necessary to bring the Bill forward again next year. The revenue derived from royalty on sandalwood

should be utilised for reforestation purposes so that effect might be given to the Act of 1918. We have neglected our forests too long. I would vote against the Bill if the amendment were not agreed to. If the Government bring the measure down again next year, I hope the House will reject it, so that the revenue may be devoted to reforestation.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I differ entirely from the previous speaker and hope the Bill will be passed as printed. It is all very well to talk about what should be spent, but the thing is to spend the money wisely. Members have quite a mistaken idea regarding the timber question.

Hon. G. W. Miles: See what other countries are doing.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: We are dealing with Western Australia.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We are wasting an asset.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: People talk about a decreasing asset. We are getting more out of the timber to-day than ever we got.

Hon. H. Stewart: Because we are exhausting it.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: As royalties are raised, so timbers are used that previously were regarded as waste. Instead of wasting the asset, we are retaining it. The department is getting more and more money whenever timber is offered by auction. People in the trade are going to private owners and purchasing old paddocks that were condemned by hewers in years gone by as cut out and worthless.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is not the commodity becoming more scarce?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: No, the Conservator is conserving it to a greater extent than ever before.

Hon. A. Burvill: It is getting cut out.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I have heard that for the last 30 years. In former years people knocked the bush to pieces, but to-day we are getting an enormous revenue without using nearly as much timber in the round. According to some authorities the forest around Bridgetown was cut out 25 years ago, but men are still cutting there to-day and are getting as many sleepers and as much sawn timber as they got in days gone by.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Do you mean that it grows as quickly as they cut it?

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: No, I mean that timber the cutters would not look at years ago is being cut and marketed to-day, and when that is cut out, timber they will not look at to-day will be taken. The Conservator has funds to-day that are more than ample. I believe it is an impossibility to reforest sandalwood. The experiments show up well for a time, but I am afraid there will be a collapse. We should not have to deal with this measure every year.

Hon. G. W. Miles: We will knock it out next year.

Hon. F. E. S. WILLMOTT: I hope by that time the hon. member will have studied the subject and will then know something about it.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Parliament would be wise to build up as large a fund as possible to meet the position that competent authorities assure us is bound to arise not many years hence. It is a pity that the money intended by the principal Act to be utilised for a specific purpose should be diverted to general revenue. Following the increase of royalty on sandalwood, there is a temptation for the Government to divert as much of the money as possible to general revenue. If we limit the Bill to one year we shall have an opportunity to review the situation next session. We do not wish to put the Government into a difficult position, but we have to consider the needs of future generations. I commend the Conservator on his reforestation policy; he is deserving of all praise.

Hon. H. SEDDON: Mr. Willmott's remarks do not agree with those of the Conservator of Forests, by whom we should be guided.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Were you guided by the remarks of the water supply engineers when dealing with that matter?

Hon. H. SEDDON: We took their remarks into consideration. The Conservator in his annual report states—

> Judging from the discussion when this amending Act was under consideration, it would appear that the deplorable state of our forests is not generally realised. Where they should be showing an average annual increment of at least 75 cubic feet per acre per annum, it is questionable whether they are growing at the rate of 5 cubic feet of sound timber per acre per annum.

That point should be considered when dealing with the amendment.

Hon. H. STEWART: The excuse against the making of the amendment, namely, that it would mean wasting the time of Parlia-

ment, is quite inadequate as an argument. Because the sandalwood revenue to-day is great and the general requirements of the Forests Department are modest, it does not follow that the time may not arrive when this revenue may not be required for general reforestation purposes. It was not thought last year that there would be any differentiation between the royalties that arose from one section of the forests and those that arose from any other. Our mallet bark resources, for instance, are being depleted, and there is no royalty from that source. Some of the sandalwood revenue might be utilised with advantage in that direction. At the Conference of Foresters in 1920 a certain arrangement was made, which was confirmed by the Premiers' Conference. In this connection the "Australian Forestry Journal" stated that a national forest area of 24,500,000 acres of indigenous forest was necessary to supply the needs of the Commonwealth. The distribution was arranged as follows:—Queensland, 6,000,000 acres; New South Wales, 8,000,000 acres; Victoria, 5,500,000 acres; South Australia, 500,000 acres; Tasmania, 1,500,000 acres; and Western Australia, 3,000,000 acres. At present, Western Australia, instead of having 3,000,000 acres reserved for forests, or for timber purposes, has only 54,000 acres so reserved.

Hon. V. Hamersley: It is a downright shame.

The Honorary Minister: There is a bigger area than that set aside.

Hon. H. STEWART: This is the area permanently reserved for forests. That statement has not been refuted, and it is no wonder that such a small amount is required for reforestation purposes. I do not think the Government should ask us to so radically alter the policy that was laid down when the previous Act was passed, but which has not been carried into effect.

Hon. J. EWING: The larger view taken by members appeals to me, and I think the amendment is a wise one. If only £5,000 is required for sandalwood, why should not the Treasurer have the advantage of the balance of the revenue derived from that source? Perhaps next year a different view may be taken of the position. I support the amendment. Ministers for Lands have always had difficulty in obtaining a settlement of the question as to what timber is required for forestry purposes and what is required for the purposes of settlement.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott: Lock up the whole country, and make it a breeding ground for dingoes and rabbits and other rubbish.

Hon. J. EWING: The present Minister for Lands is trying to elucidate the difficulties and arrive at what is right in the interests of the State. We should have an opportunity every year of reviewing this matter, until a settled policy is arrived at.

Hon. A. J. H. SAW: We should guard most jealously the revenues that have been set aside for reforestation. In our valuable timbers we have something that we have inherited, and it is our duty to hand down to posterity something of equal value. We can only do that by a proper system of afforestation, and we cannot carry that out without adequate funds. The sandalwood revenue may at present be in excess of immediate requirements, but sandalwood will not last for ever. There may not be a market for it next year, and already a considerable quantity is lying at Fremantle awaiting shipment. Instead of allowing the Government to take moneys in excess of what was previously laid down we should from time to time review the matter.

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

Ayes	.. ..	17
Noes	.. ..	5
	Majority for ..	12

Ayes.

Hon. C. F. Baxter	Hon. G. Potter
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. A. J. H. Saw
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. H. Seddon
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. A. Stephenson
Hon. E. H. Harris	Hon. H. Stewart
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. H. J. Yelland
Hon. G. W. Miles	Hon. A. Burvill
Hon. J. Nicholson	(*Teller.*)

Noes.

Hon. J. R. Brown	Hon. F. E. S. Willmott
Hon. J. M. Drew	Hon. T. Moore
Hon. J. W. Hickey	(*Teller.*)

Amendment thus passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

BILL—WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED, ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE).

Returned from the Assembly without amendment.

BILLS (8)—FIRST READING.

1, Entertainments Tax Assessment.
2, Entertainments Tax.
3, Electoral Act Amendment.
4, Fremantle Municipal Tramways and Electric Lighting Act Amendment.
5, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.
6, Water Boards Act Amendment.
7, Goldfields Water Supply Act Amendment.
8, Narrogin Soldiers' Memorial Institute.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 23rd September.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [7.52]: On comparing the Bill with the Industrial Arbitration Act Amendment Bill which was not agreed to last session, I find that a few alterations are embodied in the one now before us. I will refer to them later, but in passing I suggest, as a means of shortening the discussion, that owing to the similarity between the two Bills much of what was said last year during the second reading debate need not be repeated this year and may, in a sense, be taken as read. I would recall one point. The Bill is largely made up of clauses drawn from legislation in other State of the Commonwealth, notably from Queensland and New South Wales and, I think, South Australia as well. In addition, there are clauses taken from the Commonwealth Arbitration Act. If there is one thing more than another that we should be guided by in dealing with legislation, it is the consideration of what is beneficial for the progress and advancement of the State. If legislation be advanced which we consider will be prejudicial not only to the establishment of industries but to workers themselves in providing for them that employment which is so essential for their progress, then we should pause before accepting any Bill that we think will adversely affect the interests mentioned. In referring to the differences between this Bill and the previous one, it may be mentioned that there has been reinserted with a slight amendment, the clause dealing with domestic servants and insurance canvassers. Many views were expressed with regard to these matters on the previous occasion. I am still opposed to their inclusion in the Bill. One does not wish to see the home life brought into the realms of dissension, nor do we wish to see the home life invaded, as undoubtedly it will be invaded, if we include domestics in the Bill.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You don't believe in domestic servants; you want domestic slavery.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I believe in domestic servants and not domestic slavery.

Hon. J. R. Brown: How are you going to prevent it if you do not provide for them in this Bill?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The hon. member will recollect that last year many reasons were given which will all answer his question. I do not believe one member would support the idea advanced by Mr. Brown. Slavery of any description is the last thing anyone wants to see. If Mr. Brown would realise that we are all inspired with noble sentiments, he would acquit every member here of a desire to pass legislation which would have the effect of inducing what he calls slavery. Domestics in this State are well paid compared with what they receive in other States. If the home life is to be invaded, the invasion will be destructive of all that is best and dearest with respect of that home life. I would call attention to Clause 5, which says "Section 14 of the principal Act is amended by adding to Subsection 4 thereof the words 'including the Westralian branch of the Australian Workers' Union.'" Section 14 of the original Act provides—

> Trade union, consisting of not less than 15 persons, formed in connection with any specified industry or industries, may be registered under this Act as if it were a society complying with the conditions of Section 6. . . .

In Clause 6 of the Bill there is a further reference to the same branch of the Australian Workers' Union. The effect of passing a clause such as this will be to confer upon the Western Australian branch of that union practically all the powers of the combined unions in the State, and it will destroy the position those unions hold and the influence

for good which they exercise in connection with their respective callings. It will mean that there will be a sort of federation of all unions, and that the Western Australian branch of the Australian Workers' Union will be the one controlling body and all the other unions will, in a measure, lose their independence. That would be regrettable and should not be supported. We already have an instance in Queensland of how detrimental the power of such a union is. We have seen from time to time in connection with industrial life in that State many conditions which we would not like to see repeated here. I believe in every union exercising that influence they think proper to exercise, but I do not believe, nor do I support the idea of having one large union such as will take place if we pass this clause. Clause 7 has also been slightly enlarged, and there are also certain other amendments which occur later in the Bill. The next principal amendment is with regard to the basic wage. Subclause 3 of what will be new Section 102 provides—

> If in a determination the court shall declare a basic wage to be higher or lower than that in force prior to such determination, then the wages provided for in any industrial agreement or award shall be deemed forthwith to be automatically increased or reduced by an amount equal to the increase or reduction of the basic wage.

Consideration may be given to this clause if the Government will accept a slight amendment similar to that suggested on a previous occasion. But on the whole principle of the basic wage one can hardly do more than repeat what was said formerly. The objections advanced previously are fresh in the minds of members. We have in the Bill an interpretation of the basic wage, which is a sum sufficient for the normal and reasonable needs of the average worker, and in the case of a male worker the basic wage shall be fixed with regard to the rent of a dwelling-house of five rooms, and the cost of food, clothing and other necessaries for a family consisting of a man, his wife and three dependent children, according to a reasonable standard of comfort.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You would not want anything milder than that?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Does a single man want all that?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: When the Bill was before us previously, I instanced a not uncommon case, that of a married man with three children, three boys or three girls, or two boys and a girl, or two girls and a boy. I assume in the case in question that the three children, having passed beyond childhood's days, are earning full wages, and that they are unmarried. They may have an inclination to remain in that condition. Then this clause will declare that for the parents and the children, each of those five people living in one house, there shall be provided a wage sufficient for a dwelling-house of five rooms and cost of food, clothing, and other necessaries, just as though each of the five individuals was in the position of a man having a wife and three children.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Would you begrudge a single man that privilege?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Undoubtedly. It is unfair to the married man that a single man should be placed in that position. The single man has not the responsibilities of the married man. Here is another instance, very common in the South-West. On the timber mills many single men are employed. One need only go round the various mills and compare the number of single men's quarters with the number of married men's quarters to recognise how largely the single men outnumber the married men.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Married men cannot live on the mills; the conditions are too bad.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The interjection shows that Mr. Brown does not know what he is talking about. If he were to inspect the pay roll of a mill, he would realise that not only can men live on timber mills, but that they earn exceedingly good money. Many of them have done well, and I say it to their credit. Numerous men in the South-West, starting life on the mills, have, by sheer industry, worked their way up to a position of independence.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You are wrong.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The basic wage, under the Bill, is to be determined by the standard of a five-roomed dwelling-house and so forth for each individual worker, whether married or single.

Hon. J. R. Brown: The standard is low enough, too.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The method is wrong and absurd. The proper method of determining a basic wage is by the measure of production, and nothing else. Wages cannot be determined on a sounder basis.

Hon. J. R. Brown: You would not like your income to be fixed on that basis.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The hon. member will have an opportunity later.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It is not necessary to elaborate further on the basic wage. The basic wage is unsound economically, and represents a wrong method of determining remuneration.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I suggest you leave Mr. Brown to tell us what a single man wants a five-roomed house for?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It would be interesting to know. Clause 59 proposes to add two subsections dealing with apprenticeship. In connection with the last Bill there was some discussion whether its apprenticeship provisions were limited to the building trade, or extended to all trades. It is obvious from the proposed subsections that the intention is to apply the apprenticeship provisions to any industry to which the Act relates. Proposed Subsection 5 provides—

> This section applies to apprenticeship generally in any industry to which this Act relates.

Proposed Subsection 6 reads—

> So far as the Act to declare the law relating to masters and apprentices (37 Victoriæ, No. 12) is inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, or of any industrial agreement or award, it shall be of no effect.

The question of apprentices is of serious moment to Western Australia, and especially to the younger members of our community. I am strongly of opinion that we should do everything possible to qualify our young lads in various trades, so that we shall not in future be compelled, as we are at present, to go outside the State for workers when a rush of work occurs. But I doubt the wisdom of including in this particular measure provisions relating to apprenticeship. I believe in formulating a wise law to provide for the employment and qualification of lads in trades. Under the Arbitration law we have been accustomed in past years, and no doubt the practice will continue, to determine through the Arbitration Court the number of apprentices to be indentured to any particular trade. That has been the cause of throwing many of our lads on to the market simply as general labourers, lads who would have liked to become qualified in a trade but were prevented from doing so by our industrial laws. If the restriction had not existed, many employers would, I believe, have provided the necessary employment to indenture those boys and give them a chance of becoming qualified in the different trades to which they aspired.

Hon. J. R. Brown: And put their fathers out of work.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not know that it would have put the fathers out of work. I think the result would have been to create more work. The more restrictions we place upon members of our community as regards acquiring a knowledge of our industries, the less employment we are creating. I believe in trying to make the avenues of employment as open as possible, and not in restricting them. I have always fought for that principle, and I do so now. All I wish to see is that young people shall be properly qualified, and not inadequately qualified, as oftentimes is the case now, simply because the lads have not been given the opportunity of an early training, which they would have got if the restrictions had not existed. But here is the anomaly. Clause 59 provides—

> Every person desirous of becoming an apprentice shall be employed on probation for a period of three months to determine his fitness or otherwise for apprenticeship.

and so on. The clause proceeds—

> No premium shall be paid to or accepted by an employer for taking an apprentice.

Proposed Subsection 4, in Clause 59, provides—

> Any employer who, when required by the court, or by the apprenticeship board, to enter into an agreement of apprenticeship, neglects or refuses to do so without reasonable cause, shall be guilty of an offence. Penalty: £50.

There is the most astounding anomaly one would wish to present. On the one hand the court says, "You shall not employ more than a certain limited number of apprentices in a given trade." The court could not go against its own decision and order an employer further apprentices when the number has been specifically limited. How is the passing of a clause like this going to provide those opportunities for apprentices?

Hon. J. R. Brown: It will prevent an industry from being over-run by apprentices.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is already done in the Arbitration Act. If I thought the introduction of these two clauses would achieve what I desire, namely opportunities for the qualifying of apprentices, I would say, "By all means pass them into law"; but as I cannot see that it would achieve one step in that direction so long as those restrictions are still retained in the Arbitration Act whereby the court can regulate

the number of apprentices to be employed, I ask why should we pass such provisions?

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It is mere camouflage.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, pure and simple.

Hon. A. Burvill: It is restricting education in trade.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am told that in the Government workshops at Midland Junction they have not even employed there at present the number of apprentices they are entitled to employ, having regard to the number of journeymen workers.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Some boys have to wait for years to get in.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: And again, in the Ways and Works Branch, the same thing applies. Yet here we have a Government suggesting the introduction of what they say is beneficial legislation for apprentices; and in their own State departments and undertakings they are not providing opportunities for those apprentices to be educated.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Question.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Until something can be done to make it possible for our lads to be educated and for those restrictions to be removed, I cannot support the introduction of those clauses unless the other clauses in the Bill are drastically amended. Should the court cease to have to restrict the number of apprentices we could bring into vogue some suitable law to provide for apprentices. Clause 60, which also deals with apprentices, is a new one. Our old friend, the provision for a 44-hour week, is not in the Bill on this occasion.

Hon. J. R Brown: We will get that later on.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Without leaving it to the court to determine whether 44 hours is a fair week for workers, the Government have taken it upon themselves to give to the men in the various departments the privilege of the 44-hour week. If the Government choose to over-ride the Arbitration Court in this way, is it worth while even having an Industrial Arbitration Act at all? I cannot conceive the reason for the constitution of a court appointed to fix hours of labour and wages and conditions, when the Government see fit to fix the hours themselves. Either the court should carry out its functions, or be disbanded. The speech delivered by the Minister for Works when moving the second reading of the Bill last year has been issued in pamphlet form with an introduction which is an extract from the provisions relating to labour in the Treaty of Peace signed on the 28th June, 1919. It is as follows:—

> Whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required; as, for example, by the regulation of the hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum day and week, the regulation of the labour supply, the prevention of unemployment, the provision of an adequate living wage, the protection of the worker against sickness, disease and injury arising out of his employment, the protection of children, young persons and women, provision for old age and injury, protection of the interests of workers when employed in countries other than their own, recognition of the principle of freedom of association, the organisation of vocational and technical education and other measures; whereas also the failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries, etc., etc.

And so it goes on. That was published as an introduction to the Minister's speech of last year. My attention was arrested by those words and I asked myself whether we in Western Australia are in the same condition as those countries referred to in this introduction. Let us examine those various conditions that the Treaty of Versailles sought to alleviate and remove. They were seeking, for example, to obtain improvement in working conditions, such as the hours. Have we not an Industrial Arbitration Act which regulated that very point until the Government took it upon themselves to regulate the hours of work, and fixed a 44 hour week, when the court had already determined upon a 48 hours week? We are a long way ahead of the countries where that unhappy condition of affairs exists. Did not our courts establish a working week of 48 hours? That is all provided for. There was the regulation of labour supply. We have endeavoured to do that. There was the prevention of unemployment. We have sought in every way to prevent unemployment. There was the provision of an adequate living wage. Has that not been provided for in both State and Commonwealth Arbitration Courts? We have the statistician's reports on the purchasing power of the sovereign so as to determine the living wage. That is fixed every quarter and wages varied accordingly. Then there was protection of the worker against sickness, disease or in-

jury. Does not our Workers' Compensattion Act provide for those shortcomings? We have a Workers' Compensation Act second to none in the world. Yet that is put forward as an introduction to a speech, as though we required to reform our conditions of labour to the same extent as is so obviously necessary in certain other countries.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is there nothing about preference to unionists in that introduction?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Not a word. They go on to deal with old age. Have not we in our Commonwealth laws provided for all these things? Are we not in a happy position in this State and Commonwealth as compared with practically every other part of the world? Yet it seems we are still trying to see what we can do to make our industrial position not better, but probably very much worse. If we have complied with all those requirements, there is no need for this Bill. The Minister obviously felt that he was dealing with a country that was merely on a par with some of the continental countries, and practically the same attitude was adopted by the Minister in introducing the Bill here. The measure raises certain economic issues, matters that are vital to our State more than to other States of the Commonwealth, and vital also to the whole of Australia as compared with other countries of the world. Compare our position with that of Victoria, a State with established industries and consolidated wealth. Western Australia is a State just beginning, struggling to emerge from the infantile condition and to reach the more advanced condition of the Eastern States. We are largely a producing State, and we provide a field for exploitation by other States, whose manufacturers can throw their goods over the border to us without having to pay duty upon them. It places the manufacturer of those States at a very great advantage. If we pass laws establishing conditions far in advance of those existing in the Eastern States, we shall, in effect, be paying a premium to the other States and making it more difficult to establish a single industry here.

Hon. J. R. Brown: What about Queensland which is ahead of the whole lot?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: If the hon. member will examine the industrial conditions in Queensland he will find he is not correct. The standpoint I have stated is a very reasonable one from which to regard all legislation. If we are going to pass laws that increase the cost of production as compared with costs say, in Victoria, how can we hope to produce goods and compete with that State? We want to provide employment for the people we are bringing to our shores. Many of the migrants brought here with the intention primarily of being settled on the land are not suited, temperamentally or otherwise, for that life, and they betake themselves to other occupations. Is it wise, when we have beneficial laws on our statute-book already, to pass other laws far in advance of the well-established States I have cited? We are making the position for ourselves worse and worse. We are creating a rod for our own backs, something that will destroy every industry we establish. I put this to the Leader of the House in the hope that he will bring it under the notice of his colleagues and get them to consider whether they are wise in introducing legislation of this kind. This Bill is a collection of cullings from the laws of the other States of the Commonwealth. No other State is so advanced as is Western Australia in its workers' compensation laws. None has such advanced legislation as is proposed in this Bill. The Government say they wish to help industries. If that is so, this is not the way to help them. I hope the views I have expressed will be echoed by other members and that, in the interests of the State, they will regard it as their duty to reject a measure that will destroy rather than create industry. Western Australia is mainly a primary producing State. It cannot claim to occupy a position comparable with that of Victoria or New South Wales. Nor could those States compare themselves with some of the large manufacturing centres in other parts of the world. What I have said regarding Western Australia in comparison with the Eastern States may well be applied to the Commonwealth as a whole as compared with other parts of the world, but it is not my duty to deal with that aspect. We have a few industries, but only a handful. Our primary producers are faced with a position that emphasises the viewpoint I take. They have to contend with the elements. In no year since 1914 have they been faced with conditions so threatening as those they have experienced this year. The season opened propitiously in every way, but later on the elements were unfavourable, and the farmers in many instances have been forced to turn in crops from which they had hoped to reap an abundant harvest. Even the crops to be reaped will not give the return originally

expected, nor will they repay the labour spent upon them.

Hon. H. Seddon: What will be the effect of that upon wages?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is the point I am coming to. The same may be said to apply to orchardists and other producers. If the framers of this Bill had been mindful of the interests of all parties likely to be affected, they would have shown consideration for the man who has to pay wages as well as for the man who is to receive them.

The Honorary Minister: That is the object of the Bill.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Can the Honorary Minister show one clause of the Bill that indicates any consideration for the employer?

Hon. J. R. Brown: The employer looks after himself. He does not want any consideration.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is the hon. member's opinion. If he, with all his wisdom, can show any clause that provides even a little protection for the employer, I shall be surprised. If the Bill had provided that losses arising from bad seasons, adverse conditions or low prices would carry compensation to the man who has to find the wages, I should see some justice in it.

Hon. J. R. Brown: What about an abundant harvest? Would the workers get anything extra?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The workers do get extra, because their wages are regulated by the court; the Government derive a benefit under the income tax.

Hon. H. Seddon: And there is the effect on prices.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Of course there is. The prices received by farmers and orchardists are regulated by the prices ruling on the world's markets.

Hon. J. Duffell: The price of wheat will be regulated severely when Russia again enters into competition with our wheatgrowers.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Exactly. An instance was mentioned in the Press showing that the price of wheat would be low this year owing to the fact that certain countries, which have not for years past been competitors in the field, would come into competition. We are dependent upon the conditions existing in countries beyond the jurisdiction of our court of arbitration. As apparently the court would have no power to regulate the prices to be paid to us for our produce, I do not see that we are justified, in the face of all the circumstances, and adverse conditions, in passing this Bill now. We ought to give grave and serious consideration to it, and decide that this is not an opportune time for its introduction. To protect many industries the Commonwealth Government have introduced a protective tariff. They have built a wall around us that is likely to crumble about our ears before long. We have heard the views expressed by many able men as to the disaster that is likely to follow the building up of that tariff wall. If we pass this Bill, will not the effect of it be to add to the cost of production, and incidentally to the cost of living? As the cost of production goes up so the cost of living must follow. Will not the result be that if the cost of production goes up, numerous applications by those men, who are engaged in manufacturing, will be made to the tariff board for some further protection to be afforded to their industries, because they will find they cannot compete with outside countries? Instead of the Bill helping us in our difficulties it is going to create more difficulties for us. When the cost of living goes up, the question is naturally asked, who is to pay? The general public pays. What protection is there in this Bill for the general public?

Hon. V. Hamersley: That is the point.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I do not see one clause in the Bill that affords an iota of protection to the general public. They are bitterly and cruelly left out in the cold. It is our duty in this House to protect the general public, and if I can help in that direction I will do so. The sole excuse for introducing this Bill can be justified by the more expeditious handling of our cases in the court. It is not by introducing measures that will increase the cost of production and the cost of living that we are going to better things. Whatever grumblings there are and objections from time to time, they are due not to the wages that are paid, but more to the delays that occur in the settling of applications that come before the court. The whole matter can be settled in a simple way. All that is necessary for remedying the matter is a small measure to provide for the constitution of a court that would deal solely with arbitration matters. Prior to the appointment of the present President, the occupant of that position was one of the judges

of the Supreme Court, who spent part of his time on Supreme Court work, and another part of his time in discharging his duties in connection with the Arbitration Court. Many delays took place in consequence of that system. One means of remedying that is to appoint a deputy president if necessary. That was not done, but it might have been done and valuable time saved. I suggest the Government would find that all complaints were removed if they would discover a method for reducing the delays that occur in connection with the decisions of the court. If this Bill was a fair one as between all sections of the public, one might be prepared to give it that full and fair consideration it would then deserve. To my way of thinking it is calculated to do injury instead of good, and in view of that I cannot see how I can support the second reading.

HON. J. J. HOLMES (North) [8.53]: It will not take me long to express my views not only upon this Bill but on arbitration generally. In view of what has transpired, and is transpiring every day, it is the height of absurdity to introduce a measure of this kind and to ask any sane man, or body of men, to consider any amendment to the Arbitration Act, except one for its abolition. In the pages of "Hansard" hon. members will find that for years past I have preached the doctrine that we have no right to maintain a court which cannot enforce its judgments or awards. That is the trouble we are faced with now. We have set up a tribunal which cannot enforce its judgments or awards. In doing this we have brought the courts of justice into contempt. The whole of our courts are now being set at defiance, and the entire fabric of justice appears to be tottering. One thing leads to another. The setting up of the Arbitration Court may have been worth the experiment. It has proved the fallacy of arbitration so far as industrial disputes are concerned. To continue to carry on as proposed under the Bill, and add, as it were, insult to injury, is the height of absurdity. No sane man would consider such a proposition. I have been asked on many occasions whether, if we wiped out arbitration, it would mean going back to the days of strikes. I have replied that the establishment of arbitration courts in Australia has not minimised the number of strikes. It has delayed the settlement of strikes. It has allowed industries to linger on pending the awards of the courts. When the court has given its decision, and that decision has not been favourable to the employees, a strike has occurred.

The Honorary Minister: And lock-outs have occurred too.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: It would have been better to have faced the position at the start, to have allowed the employers and employees at round table conferences to settle their disputes either before or after a strike, than to have brought in a third party, in the form of an Arbitration Court, which, when it does make an award, cannot enforce it. The worst feature of the business is that the Government, who are responsible for the Bill, are aiding and abetting trade unions in setting the decisions of the court at defiance.

Hon. J. R. Brown: That is wrong.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Take our own Arbitration Court. This came to a decision after the hearing of evidence, and fixed the hours of labour at 48 per week. The Government of the country, who introduced this measure, undermined the court of its own creation by altering the hours to 44 per week. Then they ask this House to consider a Bill to amend the Arbitration Act. The sooner we get rid of it the better, and the sooner we get rid of the Arbitration Court the better. Instead of wasting our time over this Bill, it would be better for us to be out deciding this one point, as to whether the courts of justice or their decisions are to be obeyed, or whether we are to have mob rule in the country. If we were doing that instead of considering this Bill we should be doing what I consider to be our duty. Last year we passed clauses in the Bill that ought never to have been agreed to. I do not think they will be passed this session. If they can be rejected, I will do my best to assist in that direction. The only condition upon which I would support the second reading of this Bill would be that I could be shown how it is possible to introduce amendments that would give the Arbitration Court power to enforce its judgments and awards. I do not see how we can do that. I am satisfied that strikes will continue. I do not think we shall have gaols big enough to hold those who set our laws at defiance. I must, therefore, oppose the second reading of this Bill.

On motion by Hon. H. A. Stephenson, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—ROYAL SHOW.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central): I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn till 4.30 p.m. on Thursday.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 9.1 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 6th October, 1925.

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

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Governor received and read assenting to the Supply Bill (No. 2) £1,232,000.

QUESTION—PRISON REGULATION.

Mr. MANN asked the Premier: What is the necessity for the amended prison regulation laid on the Table of the House on the 29th September?

The PREMIER replied: The new regulation is necessary in order that the prison regulations may be sufficiently elastic to enable those controlling the prisons to deal with exceptional circumstances, such as the influx, at short notice, of a number of entrants which might more than double the usual number under detention. The prisons do not carry stocks of clothing, cell equipment, etc., to enable the whole of the regulations to be strictly applied under such abnormal circumstances. Moreover, the seamen sentenced under the Merchant Shipping Act are obviously of a class distinct from the ordinary type of prison inmate. It is in accordance with recognised prison practice that, when there exists a number of inmates of a type similar to each other but different from the rest of the prisoners, there be applied to such inmates classification suitable to the circumstances. The new prison regulation enables this to be done.

BILL—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Mr. Latham, and read a first time.

BILL—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BANK ACT AMENDMENT (PRIVATE).

Select Committee's Report.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [4.36]: I move—

That the report of the select committee be adopted.

Question put and passed.

Second Reading.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [4.37] in moving the second reading said: The Bill has been before a select committee, and the select committee's report is before members. The two main objects of the Bill are to facilitate the introduction of capital from overseas into the State as to the buying of the bank's shares abroad, and to facilitate the lending of the money when it has come here. For the former purpose it is proposed to establish branch registers in certain parts of the British Dominions. Later, the Bill provides that the bank may lend money to its clients in the same way as other banks do to-day in this State. The Western Australian Bank at present has a cumbersome method of handling loans, which handicaps it in comparison with other banks. The evidence given before the select committee shows that the same trouble was experienced by other banks, and was rectified in the manner proposed by the present Bill. Mr. F. M. Stone, the