

consideration moving from him to his immediate vendor the amount of any such ad valorem duty which he is required to pay as aforesaid."

The object of the amendment is to protect sub-purchasers. Each purchaser will have to pay his own stamp duty, instead of the whole burden falling on the last purchaser.

Amendment put and passed.

On motions by the Chief Secretary, clause further amended by inserting after "declaration" in subparagraph (a) of the proviso the words "by him"; by deleting in subparagraph (a) the words "by a competent valuator"; and by substituting "value" for "valuation" where it first occurs in line 2 of subparagraph (b).

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That "exceed" in line 27 be struck out, and "is less than" be inserted in lieu; and that in line 22 "person's valuator" be struck out and "person" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That "exceed" in line 27 be struck out, and "be less than" inserted in lieu.

Hon. A. THOMSON: What is the meaning of this? If there is an appeal, and the appeal shows the valuation to be less than that submitted, will the contractor have to pay the costs?

The CHIEF SECRETARY: This refers only to merchants and goods. It is the word "exceed" that is wrong, and the amendment will make the paragraph clear.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That after the words "be less than" (previously inserted) the words "the value" be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That in line 37 of sub-paragraph (d) of paragraph (i) of the proviso, after subsection 3 of the proposed new Section 72, the words "does not exceed" be struck out, and "exceeds" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I submit that the word "valuation" should be changed to "value." I move an amendment—

That in paragraph (d), line 3, "valuation" be struck out and "value" inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I move an amendment—

That to the proposed new Section 72 a subsection to stand as Subsection 5 be inserted as follows:—This section shall apply only to contracts or agreements made after the commencement of this section, but as regards any contracts or agreements made before the commencement of this section, and still subsisting thereafter the provisions of this Act and of section seventy-two of this Act as the same was contained therein prior to the commencement of this section shall apply.

Some doubt has been expressed regarding contracts that are entered into. It is not intended that the Bill should apply to them, but this amendment will put the matter right.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Bill again reported with further amendments.

House adjourned at 9 p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 17th November, 1931.

	PAGE
Assent to Bills	5240
Questions: Railway uniforms, tenders	5240
Statute of Westminster	5240
Tenants, Purchasers, and Mortgagees' Relief Act	5240
Annual Estimates: Report of Committee of Ways	
and Means	5240
Bills: Forests Act Amendment (No. 2), 1R.	5240
Land Agents Act Amendment, report, etc.	5240
Electoral Act Amendment, Report	5240
Licensing Act Amendment (No. 3), returned	5263
Loan (No. 2) £2,450,000, all stages	5263
Electric Lighting Act Amendment, 2R.	5274
Companies Act Amendment, 2R.	4275
Land and Income Tax Assessment Act Amend-	
ment (No. 3), 2R.	5276
Loan Estimates: Com. of Supply	5240
Motion: Agricultural bank clients, to inquire by	
Royal Commission	5264

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

- 1, Dried Fruits Act Continuance.
- 2, Local Courts Act Amendment.

QUESTION—RAILWAY UNIFORMS, TENDERS.

Mr. RAPHAEL asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Do the department intend to call tenders for the supply of railway uniforms for the current year? 2, If so, when?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, During the present week.

QUESTION—STATUTE OF WESTMINSTER.

Mr. MacCallum SMITH (without notice) asked the Premier: 1, Is the Premier of opinion that the supplementary resolution recently passed by the Commonwealth Parliament regarding the Statute of Westminster meets the protest against the proposed statute, as carried by this House on the 30th July, 1931? 2, Has he noticed a Press announcement that a Bill for the Statute of Westminster is to be brought down in the House of Commons this afternoon? 3, Will he cable a further protest to the British Government against the passing of the Statute of Westminster until such time as it has received the consideration and approval of the Australian States?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No. 2, Yes. 3, I have already cabled stating that the resolution carried by the Federal Parliament does not meet with the approval of this Government.

QUESTION—TENANTS, PURCHASERS AND MORTGAGORS' RELIEF ACT.

Hon. P. COLLIER (without notice) asked the Attorney General: In view of the fact that the Tenants, Purchasers and Mortgageors' Relief Act, 1930, will expire on the 31st December next, do the Government intend to introduce a Bill to continue the Act for another year?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: Yes. Notice of the necessary Bill will be given to-morrow.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1931-32.

Report of Committee of Ways and Means adopted.

BILL—FORESTS ACT AMENDMENT (No. 2).

Introduced by the Premier, and read a first time.

BILL—LAND AGENTS ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as to enable the Bill to pass through the remaining stage at this sitting.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1931-32.*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 11th November; Mr. Richardson in the Chair.

Vote—Departmental, £79,849.

HON. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [4.46]: The total amount of the Loan Estimates has been so greatly reduced this year that it leaves very little scope for discussion. The amount set down is £1,459,000, which of course is a very considerable reduction on the amount we have been accustomed to dealing with in recent years. But that is not the whole of the money that will be at the disposal of the Government for expenditure on public concerns during the year, because it does not include a sum of approximately £240,000 from the Federal Government as a grant for main roads. So if that be added to the amount of the Estimates, it brings the total for this year to

about the same as that of last year, namely, £1,759,000.

The Premier: But we do not add it in that way.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We do not add it here, but the £240,000 will be an additional amount available. And it is better than loan money, for it is a straight-out grant; we do not have to repay it nor to pay interest on it, as we shall have to do with the ordinary loan expenditure. But even with that amount added it does not leave the outlook very bright in regard to the public funds available for the assistance of our industries. Something like more than half the amount is set down for expenditure on agricultural development. That is all too small, because it will be agreed that if the large number of people on the land and now in difficulties are going to survive, considerably more than the total amount of these Estimates will be required to see them through. So although the sum set down here appears to be large—about £800,000 in round figures—it will be found not nearly sufficient to get over the season. Because if we look at the expenditure last year on the Agricultural Bank, the Industries Assistance Board and those other headings which provide assistance to the people on the land as the Premier pointed out, it does not represent the total amount of expenditure last year, because there was something like £200,000 from the Commonwealth Government and another £400,000 raised by the Industries Assistance Board.

The Premier: The Finance and Development Board. Of course not all of that was expended last year. Still it has all been expended since.

Hon. P. COLLIER: So that would bring up the total expenditure last year to considerably over a million pounds for the development of agriculture. I am afraid the amount set out here for expenditure in other directions is all that can be made available from this total. Probably we shall have an opportunity shortly to discuss, on another question to come before the House, the position of the farmers and their need for assistance, so I will not dwell further upon it at the moment. The next largest amount in the Estimates is a sum of £210,000 for country water supplies, drainage and irrigation, mainly if not almost entirely in the South-West. Nearly the whole of that amount will be for expenditure upon drainage and

irrigation. I have no doubt the expenditure in enlarging the Harvey weir so as to provide a greater quantity of water for irrigation purposes will be justified. Irrigation in the Harvey district is not an experiment, but has already proved successful, until the district has become one of the most prosperous of the dairying areas in the whole of the State. I have no doubt its output will be substantially increased when the greater quantity of water is available. But I must confess to being somewhat sceptical about the expenditure of money on drainage. When I look back upon the history of drainage in this State, nearly all in the southern portions of the State, I cannot recall one scheme that has been a success, or even one that has not been an absolute failure. Wherever we have embarked upon drainage with a view to land settlement, we have failed at every turn. Herdsman's Lake offers a striking example of failure. Then there was the huge amount expended on the Peel Estate in drainage alone, something like half a million pounds. That, too, as far as drainage goes, has been a failure, certainly anything but a success.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: The largest portion of the expenditure was on the main drain, and that is closed up to-day.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, our attempt to drain that estate has been a failure. And even in other parts of the State where the drainage work has been successful, there have been found other obstacles that have made for failure. Down in the Busselton district considerable drainage works have been carried out, but no one can say they have been successful.

The Minister for Works: They were successful in point of draining the land.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The drainage at Busselton was carried out many years ago, but there is not a great deal of development there as yet. That country was drained nearly 20 years ago.

The Premier: There has been a good deal of cultivation on some of the blocks.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Some of them now are coming into production, but for many years there was practically no result at all. In the Denmark district also we have had similar experience, and generally speaking we have had very little success from the large amount of money expended on drainage schemes. So I am rather sceptical about the drainage schemes now under way or

about to be started shortly along the south-western railway. When land that has been under water for the greater portion of the year is drained it is probable and certainly possible that it will be found, after large sums have been expended on the drainage, that the land is not of a quality that will permit of profitable operation. That is the danger. I do not know whether any soil analyses have been made of those lands after they have been drained.

The Premier: Yes, at the Harvey.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the Harvey scheme is not drainage; it is irrigation.

The Premier: And drainage too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: On new agriculture.

The Premier: And old agriculture too.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The portion served by irrigation from the Harvey weir is all right, but under some of those works we are starting in new districts the land may not be of the quality it is at the Harvey, and so we may again find ourselves with the land drained, and for many years very little settlement following. I hope I am wrong. I have no prejudice at all in the matter, and if we could be sure the land we are draining will be of high productive quality, perhaps it is as good a way of spending money as the clearing of heavily timbered country to make land fit for settlement.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is around Collie a big area wanting only drainage.

Hon. P. COLLIER: In the past we have been too ready to take on these schemes without due examination, perhaps in consequence of being urged on by the settlers and local residents. I remember once I went down through that country and received deputations. The local residents were highly enthusiastic in eulogising the land—it was only a drainage scheme—but, after all, the greater number of those men were not qualified to speak. Their enthusiasm for their district carries away their judgment. A great number of them, I think, are not really qualified, for they have never tested the land proposed to be drained.

The Minister for Agriculture: A lot of it is the best subterranean clover land in the State.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not know what areas the hon. member refers to.

The Minister for Agriculture: In the Collie district.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be so, but it is not land that has been drained. Un-

fortunately very often the land is under water and we cannot tell what it will be like when drained, whereas we may know that the surrounding land which does not require drainage is of good quality. Perhaps we are not right in assuming that land which is under water is going to be of equal quality when drained.

Mr. Wansbrough: Usually it proves to be mineral when drained.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That has been our experience, namely that land under water for the greater part of the year does not prove to be of equal quality with the land surrounding it.

Mr. McLarty: Some of the best land in the South-West has been drained.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Is that so? What area is that?

Mr. McLarty: It is a good big area, and will grow clover perfectly.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then it is all right as far as production goes. We have not been able to grow the things we expected to grow on the swamps at Peel Estate, and everyone believed that land was of high quality.

Mr. McLarty: This drainage is not swamp drainage.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, I understand it is low-lying land that is not swamp land. There may be a difference. I only hope the Government will make the fullest possible investigation before proceeding with drainage work. These are times when we should profit from experience, and not embark upon new schemes involving the expenditure of considerable sums of money without thorough examination and investigation beforehand. Having regard to the difficulty of obtaining money at present, it is imperative that we should not embark lightly upon new schemes. I hope the Government will make all possible investigation beforehand. It has been said that the State would have been in rather sorry difficulties had the 3,500 farms scheme been launched. Had that scheme been undertaken in the manner in which we had been accustomed to face similar schemes, the State would now have been committed to it. Only because of the caution exercised by the then Government, and particularly the caution of the Minister for Lands at the time, was the utmost investigation made before anything very serious was done. We considered that every possible avenue of investigation should be explored.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: The Premier wanted us to rush into that scheme.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Yes, you urged it very strongly.

Hon. P. COLLIER: However, Dr. Teakle's report and the reports based on scientific investigation saved us from becoming committed to heavy expenditure in that direction. I have no doubt that, as the years pass, a great portion of the area will be settled, but it will have to be done slowly and only after close investigation. There can be no question that important services of the State are being starved. That is inevitable because of the lack of money. If we look at the amount provided for rolling stock for railways—

The Premier: They are very well supplied.

Hon. P. COLLIER: —and the amount provided for the electric power station, as well as the provision in other directions, we find very heavy reductions. No doubt the railway rolling stock was brought to a fairly good standard by the previous Government, but the wear and tear is heavy. In bad times, all the services that could be compelled to do without expenditure have had to go without until we reached a point when they could go no longer, and then huge sums of money had to be found to bring the services up to standard. In a couple of years many hundreds of thousands of pounds will have to be provided all at once to bring the services up to standard and meet the requirements of the people. That has happened on more than one occasion in the past, and it is happening now. Not only is maintenance being withheld, but necessary improvements to render the services required are being postponed. That will involve great expenditure in a year or two. In 1929-30 the expenditure on rolling stock was £139,000. Last year there was a drop to £20,000, and this year the estimate is £4,000. We can hardly imagine that a big system with something like 4,000 miles of railway can manage for the whole of the financial year with only £4,000 for rolling stock. It would not build one truck.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: Yes, it would.

The Premier: It would build twenty.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: You can build three trucks for £1,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Well, that means 12 trucks for the year.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: But the Government are allowing a thousand trucks to fall into disrepair.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is the trouble. Maintenance is being starved, and later on heavy expenditure will have to be incurred. To effect the repairs later will cost much more than would be necessary at the moment if the money were available. The same remark applies to the power house. A sum of £43,000 was provided in 1929-30 compared with £10,000 last year, while the estimate for this year is only £4,000.

The Premier: A new unit would cost about £280,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It would take 18 months to two years to instal a new unit, and although there is a little slackness in the demand for power at present, when the tide turns, the demand will increase and it will be impossible to meet it. When I took office, I was faced with a demand for something like £400,000 for the power house and there was heavy expenditure over several years. The power house is able to meet requirements at the moment.

The Premier: Expenditure on the power house is always going on.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But for two years very little has been provided. There was practically no expenditure last year and practically no provision is made for this year.

The Premier: And none the year before towards installing another unit.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, because there was a reserve from the previous unit. When we spend a large sum of money for a new unit, it should carry us on for two or three years. The power house involves continuous expenditure, but unless we look ahead, we shall not be able to give the service that the people demand.

The Premier: That is likely to happen, but to instal a new unit would take an enormous sum of money.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Electric power is one of the essential factors.

The Premier: If we cannot get the money, you cannot have it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, the Government have not much money to spend anywhere outside of what is required for agricultural development.

Hon. J. C. Willecock: That will not absorb the people out of work.

The Premier: Producer gas could be used.

Hon. P. COLLIER: People do not seem to favour producer gas. Although it has been used successfully in the batteries on the goldfields, it has not been adopted much in the city. If industry revives in such a way as to necessitate the employment of people, practically the first call will be on the electric station for power, and if we are not able to provide the service required, industries will lag. There is a remarkable falling-off in the expenditure on roads and bridges. Some part of the road expenditure was involved in the Federal grant.

The Minister for Works: Yes, 15s. in the pound.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Covering the whole item of roads, bridges and public buildings, the expenditure was £317,000 in 1929-30, compared with £208,000 last year, and for the present year the estimated amount is £1,300. We are relieved of the State's contribution to the Federal aid roads grant, which meant a considerable sum, but even so, work on bridges and public buildings must be at a standstill. Naturally, such work must be deferred when money is not available. Although a larger amount is set down for the metropolitan water supply this year than was expended last year, I would repeat what I said on the Revenue Estimates regarding the great risk of a serious shortage of water in the metropolitan area during the next few years. Like the electricity supply, an additional water supply cannot be provided in a year or two.

The Premier: No, it takes time.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Meanwhile great hardship may be inflicted on the people, and industry may be retarded. We should endeavour to provide for the service required not to-day but three or four years hence. Development of mining suffers most of all. The estimate has got down to £15,000 for development of mining, and £5,000 for the erection of batteries, making a total of £20,000. Two years ago, the expenditure was £86,000.

The Premier: That included £45,000 rebate on water supplied to the mines.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, but there still remained £40,000 for the industry.

Hon. J. C. Willcock: And the prospects are three times as good as they were.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. In the column giving information as to how the money is to be expended, appears the following:—

Loans under Mining Development Act; loans of boring plants; prospecting and boring; rebates, subsidies and development work; assistance generally in aid of mining.

Consequently the £15,000 covers a wide field and there will not be much for any one of the items. One matter covered pretty fully by the Minister for Mines when introducing his Estimates I should like to stress, and that is the need for the expenditure of a little more money on the goldfields. People are crying out for crushing facilities on many of the old fields, and on some new fields. From letters I have received, it appears that many prospectors will be forced to leave and look for sustenance on the dole, unless they can obtain additional assistance to get their ore treated. Yet £15,000 has to cover the whole of the great mining industry, which is of immense importance to the State to-day. I am afraid that because of the way in which the depression has hit the people on the land, we are apt to concentrate all our thought in that direction, and to overlook the value and importance of gold mining to the State. The yield, which is increasing month by month, is of great value to the State. Gold to-day stands at a higher price than it ever did before, and that is encouraging hundreds of people to prospect for it, whilst many of them are getting results.

Mr. Angelo: And it is not a fluctuating market.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The only fluctuation has been upwards. To-day it is possible to get 30s. for a sovereign. I think to-day gold is worth about £6 13s. a standard ounce, not inclusive of the bounty. This has given a great stimulus to those engaged in the industry. It would be a thousand pities if the optimism of those on the goldfields who are searching for gold should get a setback, because of the lack of £20,000 or £30,000 with which to give them the assistance they require to enable them to carry on. It would be money well spent, and probably come back to the State as such expenditure has done in the past. Little can be said on these Estimates. There is no money to spend. There is a tremendous falling off in that which is available to spend. All we can do is to

make a strong effort to see that whatever money is available during the year is expended in the best possible direction, with a view to the maintenance of our existing industries and the establishment of new ones.

HON. J. C. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [5.17]: It is a very serious thing for the country that we should suddenly have to say to those employed on loan works that we can spend loan money only to the extent of $1\frac{1}{2}$ millions this year, compared with $1\frac{3}{4}$ last year, and £4,600,000 in other years.

The Premier: It cannot be helped.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: No. It means that we have to readjust our ideas and our methods of employing individuals. Some 18 months ago there was a population of 8,000 or 10,000 people, who were reasonably assured of constant employment in the carrying out of our public works policy. Had the money been available, we could have continued with that developmental work, because there is any amount of that sort of work still to be done in Western Australia.

The Premier: Never more than to-day.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: That is so.

The Minister for Works: There is so much to do and so little money with which to do it.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: That brings us face to face with a serious problem on behalf of those people who used to follow public works employment.

The Minister for Works: There were about 7,000 engaged on public works.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, and in connection with the Loan votes of the railways for the building of trucks, engines, etc., another 1,000 were employed. It can be said that nearly 10,000 people were dependent for their livelihood upon the public works policy of the State and the expenditure of this money. Within the last 12 months the whole system has changed, and those people find themselves without any outlook. The question is how to readjust our economic life to find employment for all those people.

Hon. P. Collier: We must establish new industries or find employment somewhere else.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: If we spend annually two millions of loan money for the next five or six years, that will be as much as we can expect. Here we have 8,000 or 10,000 men who are without the usual means

of livelihood. The point has been stressed that the Government should seriously consider what manner of industries these people are to be provided with to enable them to earn a livelihood. It cannot be said that we do not need men for the development of the country, for we do need every one of them. In my opinion the Council of Industrial Development should play a considerable and active part in ascertaining what can be done by way of affording judicious assistance in the initial stages of the establishment of new industries, so that they may be tided over the difficulties that always beset them at the outset.

The Premier: We could produce our own food, our butter, cheese, bacon, etc.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes. In Geraldton the tomato industry has this year exported products to the value of £30,000 or £40,000, and this has been done from an area of 5,000 or 6,000 acres.

The Minister for Works: We sent 31 tons of tinned milk away from Harvey.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Where?

The Minister for Works: All over the State.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I am speaking of the tomato industry. This export to some extent balances the tremendous imports from the other States.

The Premier: If the tomatoes had not been shut out early this year, we would have got even better returns.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, but only one boat went off its regular run.

The Premier: The trains would not take the goods.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: In season and out of season the previous Government, as well as the present Government, endeavoured to induce the South Australian Government to allow tomatoes to go by rail, and at last the persistent efforts were rewarded by permission being given to that effect. The fact that the Eastern States boats now leave on Thursday instead of Saturday also makes a difference. There is a big field for the manufacture of tomato sauce in this country. A small factory has been established at Geraldton to supply the demand within the State. Because of the lack of experience and judicious advice the product has not been as successful as it might have been. In Government employment there is a highly technical staff. The Council of Industrial Development could take the position in hand and give the advice required.

Possibly also some financial assistance might be given to the industry. Once it is established, it would probably develop very rapidly, and thousands of pounds worth of tomato products could be sold within the State. It is a product which can easily be handled, but the industry does need a measure of encouragement and assistance. I do not want the Government to establish a factory, but they might assist to the extent of £1,000 or £2,000, so that the industry might overcome its initial difficulties and be put on the road to success. In this way, local requirements in this commodity could be met. In Geraldton a small industry has also been started for the canning of crayfish.

The Premier: And very good they are, too.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: These people have not had much assistance in the way of advice, but I am sure if they had, say, £5,000, at least 100 men could be profitably employed. This is one of the natural industries of the State. I do not say we should encourage a lot of exotic industries which are not in conformity with our natural conditions, but the crayfish industry, particularly in that district, is one which could well be developed.

Mr. Thorn: It is one of the finest products on the market to-day.

Hon. P. Collier: Large quantities of fish are still coming into the State.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Thousands of pounds worth of this commodity come to Western Australia. I understand that £50,000 worth is exported from South Africa and other parts of the world.

The Premier: More than £150,000 worth of fish of one sort and another is imported.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: This is one of the lines that could be successfully marketed here. If the Council of Industrial Development had a little money available with which to render assistance, and were able to proffer sound advice, the industry could produce a commodity that would hold its own against competition. Financial assistance of that sort would also enable the industry properly to handle the by-products, and so market the principal products at a lower price. I visited the factory recently, and noticed that all the by-products were being thrown away.

These represent a valuable fertiliser, for which there is a ready sale.

The Premier: As chicken feed.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, and in other directions. A considerable amount of money could be made out of the by-products. This is the sort of thing we should look to for our new industries. It has been said that for the future we cannot look extensively to the Government for money for the establishment of industries by which people may be kept in work. If private enterprise has to find the money, there must be some guiding hand over it. There must be some body which is prepared to give advice, and, where warranted, a small measure of financial assistance. If that is done, and the advice is taken, our industries will do much better than if they are allowed to go on in a haphazard way, controlled by individuals who start off without proper investigation and information, and with too little capital to enable them to succeed.

The Premier: That is the trouble.

Hon. P. Collier: Too many little industries have gone to the wall through lack of capital.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Government can be of tremendous assistance if they will give proper advice. I do not want attention to be paid to every hair-brained individual who comes along for money for one thing or another, but I have referred to two industries which are natural industries, and which, by judicious assistance, would help numbers of people to make a reasonably good living. I am informed that if £10,000 were put into the last industry I have referred to, it would permanently employ 100 men. We do not mind spending £10,000 in laying three or four miles of railway to a place where perhaps 50 individuals are engaged in production. In the industry to which I have referred, the production per head would be far greater than it would be in the case of 50 men, who were engaged on the land in some parts of the State. This would make a difference in our trade balance.

The Premier: We have often tried to assist these industries.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: We have not been so interested lately in these enterprises, because we have concentrated upon development by means of opening up the land with the aid of Government money.

Hon. P. Collier: Another reason is that the people themselves, until recently, have not realised the importance of buying local products. They are a bit slow still, but they are improving.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: That is so.

The Premier: Every time these industries have been started, it has been with too little capital, and those concerned could not establish stocks.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Apart from that, they did not have the proper advice regarding the industries in which they were interested. An ordinary individual, just because he happens to see crayfish and realises that they can be canned, cannot be expected to have the knowledge to undertake that industry. It would be much better if, at the outset, that individual had the benefit of the assistance that could be rendered by Government experts.

Mr. Sampson: Is there a sufficient supply of crayfish readily available?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I am not given to exaggeration, but there are millions upon millions of crayfish available. I understand that the Attorney General—

Hon. P. Collier: Was driven off an island by crayfish.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, that is what they say. This is no exotic industry. We have a natural advantage not possessed by people in any other part of the world, and we should make every endeavour successfully to exploit that advantage. I do not quarrel with what has been done by the Council of Industrial Development, but it should be a matter of Government policy that the council should take a more live interest in the establishment of industries in this State. In the Geraldton district there are the possibilities I have mentioned for the successful establishment of factories for the manufacture of tomato sauce and to can crayfish. If those two commodities were manufactured here, the effect upon our economic life would be tremendous. We would not have to import vast quantities of these lines, seeing that they could be successfully manufactured here. The Commonwealth Government think it is all right if they impose a duty of 2d. a lb. on these lines. Having done so, they consider that people should be able to establish the industries because of that margin of protection. That is not what is wanted. What is required is assistance, particularly financial

assistance, in the early stages, and expert advice, which will go far towards the successful establishment of industries. With regard to agricultural development, we know that we will not have the advantage of the immense loan expenditure that characterised our operations in past years. The difference between £5,000,000 and £1,000,000 is comparatively tremendous, and we know we will not have the advantage of the higher figure in the years to come. At the same time, we must continue to open up areas of land, and in the Geraldton district there is approximately half a million acres that can be successfully dealt with. The Minister for Lands, who was there four or five weeks ago, will appreciate the position. Experiments have been conducted there, and from new land that had not been fallowed, an average of about 18 bushels was obtained.

The Minister for Lands: Have you got the latest figures?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, I have them here. The statistics have been compiled on a careful, systematic basis, and the results are given from the whole of the blocks. From 18 plots of half an acre each, results of trials with various kinds of wheat are shown. Some of the wheats did not prove suitable, but even so, the lowest return shown was 16 bushels. Some returned an average of as high as 20 bushels, while the average over the lot was about 18 bushels.

The Minister for Lands: The grain was just combined-in.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes. Notwithstanding the depredations of rabbits and other pests that must have come from 40 miles or more to feed on the pastures new, which must have adversely affected the gross returns, the average production was very high. On the main crop of nine acres there was a yield of 18 bushels, and on the main crop of Merredin, which comprised 26 acres, there was an average of 20 bushels.

The Minister for Agriculture: You would not persuade others to combine-in because of that experiment?

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Perhaps not.

The Minister for Lands: It is a different class of soil.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Yes, it is a different proposition in the district to which I refer. I know the area well. It comprises friable, open soil that does not require heavy ploughing. There are practically 500,000 acres of that class of land within

40 miles of a railway, and closer than most other agricultural areas to a port. It is within 70 miles of Geraldton, so that there would not be the imposition of the 4d. freight rate on every bushel of wheat produced there. It will be seen that there is a big field there for development. I do not say that the Government should immediately construct a railway through the area, and proceed to throw open the land for selection at once. On the other hand, when there is a possibility of further land development in this State, before anything is done regarding railway construction elsewhere, the claims of this district should receive the serious consideration of the department. Probably that will be necessary within the next two or three years. We must go on with agricultural development, or else the State will go under. I believe there is a better field for development in the particular district I refer to than elsewhere in the State. The Victoria district has consistently, year after year, led in the average wheat production of this State. Generally it has been a bushel above the average of the State.

The Premier: The Southern Cross district beat you last year.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The Southern Cross district may do that in a particular year, but consistently for years past the Victoria district has maintained the highest average, and will continue to do so. We can afford to open up the land there, because successful experiments have already been carried out. Instead of opening up large areas elsewhere with a 9-inch rainfall, and precarious at that, we should give consideration to the undeveloped stretches of the Victoria district. In the Dartmoor area, 25 miles to the south, consistent average of from 18 to 24 bushels to the acre has been secured. The claims of that area should also receive serious consideration. Those parts will have to be opened up and developed before long. It must be realised that in these days we cannot afford to open up areas for wheat and wool growing alone. For the future farmers will not be successful if they depend entirely upon those two commodities. I am pleased that Western Australia has exported half a million dozen eggs this year.

Hon. P. Collier: And we have started the export of fat lambs.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: Both these sections of primary industry can be developed to a great extent. Then we can go in for pork and many other side lines, which will have to be developed appreciably.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course they must be.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: We cannot continue to rely upon one or two main lines. A few years ago there was hardly anything produced in many districts except wheat, but now that has to be changed.

The Premier: The farmers bought cows, but then got rid of them.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: In future farmers will have to combine with wheat and wool such side lines as poultry, eggs, fat lambs, dairying and so on. They must go in for all those things if their farms are to be self-contained and successfully conducted.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: If you do not improve your marketing organisation, you will not keep going long.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: The hon. member is doing good work along those lines, and he is bringing much enthusiasm to bear upon his task.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: With but little progress.

Hon. P. Collier: It is useless getting on with such production if we do not secure a market.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is so.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I can leave that phase to the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) who is enthusiastic in his missionary efforts both here and in the country districts, and rely upon him to see that everything possible is done regarding marketing.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: As soon as you touch vested interests, you do not make progress.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: That may be one of the difficulties.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: So long as men are allowed to exploit the farmers, they are encouraged to do so.

The Premier: You want to wipe them out.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: No, I want to give the farmers a chance.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I think we can leave that part of the business to the hon. member, because I know he will make a good job of it. It is pleasing to know that the farmers now appreciate the fact that

they cannot rely upon one commodity only, but must develop self-contained propositions. Moreover it is not sufficient to go in for wheat and some sheep only. In order successfully to develop agricultural operations throughout the State, the various side lines I have indicated will have to be given much more attention than in the past. Our experience in years gone by has been due to the one fault—we were too prosperous.

The Minister for Works: You are right there.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: In these days we must concentrate upon other lines as well. I am glad to note from the Estimates that the Government have been able to provide money for continuing the construction of the Geraldton harbour. I have already commented upon the Victoria district and its prospects, and if the industries I have pointed to are brought to fruition, it will mean an appreciably increased trade for the port of Geraldton. We have reached the stage of producing 10,000,000 bushels of wheat in the area adjacent to Geraldton, which is the natural port for that part of the State. There are large areas of country still to be developed and that will mean still further trade for the port. With more scientific farming and better conditions generally, those who have already taken up land will undoubtedly increase their average production. If prices remain reasonably high, in a comparatively few years we shall be exporting 20,000,000 bushels of wheat from Geraldton. In those circumstances, it is essential to continue the construction of harbour facilities there. The Premier and the Minister for Works are each favourably impressed with the necessity to continue that work, and I am glad that £30,000 or £40,000 is to be spent on the harbour this year. I hope it will be possible to do something towards dredging the harbour to a depth of 30 feet to enable the port facilities to cater adequately for overseas vessels. If we concentrate on the side lines I have mentioned, we shall have large consignments to ship overseas from Geraldton, and I hope that in due course boats will be able to load parcels of wheat there. That is a profitable method of handling the harvest. If the harbour were dredged to a sufficient depth, it would prove remunerative in the end.

The Premier: Dredging is costly work and does not mean much in wages.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I realise that position, but with the prospects ahead of the port, I am glad the Government have been able to find so much money to continue the important work of harbour construction at Geraldton. I wish once more to impress upon the Government the importance of establishing industries within the State, and of making the Council of Industrial Development a really live body. The council should collect statistics, ascertain what industries can be established locally, and what markets are available.

The Premier: We have always known about the fish and other industries that can be started, but the difficulty is to get people to embark upon those ventures.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: There is a possibility that, with a little judicious assistance at the outset, money would be available to establish some of these industries.

The Attorney General: Our experience of advancing money to establish industries has been most unfortunate in the past.

Hon. J. C. WILLCOCK: I know that has been so, and I do not suggest that the Government would be warranted in finding all the money necessary to establish industries. On the other hand, the expenditure of a comparatively small amount at the initial stage would be well repaid. If people are not prepared to sink their own money in establishing industries, then the State will not be warranted in assisting them. Unless the Government take control of an industry as a State trading concern, they will not be warranted in providing large sums of money for other people to squander. If people are prepared to provide £7,000 or £8,000, the interests of the State would not be jeopardised if £1,000 or so were advanced at the initial stage. The State would be well repaid and the industry would be put on the highroad to success.

HON. S. W. MUNSIE (Hannans) [5.45]: I cannot allow the Loan Estimates to go through without having a word to say in connection with the development of mining. For the last 18 months we have heard nothing but comments on the assistance that has been urgently required by and granted to the man on the land. I have no fault whatever to find with that, but my complaint is that if a request is made from a goldfields area for assistance for mining, we are told that because of the enhanced value of gold, the mining industry should be

in a position to look after itself. I am aware that the Government are hard pushed with regard to loan money, but they have a million and a half at their disposal this year, and of that total a paltry £20,000 has been made available to the mining industry. I wish to emphasise this fact, that at the present time it will well repay the State to grant a little more assistance in the way of facilities to the man who is game enough to go out and prospect for gold. There should be additional facilities to enable him to treat his ore. Complaints have been made because year after year the State batteries have shown a loss of between £6,000 and £8,000. Someone remarked the other night—I think it was the Leader of the Opposition—that he had often heard it said that indirectly the State batteries had proved of great benefit to the State. The loss that has been sustained by the Government in running the State batteries is admitted, but those batteries, more than anything else I know of have been of immense advantage in an indirect way to Western Australia. When we come to realise that the State batteries have produced over six million pounds worth of gold, we must also be prepared to admit that fully 90 per cent. of that gold would never have been recovered but for the money that was spent on those batteries. Every Government that has been in power has never hesitated to treat liberally the agricultural industry. The Loan Estimates have always provided a considerable sum of money for this industry, and at the present time, in the midst of the depression from which we are suffering, we find that actually £747,717 is to be provided. That is almost as much as the mining industry has received over a period of many years. We must bear in mind that for the past 30 years the mining industry in this State has distributed more than a million and a half in wages each year. I will undertake to say that directly it has paid much more in wages than has the agricultural industry, although I admit that if we take the individual who is settled on the land and include his wages, probably the man on the land in the last ten years has distributed as much in wages and salaries as has the mining industry. When we come to realise that the mining industry has produced £165,000,000 worth of gold and paid £29,000,000 in dividends, we can imagine the immense good that has been to the State. The industry has justified all the assistance that has been given to it by

Governments. This year, through lack of funds, the benefit that the industry has received during the past six or seven years in respect to the supply of cheap water, has been cut out. That will mean that the whole of the industry from Southern Cross eastwards will be compelled to pay the ordinary rate for water. This will involve the payment by the industry of about £27,000 or £28,000 since this has been approximately the value of the concession granted up to this year. The Government are taking away more from the mining industry in a direct way this year than the total amount they are making available in the Estimates by way of assistance. That is not right. The other evening when discussing another aspect of mining, the question was asked by two or three members as to whether the companies were repaying the loans that had been advanced by the Government. I admit that a good many advances that have been made from the Mines Development Vote have not been repaid, but where the advances have been made to companies they are being repaid. It is the advances to individuals that are not being repaid. But let us take one branch of agriculture that was established about nine years ago—I refer to group settlements—and see what the position is there in respect of the financial assistance that has been granted. There has been an enormous sum of money written off and the whole of the ratepayers of the State must continue to pay interest on that money. We have heard a good deal lately about the revival in the mining industry. The Minister for Mines when introducing his Estimates the other evening, had the task of making one of the most cheerful speeches delivered in this House during the past eighteen months. The industry is certainly going ahead by leaps and bounds, and capital is coming in from outside. But what do we find the Government doing? They are skimping the vote and treating the industry more scantily than any other. I protest against that, but whilst doing so I have no intention of decrying the agricultural industry. I agree with the member for Geraldton that if the State is to progress we must continue to help the agricultural industry and to settle people on the land, but while we are doing that we should not ignore another industry that has done so much for Western Australia. The agricultural industry has not done, nearly as much for

the State as has the mining industry, and yet we find that it is to receive over £700,000, whilst the mining industry is to get a paltry £20,000, in addition to which the mines will have to forfeit the concession of £27,000 that they had been receiving in respect of the water supply. Thus the Government will show a profit of £7,000 in that way. On top of all this, through stress of circumstances, the Minister is obliged to reduce the concessions that for many years past have been granted to prospectors. He is reducing the cartage subsidy, and is cutting out rebates on low-grade ore. With all that he is able to find only £20,000 to assist the industry generally. There never was a time in the history of the State when the Government should be only too glad to do everything possible to assist the mining industry. We are now receiving for all the gold that can be produced about £2 14s. an ounce over and above the actual value of gold in normal times.

The Minister for Lands: It is really a premium on the gold.

Hon. S. W. MUNSIE: Exactly. And in the face of that—of course we all know the Government are hard up for funds—they are not able to find more than a miserable £20,000 for the industry! I could emphasise the point made by the Leader of the Opposition the other night regarding the amount of money on the Estimates for drainage work. There are few instances that can be pointed to in Western Australia where money that has been expended on drainage has proved successful. The drainage works that the Government are engaged on at the present time cannot be successful by reason of the methods being adopted in the employment of men. There again they are spending five times as much as is being given to the mining industry. Counting men on wages, on tribute, and prospecting, there are at least 8,000 men engaged in the industry to-day, as against 4,500 men two years and a half ago. Employment on the goldfields is increasing, but one item shows a greater reduction than the total amount the Government are giving the industry during this financial year. On the subject of assistance to prospectors, many deputations have recently waited on the Minister for Mines. The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. M. F. Troy) has hardly ever risen here to speak

on mining without bringing that subject forward. These Loan Estimates, nevertheless, provide no assistance whatever to prospectors. The Government are assisting hundreds of persons engaged in other industries which have encountered hard times. Now, the man who goes out battling in the gold-bearing districts is meeting with just as hard times as any man established in industry. If sustenance is to be given to any section of our community, none of it is more deserving than are the prospectors. Yet these Loan Estimates do not provide them with a shilling. Presently we shall be asked to consider methods by which the Government can further assist the man on the land, who, I acknowledge, is entitled to all the aid that can be rendered him. However, a prospector might discover another Golden Mile. I am one of those who believe that Kalgoorlie is not the only Golden Mile in Western Australia. I hold that there is no other country in the world with the same area of auriferous country as Western Australia has. Yet less is being done here to assist mining to-day than has been done since Bayley discovered Coolgardie in 1892. In my opinion the Government should have made not less than £50,000 available for assistance to mining during the current financial year.

MR. McLARTY (Murray-Wellington) [6.5]: A considerable proportion of the drainage work now being done by the Government in the South-West is located in my electorate. It is work which has been advocated for many years by the most practical farmers in the district. The Leader of the Opposition need have no fear as to the results from the expenditure. The Harvey River division scheme alone will benefit 123,000 acres of country. I do not say that it is all good country, but it includes a large area of useful land. This scheme has always been recognised as the key to the drainage position in the district. Until it is tackled, there cannot be a comprehensive drainage system in that area. Numerous brooks and creeks run through the district, and the hills are close to the location of the scheme. The water comes down from the hills in large quantities and with a great rush, and has not a defined course. Once one gets west of the railway, the country is extremely flat, and the water spreads over miles of it, with-

out a chance to get away. Yet one finds places where farmers have been able to drain, to establish really good pastures, and to dairy successfully. Years ago that country was not regarded as useful at all. In fact, people would not take it up. The west Coolup country is a fair sample of the lands affected. Until drainage was established there, the results were extremely poor. I remember that years ago people in my district used to say that it is country which they would not have as a gift. Yet to-day, owing principally to drainage, but thanks also to the use of super and the establishment of clovers, some of the most prosperous dairy farms in the district are to be found in the neighbourhood of Coolup. That fact in itself suffices to prove that if only the water can be got away, the land is capable of profitable production. As regards the irrigation schemes in hand, in the Harvey and Waroona areas it was imperative that something should be done. Both districts were suffering from annual water shortages, and the position was becoming more acute. The crops, particularly green fodder crops and potatoes, suffered heavy losses. It has been estimated that in one season alone the farmers there suffered losses totalling £10,000 by reason of shortage of water. The same thing applies, though to a lesser extent, in the Hamel and Waroona areas. As pointed out by the Minister for Works, the extended irrigation schemes have been responsible for the establishment of condensed milk factories. One factory is in full swing at Harvey, and Nestle's are clearing land at Waroona to erect a building, estimated to cost £30,000. I feel quite sure that if the two additional schemes had not been proceeded with, there would have been little chance of the establishment of those factories. Further, it is said that in the Drakesbrook district a bacon factory is likely to be started at an early date. Reverting to the drainage question, this country is entirely different from the Herdsman's Lake country or the Peel Estate swamps. It is all useful country, stiff clay country, the most suitable we have for subterranean clover. Moreover it is proven country. Once the water is taken off, the results will, I am convinced, be highly beneficial.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM (Kalgoorlie) [6.11]: These loan proposals, totalling £1,460,000, provide for an expenditure of

£410,000 on irrigation, joined with drainage, in the Collie River district. I am rather concerned, not so much as regards the irrigation, but as regards cost and maintenance of the drainage. Before the Minister is empowered to construct a drainage scheme, upon which the people concerned will have to pay rates, he must get the consent of the landholders. What is the position here? I understand that in the district affected the land is under water for some months in the year. That will prove an advantage as regards preventing mineralisation of the soil, but it also means that an almost perfect system of drainage will be required so that the settlers may carry out the policy of summer production. Unless the Government are prepared to construct and classify the drains as a national work, the people of the district will be called upon for all time to bear the cost of maintenance. Failing that, the Government must first consult the people whom they propose to rate. The scheme appears to me to be a combination of irrigation and drainage. Apparently the Government are content to classify the drains as national works.

The Minister for Works: There is a drainage rate as well as an irrigation rate.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM: The Minister for Works is fully aware that he cannot undertake a drainage work without complying with a certain section of the Act. Perhaps the Minister can give me an assurance that the people concerned have authorised the work.

The Minister for Works: Quite correct.

HON. J. CUNNINGHAM: That being so, the progress of the work will be plain sailing so far as the Minister is concerned. As I have said, this portion of Western Australia is subject to flooding during the winter months. Other areas of the Commonwealth, and portions of the United States, in which there is no flooding, are subject to the disability that the alkali comes to the surface as the result of the application of water year after year for want of a drainage system. I have no fear as regards mineralisation of our South-Western lands, more especially in the area under discussion. On this work the Government propose to expend £410,000. Is there a need to construct irrigation works here with a view to carrying on summer production of butter and milk? The proposal has arisen out of the Government's policy in connection with sustenance payments to the un-

employed, their policy of finding employment for the workless. The Government have two objects in view. The first is to absorb the unemployed by sustenance relief works. Secondly, the Government desire to expend money so as to bring about directly beneficial results to the State by the opening up of further lands for summer production of butter and milk. I desire to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that the Government are not obtaining the best possible results by the manner in which they expend money in wages or on piece work rates in connection with the system of relief works.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Before tea I was referring to the methods adopted by the Government in connection with relief works such as the Harvey irrigation scheme. To my thinking the method of employment and the rates prescribed in payment are altogether on a wrong basis. It would be far better if the Government were to arrange to pay the prescribed rate of wage, even if only for a month or six weeks, rather than the reduced rate provided in the relief scale. That would enable the workers to secure a certain sum of money, and to make payments to those they have left behind in the metropolitan area. To-day those men are called upon to keep two homes on a sustenance rate of wage that is absolutely inadequate for the purpose. I know there is a great deal of discontent amongst those engaged on the relief works, and I ask the Minister to review the whole position in reference to the methods adopted and the scale of payments made for that class of work. If he did that, I think he could evolve other methods whereby greater satisfaction would be given to the workers employed. Attention was drawn by the Leader of the Opposition to the small amount, £20,000, provided in the Estimates for the mining industry for the whole year. Of that sum only £15,000 will be made available for the purpose of mining development and financial assistance to prospectors. It is utterly impossible to provide out of that sum the necessary financial assistance to prospectors. To-day the goldfields business people are backing the prospector, and have been doing it for years past. But there are so many men out prospecting and receiving

assistance from them that the burden has become too great for the business people to carry. If it is the desire of the Government to further the mining industry, they could with advantage make additional money available. Not only that, but the sums paid to individual prospectors should be increased. Men cannot all the time prospect along the railway lines; it is necessary to get away into the bush. The country adjacent to the railways has been travelled over for years, as have also the lands adjacent to small mining towns, which may be said to have been thoroughly prospected. So it is realised by the prospectors that to open up new country it is necessary to get away from the towns and the railway lines. For that purpose £1 per week is little enough to pay a prospector to enable him to live. It is almost useless for the Minister for Mines to make additional crushing facilities available to prospectors unless the prospectors have financial assistance by way of sustenance payments. Recently the Minister announced that he had provided new plant in certain gold-mining centres, and had also reconditioned old plant. That was very good work on his part, but unless those engaged in prospecting are able to get money to pay for the necessities of life, very little prospecting can be done. The Government should look into this side of the question: whereas they are spending hundreds of thousands of pounds on relief work in the metropolitan area, they propose to spend only £15,000 on actual mining development work and on assistance to the mining industry. As the member for Hannans (Hon. S. W. Munsie) pointed out, mining in the past has done a lot of good for Western Australia and is doing an enormous amount of good to-day. It is the hope, not only of those representing gold-mining constituencies, but of all members, that the gold-mining industry should get the necessary assistance, which it cannot get out of £15,000, as proposed in the Estimates. Recently the Minister saw fit to suspend the regulations covering rebates and free crushings, and in addition he reduced the amount allowed to enable prospectors to cart to the batteries. I understood the Minister, when making those remarks, to say that gold is of such high value to-day that the prospector is in a very much better position than he was when those regulations were made. I am

not too sure of that. In the first place the prospector has to go out and find a proposition. Then he has not always a reliable test, not even the higher assay; it is necessary in most instances to have a sample crushing put through. And the prospector may not secure the advantage of the high price of gold. For he has to put in months securing the ore to put through a trial parcel. As I say, he has to sacrifice months of his time, and then very often does not secure sufficient gold even to pay the small charges made by the public batteries, and his share of the cartage charges. So, whereas leaseholders established on their leases may get a direct advantage as the result of the present price of gold, the prospector is in a totally different position. I should like the Minister to review his past actions in reducing the sum allowed for cartage and suspending the regulations covering rebates and free crushing. I know the Minister is sympathetic towards the industry, and we all know he is hard pushed for cash; but if we are to preserve the mining industry, those regulations should not be suspended for any length of time. I am confident the Minister, if he reviews the position, will be able to find a little money with which to give further encouragement to the prospector, and so enable him to follow his calling in the hope of opening up new mines for the State. I do not propose to say anything further, other than to touch upon the small amount provided in these Estimates for the renewal of sections of the goldfields water supply main. For years past the 30in. main has been very much neglected. It is now in a state of rotten disrepair. In years gone by money was withheld which should have been spent on replacing some of the pipes and reconditioning others that were lifted from the main, so that they might be improved to such an extent that they could be used again. When I was at the department I made every effort to secure additional money to lift those rotten sections of the main with a view to giving security, not only to the goldfields people, but also to those agricultural settlers dependent entirely for water on the goldfields scheme. There is going to be a difficult time unless money can be secured for the purpose of making necessary renewals and reconditioning old pipes. Under recent methods adopted by the departmental officers, pipes when lifted can be reconditioned and placed in such a state of re-

pair that they have a new lease of life and last up to 12 to 15 years longer. In view of the present rotten state of the main, it is necessary that the Government and the House should render assistance to place that main in a state of proper repair. I notice there is very little money to be made available in agricultural areas for water supplies. I hope the Minister is not altogether dropping the question of providing such supplies in agricultural areas. Although we are experiencing a depression in wool and wheat production to-day, it is not going to last for ever, and unless the Minister is prepared to do his share of the work from year to year, the time will come when there will be such an enormous demand for water supplies in agricultural areas that the Government will find it very difficult indeed to provide the money necessary to carry out those works.

MR. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [7.42]: I am heartily in accord with the remarks that have fallen from the Leader of the Opposition and other goldfields members. The prospector is a good, long-odds chance that we can well afford to back. It may be said it savours of speculation to assist these men to go out on the chance of finding a mine or a reef. But at present we are giving assistance to a great many young men who, although they themselves may know nothing about prospecting, yet could be split up into parties of three or four with an old prospector to lead each party, and be sent out in an endeavour to find new gold mines, and try their luck generally. Members who have lived on the goldfields know how easy it is sometimes to pass gold. Some 40 years ago, when I was living at Roebourne, there was a pool in a little creek where for two years or more my friends and I camped nearly every Saturday when out kangaroo shooting. Nevertheless gold was not found there till a Chinaman's cart happened to be passing the creek. The Chinaman gave his horse a drink in the creek and, as the cart swung round, the wheel turned up a 48-oz. nugget. Within a few months thousands of ounces were found, and I myself specked some gold lying under spinifex bushes. I do not know how many thousands of people must have passed that spot. Three or four months ago an old prospector arrived at Carnarvon. He had been out sandalwooding and was in a bad state of health. He told us that in the

Kennedy Ranges he had found a reef, and be asked for three month's sustenance, in order to test the find. I tried to get the sustenance for him. He waited at the Gascoyne Junction but the sustenance could not be obtained. Meanwhile the poor old man fell ill. The reef he spoke of may be there, and for the sake of three months' grubstakes we might have given him a chance to prove his words. I have known many other instances. I remember reading a letter in this House some years ago from a wool broker at Home, who sent one of the pastoralists, whose station touches the Kennedy Range, a few pieces of stone that had been found with other pieces embedded in the fleeces sent for sale. Several of those pieces of stone showed gold plainly. There must be gold for that sort of thing to happen. We should do our utmost, especially at the present time, to find new gold mines. Hundreds of thousands of pounds have been spent on building up the wool industry, but unfortunately the price of wool is down and wool-growers are in distress. Let us remember, too, what has happened to the wheat industry. For gold, however, there is always a market. The only fluctuations that take place, as the members for Hannans said, are in an upward way. I agree with him that one lucky prospector would mean more to Western Australia than would all the group settlements put together, that is, for the immediate present. I fully believe that the group settlements will prove to be of great benefit to the State, but we want something immediately, and we should do all we can to produce more gold. As the member for Kalgoorlie said, it is hard to get away from the railways or from the beaten track. I remind the Government that there are thousands of camels in the North-West to be purchased for almost nothing. I have heard of splendid camels that at one time cost £60 now being purchased for £5. Suppose the Government, in addition to giving grubstakes, arranged for parties of three or four able-bodied young men to go out with an experienced prospector to lead them, and gave each party a couple of camels, when the rains commence and the weather is cooler, the State could be honey-combed in the search for more gold. I have every faith in this State. In my district we have a field called Bangemall. I am afraid the name has been responsible for its backwardness, but there is any amount of stone

that it would pay to crush if we could only get a battery. Most of the upper Gascoyne country is auriferous country, which I feel certain would pay to prospect. With the members who have spoken, I hope that the Government will see their way clear to make more money available to legitimate prospecting parties led by experienced men. They could make it a condition that the younger men at present on the dole went out with experienced men, and then the expense to the Government would not be very great. Many of the fine young lads now out of work could be taken into the auriferous country where they might be able to do some good for themselves and for the State.

MR. RAPHAEL (Victoria Park) [7.50]: It has been said that fools dash in where angels fear to tread. That is applicable to members of the Government. The Minister for Railways is no doubt backing up the Premier in his irrigation scheme in the Harvey area. I imagined that when the Loan Estimates were introduced the Premier would have indicated that he had had enough of his different schemes, such as group settlement, and would have been satisfied with the losses already incurred, and would have been prepared to utilise some of the money made available by the Federal Government to start necessary works in the metropolitan area. It should not be necessary to mention again that the Country Party members seem to put it over the Nationalist members every time. Still, we can only admire the country representatives for their astuteness. The Minister for Railways has told us on several occasions that when the State returns to prosperity—and judging by the markets for our produce we are rapidly returning to that state—the electricity supply will not be sufficient to meet the demand from industries. The Minister knows the position, and yet he has made no attempt to justify the inadequate provision on the Estimates. No substantial provision is made on the Estimates to ensure that the necessary current will be available to carry on industry. Another matter on which the Minister might have touched was the toll of traffic being taken by the taxis. The Government have been content to sit back and allow the taxis to take control of the whole of the traffic. The Government's attitude appears to be that if the taxis like to run, the Government are prepared to refrain from running the trams. Then they go fur-

ther and reduce the size of trains and also cut out a number of trains, not bothering about the people's money invested in those facilities.

The Minister for Works: Where did you get that story?

Mr. RAPHAEL: It is no story to those who are able to think clearly. The Government have lost money in every direction. It would have been more to their credit had they reduced railway and tramway fares and offered genuine opposition to the different combines that are operating against the State facilities. The other day I read that the Aberdeen Municipal Council's tramway system was suffering loss owing to the competition of buses. It took a considerable time for them to realise that there was only one way to meet the competition, and that was by substantially reducing the fares charged on the trams. A substantial reduction was made, and within a brief period the tramways had defeated the buses and were able to show a profit. If the Government had reduced rail and tram fares, they would have obviated the necessity for discharging many employees who have given good service to the State. I think I have previously mentioned in this Chamber that on the occasion of a carnival at the W.A.C.A. ground, only three trams were provided to carry away 400 or 500 people, though taxis were present in strong force. When the Minister allows his officers to sit down and be guilty of that sort of thing, it is time an investigation was made. I hope the Minister will allow a few of my remarks to sink into his mind, though I am afraid they will take some driving in. At least he should make some attempt to combat the competition of the taxis. If the Minister had done his work as I expected him to do it, he would have made an attempt to retain the traffic between Fremantle and Perth. In Victoria Park the motor menace is not so pronounced, but the buses are crowded and the trams are run half full. The Minister has plenty of rolling stock, and if he employed more men to run it, I am sure the Government would show a profit instead of a loss on those facilities. A matter on which I expected the support of the member for Canning (Mr. Wells) was my advocacy of a new causeway, but there is no amount on the Estimates for the work. We have been told that this is a time for undertaking none but reproductive works. If the works at Peel

Estate and elsewhere have been reproductive, I think expenditure on a new causeway would have been far more justified, because that work would probably have resulted in the saving of human life. I do not say that the Harvey scheme will prove a failure, but I do not think it will be a success.

Mr. McLarty: Do you know anything about it?

Mr. RAPHAEL: I am not an engineer, but I know what rotten schemes the Government have put in hand in the past, and we can only look for additional failures from them. Hardly one scheme has been successful. Why should we be so short of land in this State? The Government must consider themselves somewhat in the role of land liberators. They are liberating land from the water, although there are millions of acres of land that could be made available without the need for reclamation work.

The Minister for Lands: Do you want two acres?

Mr. RAPHAEL: It might be to the benefit of the country if the Minister took a block 6 feet by 3 feet. I am well aware of the mistakes made by the Minister in the departments of Lands and Health. I hope the Government will make some attempt to provide a new causeway. It is the most important artery leading to the city. The Minister for Lands passes over it every day, but he usually has his eyes closed, probably to avoid seeing any accident. When the Labour Party left office the City Council were providing £850 a year for the reclamation of land in connection with the new causeway, and I expected the Government to utilise that money, in conjunction with money provided by themselves towards the great scheme laid down by the ex-Engineer-in-Chief and fostered by the ex-Minister for Works. I do not say it was within the power of the Government to undertake the whole of the work, but I did hope that they would start the construction of a new causeway.

MR. PATRICK (Greenough) [8.0]: Like the member for Geraldton, I am pleased the Government have found sufficient funds with which to carry on the Geraldton harbour works. No work in this State is more justified than this one. I regret it is not possible to find money for

the development of the country north of Geraldton by means of a railway. If the harbour is to be made to pay, the country at the back of it must be opened up. Within 100 miles of Geraldton there is the finest land in this State awaiting railway communication. I refer to the land north of Yuna and east of Yuna and to the repurchased estates of Mendels and Wongoondy. Had not the Midland Railway Company been a private concern, no doubt the railway from Mingenew to Mullewa would have been built years ago. When the country north of Yuna was first brought under the notice of the Government, it was condemned by the present Director of Agriculture. He said the rainfall was not a real winter rainfall, and that the country was not suitable for wheat growing. Fortunately we had public spirited men in Geraldton who formed the Wandalong Syndicate. These people went out 30 miles to develop a large area of country and improve it, and have now taken an interest in the country further north, that to which the member for Geraldton referred. They carried out thorough experiments this year. The Government set aside 100 acres of cleared land well netted in with a rabbit-proof fence. Half of it was fallowed, and the other half was divided into plots and sown with two or three varieties of wheat. There were nine acres of experimental plots divided into half-acre lots, with check plots of Gluyas Early. The results were as follows:—Nabawa yielded 13 bushels 12 lbs. to the acre; Gluyas Early, 20 bushels 8 lbs.; Bencubbin, 20 bushels 18 lbs.; S.H.J., 17 bushels 26 lbs.; Gluyas Early, 19 bushels 32 lbs.; Merredin, 20 bushels 54 lbs.; Geeralying, 18 bushels 18 lbs.; Gluyas Early 18 bushels 12 lbs.; Noongaar, 18 bushels 12 lbs.; Nabawah, 16 bushels 40 lbs.; Gluyas Early, 18 bushels 36 lbs.; Bencubbin, 19 bushels 20 lbs.; S.H.J., 17 bushels 44 lbs.; Gluyas Early, 18 bushels 36 lbs.; Merredin, 19 bushels 16 lbs.; Geeralying, 18 bushels 12 lbs.; Gluyas Early, 17 bushels 50 lbs.; Noongaar, 19 bushels 56 lbs. The average over the whole of the half-acre experimental plots was 18 bushels 28 lbs. There was also a bulk crop of Noongaar on $7\frac{3}{4}$ acres, which gave an average yield of 18 bushels 20 lbs., and a bulk crop of Merredin on 26 acres which gave an average of 20 bushels to the acre. The whole of the

area averaged 19 bushels 20 lbs. The rainfall on the plots was 4.89 inches prior to seeding, and 4.99 inches after seeding. This could not have been called a wet year. The crop was seeded on the 17th, 18th, and 19th May with 45 lbs. of wheat to the acre and 90 lbs. of super. It was harvested on the 28th, 29th, 30th, and 31st October. This was probably where the Director of Agriculture was deceived in that this district is so much earlier than it is in any other part of the State. The land is of a very light nature, and retains the moisture well. There is also a belt of country east of Yuna which deserves railway communication. The beauty of it is that the whole of it is situated within 100 miles of the port. I do not think there is any other belt of country in the State which can so easily be served by a port if given railway communication. The country closer to Geraldton is eminently suitable for fat lamb raising and the development of dairying. There is a large area of light land suitable for lupin cultivation. On my own property I have proved that much of the land is suitable for early subterranean clover. A good many years ago a Russian Pole came to Northampton, and took up a block on the repurchased estate there with the intention of growing tobacco. He put in some very successful plots. His idea was not only to grow the product but to manufacture tobacco. When he found he had to put up a bond to the Commonwealth Customs of £10,000 before he could embark on the manufacture of tobacco, he threw up the whole thing and went to Sydney. I believe he is now in a fairly large way, manufacturing tobacco there.

The Minister for Railways: He would have to find the same security there.

Mr. PATRICK: Evidently he formed a company, and thus found the security. Tobacco is a similar class of plant to the tomato. In the Geraldton country, which is absolutely free from frost during the winter there is no doubt tobacco can be grown as a winter crop, whereas in other parts of the State it has to be grown as a summer crop. The climate is so mild that the plants develop in the winter whereas the summer is required in other parts before they will develop. I regret that loan funds are so limited in extent that the development of the fine tracts of country to which I have referred will have to be retarded. I hope it will be possible to develop this country

in the near future in the interests of the State.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [8.7]: I regret more money is not available for a number of necessary works. I refer particularly to the need for the extension of the electricity supply. There is particular need for this in all producing districts in the outer suburban areas. The need has been great in the Mundaring district for many years. Both the present and the previous Minister for Railways have given their attention to this matter, but unfortunately neither was able to do what was required, owing to lack of funds. The member for Geraldton when Minister for Railways received a big deputation at Mundaring, and I know he used his utmost endeavours to secure an extension of the service to that centre. The same can be said of the present Minister for Railways. To-day private enterprise has come into the field, although I realise that this is not altogether in the best interests of all concerned. I know it is cheaper to generate current in big quantities than to do so with a number of small plants. It was, however, felt there was no hope for this centre unless private enterprise stepped into the breach. It is gratifying to know that in the installation of this service the same phase of current has been adopted as is adopted at the Government power station. If at a later stage the Government are able to take over the scheme this can be done without going over all the work again. Everything that is used is of standard type and there would be no loss incurred in taking over the service. Since the Government were guaranteed against any loss consequent upon the extension of the service, it is to be regretted that the extension was not made. In South Australia current is delivered over a distance of 120 miles. It is economically unsound to have a number of small units operating within a few miles of each other. There is a separate unit at Northam, another at York and another at Toodyay and so on. Units are established in many areas at a distance not greater than 120 miles from the main generating station in Perth. I feel very keenly upon the matter. Whilst there has been plenty of current for the metropolitan area no provision has been made for primary producers in the outer suburban districts. Reference has been made to the im-

portance of egg production and to the great market that awaits exporters of eggs from this State. That is true, but without electric current it is impossible to irrigate at the time of year when green stuff is so badly needed. If power were provided water could be pumped to the crops at the critical time, which would make a tremendous difference to the poultry raisers. I should like to thank the ex-Minister and the present Minister for the efforts they have put forth. It was owing to lack of funds that neither could achieve success. I also wish to refer to the Parkerville water supply. The ex-Minister for Water Supplies did his utmost to provide this supply but he failed. I know he was very keen on the matter, but unfortunately the great need of the wheat districts for the time being prevented the reticulation of water to that growing centre. I hope it will yet be possible to carry out this work, for it would make a tremendous difference to that part of the country. The township of Parkerville is well served by a railway, and if water were provided there would be a great influx of population. The cost would not be very much. The late Mr. George approved of the work on one occasion, but difficulties arose and the pipes were never laid. Parkerville is at a lower level than Mount Helena, which is connected with the Mundaring water scheme, and the water would be provided by gravitation. I hope it will be possible to give consideration to this matter. Whilst the electric light, power and heat difficulty at Mundaring has been solved, there are many centres to which the extension of cables should be made. I hope serious consideration will be given to this by the Government. It is not economically sound to have a big scheme like the Government power station operating when those who need it most are served least by it. I again urge that consideration be given to these outer suburban areas and thereby make it possible for a living to be secured where at present it is exceedingly difficult.

HON. W. D. JOHNSON (Guildford-Midland) [8.16]: I have nothing to say regarding the Loan Estimates themselves. I concur in much that has been said already. On the other hand, I submit it would be an extraordinary procedure and quite a new departure, were the Estimates to be passed without the Minister for Works, who will

largely administer the funds voted, giving us some detailed information. The Estimates have been introduced in a casual way by the Treasurer, and I can understand that his knowledge of the details must be slight. Surely the Minister for Works, who is in charge of the activities covered, particularly those that were stressed by the Leader of the Opposition as requiring especial care, should give the Committee some detailed information regarding what the Government have done by way of investigation before we agree to the lump-sum votes. I can understand the Government getting their Estimates through on the lump-sum basis.

The Minister for Lands: What did you do when you were in office?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: Never in the history of this Chamber has the Minister for Works of the day failed to speak on the Loan Estimates and give detailed information regarding the works contemplated.

The Minister for Lands: I remember your doing it!

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: The Minister for Works should be prepared to give us information as to what investigations have been carried out. Particularly would I like to have some information regarding the irrigation and drainage works that are to be undertaken. Much activity is going on to-day in anticipation of the Estimates being agreed to. While those works are being proceeded with and others are contemplated, we have had no detailed information at all. I would like some reply by the Minister regarding what was done by way of investigation before the Estimates were arrived at, what estimates have been framed regarding the works to be undertaken, and other details. So far, we have no idea whether proper investigations have been made, estimates prepared of the work to be undertaken, and whether the various propositions have been inquired into carefully by the officers of the Public Works Department and the Water Supply and Sewerage Department.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [8.18]: Before the Minister replies, I would like to ask him whether he is in a position to say what is to be done regarding the Westana tramway route. Does he intend to operate that portion of the tramways, or does he intend to accept the offer of the bus company to

provide a service on receipt of a bonus? The people in that part of the metropolitan area are anxiously awaiting the Minister's pronouncement.

MR. HEGNEY (Middle Swan) [8.19]: I wish to bring under the notice of the Minister the possibilities of tobacco-growing in this State. About a mile at the back of Bayswater tobacco is being grown, and on Sunday afternoon last I had an opportunity of inspecting a three-acre plot. Excellent tobacco leaf is being produced. The settlers have to contend with the difficulties arising from the low-lying nature of the ground. Drainage is essential there. At present we import large quantities of tobacco leaf, tobacco and cigars from overseas and from the Eastern States. If we could successfully cultivate the tobacco plant in Western Australia, we would do much to stimulate a new industry within our borders. A visit to the Bayswater tobacco farm will repay Ministers and members generally. The plants have been in the soil for three weeks only, and it is surprising to note the height to which they have grown. Additional areas could be brought under cultivation if the drainage difficulty were overcome. There is no outlet for the water. It is lying alongside the road, and it is too big a problem for the road board to contend with. I mention the matter to the Minister so that possibly he may take some action in the immediate future. Perhaps he will see that an engineer reports on the drainage possibilities because, if something were done, it would go far towards promoting closer settlement on smaller allotments within close proximity to the market. If the tobacco industry could be established on a good basis, the effect would be seen in diminished imports from overseas and from the Eastern States. In addition, there are great possibilities ahead of the production of almonds and peanuts. I understand that one member of this Chamber represents a peanut farm, and perhaps I am one of the latest to advocate production along those lines. In addition, dairying, market gardening and piggeries could be established successfully on small holdings in the area I refer to. The paramount difficulty is associated with the drainage problem, and I trust the Minister will be able to take what action is required in the interests of closer settlement there.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. Lindsay—Mount Marshall) [8.24]: I was hopeful that members would allow the Estimates to go through and then deal with the various matters on the Items. As the member for Guildford-Midland (Hon. W. D. Johnson) has drawn specific attention to the point, I will do my best to give the information sought. The provision on the Estimates for harbour works relates to Fremantle and Geraldton only. Regarding the Fremantle harbour, one of the first problems I was confronted with arose out of a report from the Chief Engineer regarding the dangerous condition of the North Wharf. It is costing £11,000 a year for maintenance, and money has been made available on the Loan Estimates, in addition to the £11,000, to provide permanent improvements at the North Wharf. At the rate we are progressing it will take many years before the work is completed. The estimate for the alterations and improvements is £300,000. Money is also made available for the Geraldton harbour, and I agree with the remarks of the member for Geraldton (Hon. J. C. Willeoek). He knows that I am enthusiastic about the harbour scheme. Unfortunately we have so much to do, and so little money with which to do the work! Money has to be made available to complete the Geraldton harbour, for it is of little use in its present condition. When the harbour is completed it will be provided with three berths having a depth of 30 feet of water. At present two berths are available, with 25 feet of water. Money is being provided to complete the third berth, and dredging will be carried out to a depth of at least more than 25 feet. Several members have referred to the Goldfields Water Supply and have indicated that insufficient money has been made available on the Loan Estimates for the scheme. Again I draw their attention to the fact that there is so much to be done and so little money available. Last year 1,376,000,000 gallons of water were pumped from Mundaring reservoir, of which 773,000,000 gallons were sold. In transit 603,000,000 gallons disappeared. That is a very serious matter. Most of the water must have disappeared through leaks in the mains. It is estimated that by spending £50,000 on repairs, replacements, reconditioning old pipes and replacing them, we will save £5,000 a year in pump-

ing charges. It is also estimated that an expenditure of £5,000 on repairs to branch mains will mean a saving of £1,250 a year in pumping charges and maintenance. It will be seen, therefore, that the money I have indicated will be well spent. There is also a sum of, I think, £18,000 provided for excavating soil and lifting mains and replacing them on bolsters, where they are situated in salty country, the effects of which are detrimental to the life of the mains. A certain proportion of the loan funds is ear-marked to deal with sewerage and storm-water drainage in the metropolitan area. Members know that certain works are in progress to-day. These works include area 38/40 North Perth, area 17 East Fremantle, area 41 North Perth, area 18 East Fremantle, area 18 Nedlands, area 19 Wembley, and so on. The Leader of the Opposition and others referred to the erection of the pumping plant on the Crawley foreshore. I said then, and I repeat now, that I have given instructions that the erection of the sewerage pumping station there is not to be proceeded with. If the sewerage work in that part of the metropolitan area is to be gone on with in future, it can only be with the construction of the pumping station at that site. It will be recognised that Area No. 18 Nedlands applies to two districts. There is Nedlands on the river side of the Perth-Fremantle road, and Hollywood and Crawley on the other side. It is necessary in connection with the sewerage system that the drainage shall be to the lowest point, and it has to be re-pumped from the lowest point in order to make the ocean outfall. As the provision of the pumping station on the Crawley foreshore has been stopped, it means that the sewerage of Hollywood and Crawley cannot be proceeded with. Money has been provided for water supply works and the completion of the King's Park bore, for clearing the Canning reservoir basin extension, and for improvements generally. Hon. members will observe that I have placed certain maps on the wall for their information regarding the irrigation and drainage proposals. I have been asked: Why irrigate in country like the wet South-West? We must realise that in Western Australia we have a climate where the conditions for six months are very wet and for six months very dry. In the South-West we have too

much water during six months and too little during the remainder of the year. In order to get the best results from production there we must drain during the wet months and irrigate during the dry. One of our difficulties in connection with the dairying industry is to produce butter in the summer months. We cannot do that under present conditions without irrigation. There are certain difficulties in connection with many of the irrigation schemes and one of ours is that the settlers have not had the same experience as settlers have had in other countries. The only place where irrigation has so far been carried out is at Harvey, and the experiments there were originally carried out to assist the citrus industry. It has been within the last three or four years only that settlers have found out how to use the water for irrigation purposes. The result has been astounding, in this way, that in proposing to extend the Harvey irrigation area we have found that 95 per cent. of the settlers have signed the petition for the extension, whilst no one signed against it. True there has been certain opposition in some of the districts, but we have found, generally speaking, that the opposition has come from the big landlords, the men who do not want to alter their methods, but want to carry on as they are doing to-day. The settlers themselves will encounter many difficulties before they are properly educated to the methods of irrigating. We have now had the experience at Harvey, and I hope that the Agricultural Department will be able to give advice to those who require it. There has been started in that district a condensed milk factory and for the month of October—the factory itself has been in existence for only a few months—there were sent away 31 tons of condensed milk. It was of first quality. I inspected the factory and found that it was working two shifts to cope with the orders that it had received, and even then was unable to complete them. I wish to show what irrigation means as far as the Harvey area is concerned. I have have certain figures that were compiled by the Harvey Road Board early this year. They give the number of settlers and the production. The figures are educational and in the course of time we can say that many thousands of acres will be in the process of development. There are areas around Burekup, Waroona and Brunswick that contain

land that is just as good as that at Harvey, land that is fit for irrigation. Along the banks of the Harvey there is alluvial soil which requires a tremendous amount of water, but in Harvey itself there is clay soil, and from the conversations I have had with settlers, I am satisfied that the clay areas are much better for the growing of pastures than is the alluvial soil. Let me quote the progress that has been made at Koriyekup. There are 22 settlers there holding an area of 1,334 acres, an average of 60 acres per settler. There are 527 areas irrigated. The estimated capital value of the holdings per acre is £22. At Koriyekup East there are five settlers with 150 acres, an average of 30 acres per settler. The whole of the 150 acres have been irrigated and the estimated capital value of the land is £6,000. In Koriyekup itself there are 103 settlers who hold 2,547 acres, an average of 25 acres per settler. Those settlers have the total area irrigated and the estimated value of the holdings is £30 per acre. Yet just outside that area we find five settlers occupying 1,950 acres, the average capital value of which is £10 per acre. These figures show clearly that by irrigation there will be four times the number of people settled than is the case to-day. The figures also show that since irrigation has been carried on at Harvey the value of the land has increased from £20 to £40 per acre, while just outside that area the land is being sold at from £2 to £6 per acre. The people outside the irrigated area are so keen on having water provided that when the proposal was put up to them they practically unanimously agreed to accept it. The present scheme at Harvey cost £31,388. It is in operation now. The extension of it will cost £181,000. In addition, it will cost £27,000 to carry out drainage in that area. In all these schemes the settlers are not going to pay the full capital cost, interest, sinking fund and maintenance. Portion of it will be borne by the State. The member for Kalgoorlie the other evening mentioned that we had not carried out the law. I can assure the hon. member we have done so. Under the Irrigation Act the Government must produce plans and specifications which are to be made available at certain places in the district, and the fact must be published in the "Government Gazette." Then, if a majority of the settlers petition

against the scheme it cannot be proceeded with. There has been a little trouble in the Brunswick area, where certain of the bigger landlords have objected to the scheme and petitioned against it. Since then, however, other action has been taken and a majority of them have signed a petition in favour of the scheme. Those have now put their shoulder to the wheel in the hope of making the best use of the scheme. This letter will give an idea of the feeling in the district at the present time. It is addressed to the Minister for Works and is dated the 1st November last—

At a meeting of the Brunswick Farmers' Association held during the past week a motion was passed, "That we express our appreciation to the Minister for Public Works for deciding to go on with the Collie irrigation and drainage works, and that we also express our thanks to the Minister for the loan of officers to explain the scheme to the settlers and for the courteous and tactful way in which the officers have carried out their duties." As president of the association I have been requested to convey this resolution to you.

This letter is signed by the president of the Brunswick Farmers' Association. Hon. members will thus see that the opposition has been withdrawn, and I am satisfied that the settlers there now will do their utmost to make the scheme a success. In all these irrigation schemes it naturally follows that every acre cannot be irrigated. There are certain parts that contain too much clay, but we are only providing to irrigate one acre in every three. We have also to provide drainage for the whole of the area. The reason is that the rainfall at Harvey has averaged over a period of 34 years 40.31 inches. Hon. members might say, "Why irrigate when there is such a rainfall?" But in six months the rainfall was 35.18, and in the other six months the records showed 5.18 inches. It will thus be seen that we get too much rain in the winter and too little in the summer. It has been said that our climate is most peculiar, and I have taken some of the Gippsland figures for the purpose of comparison. In Maffra the fall was 11.87 inches in the six wet months, and 11.61 inches in the supposed six dry months. I have an extract from the annual report of the Victorian State Rivers and Water Supply Commission for the year 1929-30 re-

garding the Maffra-Sale irrigation district. It says—

The area of lands under irrigated culture in these districts has increased from 9,000 acres in the 1928-29 season to 14,151 acres in 1929-30, and this rate of progress is expected to continue. The development on closer settlement estates in the districts has greatly increased and many holdings should reach their full capacity in the coming year. Many inquiries are being received for irrigated holdings now that the benefit of irrigation has been so substantially proved. Surveys are being carried out in the Maffra-Sale district in compliance with strong requests for the inclusion of additional lands in the irrigation areas.

It is rather remarkable how the unimproved capital value of land under irrigation has increased in Victoria. At Baccus Marsh the capital value per acre is £44; at Maffra it is £28. Hon. members will see that the capital value of irrigated land there is very high. Let us compare our costs with those of Victoria. Take the Collie scheme, for instance. This is the basis of comparison—a holding comprising 60 acres, the rate with one free watering—20 acres at 10s. per acre—would amount to £10, and two additional waterings would be 2s. 6d. each, the total thus being £15. Next take a holding of 100 acres—33 acres at 10s. would come to £16 10s., and with an extra two waterings for 20 acres an additional £5, or £21 10s. At Baccus Marsh 60 acres at £45 an acre give a capital value of £2,700. The charges there amount to £40 10s. per annum. At Maffra 60 acres at 29 give a capital value of £1,740. The charges there are £19 7s. Thus we can compare £40 10s. at Baccus Marsh and £19 7s. at Maffra with £15, the charges in connection with the proposed Collie scheme. If we take the Victorian irrigation schemes of the same acreage as ours, we find that the charges at Baccus Marsh total £67 10s., at Maffra £32 5s., and at Collie £21 10s.

Mr. Angelo: For the same quantity of water?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. Under our scheme it is proposed to water one-third of the area only. The Collie scheme will take three years to complete. That is, it will take three years to complete the work, and for three years after that no matter how big a man's holding, he will be rated on only 33 acres. Subsequently he will be rated on only one-third of his holding. It is expected that then

the land will be subdivided into small holdings. To me it seems that 50 or 60 acres under irrigation is quite as much as any man requires. The other item on the plan shows the Harvey cut. Investigations have been made by the Public Works Department into this matter for the last 20 years. The department constantly receives requests for irrigation and drainage schemes in the South-West, particularly drainage. Every South-West conference for the last 20 years has requested drainage and irrigation works. It is impossible to drain that portion of the South-West adequately without the Harvey cut. I have a long report on the subject from the engineer in charge. The Harvey River, as it crosses the railway line, gradually fills up; and in flood time the water spreads over a huge area of land. That applies also to the irrigation channels from Waroona and Hamel right up to the coast. There is no outlet from Mandurah to Bunbury. The idea of the Harvey cut is to collect the waters on the low-lying ground and divert them into the sea about 13 miles from Harvey.

Hon. W. O. Johnson: Is there a natural fall into the sea?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes; I understand so. The drainage schemes mentioned to-night have all been schemes along the coast, in connection with which there has not been sufficient fall. That error is not being repeated. On all the plans I have seen, the fall is sufficient. The water is picked up a good distance from the sea. The Harvey cut is 12 or 13 miles away, and the water will readily drain into the sea. The idea is to open up a new estuary between Harvey and Mandurah, which will drain 123,000 acres. By this scheme, and other, small drainage schemes, it is expected that that area of land will be put to more profitable use. The engineer's report shows that he has thoroughly investigated the work, and I am perfectly satisfied that the result will be what is expected. The Harvey cut is to cost £220,000, equal to £2 per acre for the drainage of the area; but it is not a drainage scheme in the strict sense of the word. Certain other drains will have to be put through that area, and for those additional drains the settlers will probably be asked to pay. The Harvey cut, however, is looked upon as a national work: and the settlers will not be asked to

pay for it. So far the work on it has been done by single men; 1,100 were camped on the job at the time of the last report. Although it was expected that men who had not worked for a considerable time would not give the very best value when taking on such labour as this, the engineer in charge has convinced himself, and convinced me, that as the men harden up they do a fair day's work, and that the cost will not be more than it would be in ordinary times. The scheme is being utilised for the purpose of picking up single men. I have been criticised here regarding the cost of work done at Harvey and Waroona. According to the report of the engineer, the estimate for the Harvey work was 4s. 6d. per yard, and the actual cost of the job completed is 3s. 7d. per yard. That work was done by married men on part time. The Waroona estimate was 4s. 6d. per yard, and the cost when completed is estimated at 4s. 4d. per yard. All the reports I have received from the engineers regarding the married men show that they are working well and that the cost will not be much more than would be the case in normal times.

Vote put and passed.

Votes—Railways and Tramways, etc., £141,258; Harbours and Rivers, £66,100; Water Supply and Sewerage, £403,616; Development of Goldfields and Mineral Resources, £20,000; Development of Agriculture, £747,717; Roads and Bridges, Public Buildings, etc., £1,300—agreed to.

Resolutions reported and the report adopted.

BILL—LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—LOAN (No. 2) (£2,450,000).

Message.

Message from the Administrator received and read, recommending appropriation for the purposes of the Bill.

Standing Orders Suspension.

On motion by the Premier, so much of the Standing Orders were suspended to enable the Bill to pass through all its stages at this sitting.

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [8.56] in moving the second reading said: We have already authorised the expenditure covered by the Bill. The measure provides the authority under which the money can be raised. The amount for works is £1,200,000. The balance of £1,250,000 represents approximately the amount which the Loan Council have arranged to provide in order to meet our estimated deficit for the year. Until now a deficit has always been treated as an advance, and has not been included in the Loan Bill; but under the present method of issuing short-term Treasury bills to cover any revenue deficiency it is necessary that we should get authority, so that the Federal Government may issue the bills. It is, naturally, understood by hon. members that whether the amount to be raised is for works or to meet a deficit, it must be done through the Federal Treasurer, and he must have authority to issue securities on our behalf. For that reason we now, for the first time, ask for authority to raise a loan including not only the amount required for loan works but also the amount of the estimated deficit.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Premier in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 5—agreed to.

Schedule:

Mr. SLEEMAN: We have here an item "Pine planting—purchase of land, forests regeneration, £50,000." Does that mean that £50,000 is to be spent on the purchase of forest country?

The PREMIER: Oh, no. It does not mean the purchase of land. It provides for the planting and regeneration of forests. It sometimes happens that there is a small piece of land which it is desired to secure, but no considerable amount of money is ever spent on the re-purchase of forest land.

Schedule put and passed.

Preamble, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

MOTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK CLIENTS.

To inquire by Royal Commission.

MR. BARNARD (Sussex) [9.3]: I move:

That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the disabilities of the Agricultural Bank clients, particularly group settlers, in the South-West.

I do not in any way wish to embarrass the Government, nor to reflect unduly on the Agricultural Bank which is entrusted with the difficult problem of bringing the group settlements to a successful issue. But a great number of the bank's clients, particularly amongst the group settlers, are at present unable to pay their bank interest. My desire is, if possible, to find some reasonable way by which that disability can be overcome and the settlers enabled to pay their interest. I am not going to say the fault is entirely with the administration, nor will I deny that there are settlers who are themselves to blame. But not the whole of the blame rests with the settlers. Some of them are not in a position to pay, nor unless relief is given will they ever be in a position to pay. A Royal Commission composed of men who could analyse the situation and reveal its strength and its weakness would be of great value. Generally speaking, the group settlement scheme has been justified. Six or seven years ago we were producing practically no butter in Western Australia and the whole of our requirements were imported from the Eastern States. To-day we are able to export butter in competition with the best from the Eastern States. Nor was ours a specially picked sample, for it was taken from ordinary stock. It is preferred in England in competition with the best butter from the Eastern States and is sold at 3s. more per cwt. than is paid for Eastern States butter. And practically all our butter is being produced in the group settlement area. So, in consequence of the group settlements, the amount of money that in the past was sent to the Eastern States for butter will be saved to us and we shall be able to produce sufficient for

our own requirements and to export. No one can deny that this has been brought about by the group settlements. So although they have been roundly condemned, this latest development proves that the scheme generally is of great benefit to Western Australia. Also I notice in the newspaper that the cup presented by the P. & O. Steamship Company for the best parcel of butter sent from Western Australia to England was won by the Busselton factory, with the Bunbury factory in second place, and the Manjimup factory in the third place. I feel sure that members desire that this industry should be fostered so that it shall provide work for numbers of people in a very healthy occupation, one that will be of profit to them and to the country generally. We have had members complaining and moaning about group settlement. I am sure it is unnecessary for us to keep on bringing up the past and complaining about money that has been wasted and mistakes that have been made. In the evolution of that great scheme a lot of mistakes have been made, and millions of pounds have been practically wasted, some of it through ignorance and some through stupidity on the part of those entrusted with the scheme. The money has been spent in a way that renders it impossible ever to get a return from it, and all sorts of expenditure has been sanctioned that would never have entered the mind of any person spending his own money in developing the land. We had the spectacle of contract clearing, originally put forward as a wonderful idea, but which has done more than anything else to demoralise the group settlers. Implements thoroughly unsuited to the work were given to the settlers, and there is to-day and has been for many years thousands of pounds' worth of machinery lying idle down there. All that has been added to the cost of group settlement and of the method of clearing the big timber that was being taken out as unnecessary. As to the method of cultivation, I have seen incompetent foremen instructing men who had had practical experience and who knew more about it than did the foreman. Then, when the method proved a failure, the settlers were blamed. All these things have added to the cost of group settlement and to the capitalisation of each location, in consequence of which prices have been raised to a point at which it is absurd to expect men to pay interest and sinking fund.

Then, when it was too late, a board was appointed to revalue the locations and reduce them to a reasonable price. At that time probably the price arrived at was a reasonable one, for the price of butter fat was about 1s. 9d. a lb., pigs were fetching 1s. a lb., and potatoes were worth up to £17 10s. per ton. But now butter fat is down to 1s. 2d., pigs are down to 6d., and potatoes to about £5 10s. So all the production from group settlement has been reduced in value, notwithstanding which the interest on capitalisation is expected to be paid. In some cases it would have been impossible for the settlers to carry on even if their blocks had been given to them, for they had no stock, without which it was impossible for them to do very much. It is quite impracticable to build up a dairy herd in a year or two. It means a few years before one can have an established herd that will be profitable. Yet settlers with eight or ten cows are expected to pay interest, provide top-dressing for their farms, and maintain themselves and their families. Many of the settlers are in that position. In reply to a deputation from the R.S.L., the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank said that after a settler's holding was built up to the extent of 15 cows the onus was on the settler to meet his mortgage obligations. I agree that is absolutely the least number of cows with which a man can be expected to pay interest. Yet many of them with only eight or ten cows are expected to meet all their obligations. It is impossible for them to do so. Settlers often complain about their stock, and justly so. I have been amongst cattle all my life, and I have been ashamed of some of the cows issued to group settlers. And the prices of those cows have been exorbitant. For cows worth £6 or £7, the settlers have been asked to pay anything from £13 to £16. In new districts all sorts of diseases arise amongst the cattle. Frequently the settler will lose one or two cows, but is still credited with being a 10-cow man when really he has but eight. Yet he has to pay for them and keep struggling on. I quite agree that a man whose location has been valued at about £1,000 and is on a 20 to 25-cow basis, should be made to pay his interest; but I claim that it is obvious that a man whose location is more backward and who is operating on an 8 or 10-cow basis cannot be expected to pay. I hope that if a Royal Commission is appointed,

members of Parliament will not be chosen. During the early stages of group settlement a Royal Commission was appointed comprising for the most part members of Parliament. The people naturally came to the conclusion that the members of the Commission were somewhat biased, because they all came from the wheat areas, no member from the South-West having been appointed to that body. No doubt the Royal Commission thought their job had been done well and they made recommendations that they considered would have been of great assistance to the Government and the settlers had they been carried out. But no notice was taken of their recommendations. One of their findings would have meant the saving of a considerable sum of money because they recommended that group settlement should be suspended. Naturally had that recommendation been adopted, no more money would have been expended. There are many problems that the Commission could inquire into with advantage to the group settlers. They are struggling along and do not know from day to day whether they will be evicted, or be allowed to remain on their holdings. They are not content to carry out the work expected of them, because they are afraid they will be evicted any day. On Saturday last I was approached by one settler who had received notice for the second time that his property was being advertised for sale. There are numbers of group settlers who are in the same position. They have not sufficient stock to permit them to carry on nor are they in receipt of any work that will enable them to obtain money with which to pay their way. They have nothing to depend upon beyond the earnings from their 8 or 10 cows with which to pay their way and make a living. It is absolutely impossible for them to do it. If something is not done to assist them, and the Agricultural Bank puts the settlers who are not paying their interest off their holdings, it will mean that the countryside will be over-run with unemployed settlers, most of whom have large families. I am satisfied that a number of the settlers will make good if they can but get the opportunity. On the other hand, I agree that there are some group settlers who will never become dairy farmers if they are allowed to remain there for 20 years, and their holdings are given to them. Those people should not have been allowed to remain on their blocks. They

should have been put off years ago. But they are there, and something will have to be done to help them. Only by appointing a Royal Commission to investigate the whole position and ascertain what is best to be done to assist the settlers, shall we overcome the difficulty. I know very well some people think they should be fostered and spoon fed all the time they are on their blocks. I am aware that the Government are hard pushed to pay the interest on the money borrowed. Nevertheless it is absolutely impossible for people to pay their interest if they have not the wherewithal. They were given to understand when placed on their blocks that they would be in a position to make a living for themselves and their families, and to pay their interest charges. Until such time as they are in that position, it is unfair for the Agricultural Bank to evict them because they cannot pay their interest. I hope the motion will be agreed to.

MR. J. H. SMITH (Nelson) [9.21]: I support the motion and feel confident that the House will agree to the appointment of a Royal Commission to inquire into the disabilities of group settlers. Such a Commission will be warranted, and I hope no member will oppose the motion. The position today is more acute and more serious than most people realise. It makes one's heart bleed to see the dire distress and almost starvation that characterises the lives of some of the settlers in the South-West today. I have not prepared any figures, but I hope that any member who opposes the motion will deal with that phase. I have attended many meetings of settlers lately. One of the means by which they have been kept quiet on this subject has been the promise of the appointment of a Royal Commission. If such a Commission is to be appointed, I hope it will be an independent body comprising practical men. It is useless to appoint a whitewashing Commission; what is required is a Commission, the members of which shall be given power to act. We must lay down the conditions under which the settlers will have a chance to pay interest and live.

Hon. P. Collier: What do you mean by "power to act"?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The trouble is that Royal Commissions sit, take voluminous evidence, make recommendations, and then very little notice is taken of those recommendations. In this instance the position of

the group settlers is so acute that some notice will have to be taken of the Commission's findings.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, but, "power to act"! What does that mean? Will they have authority to decide financial matters without reference to the Government or to Parliament?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Their recommendations should be referred to Parliament.

Hon. P. Collier: But you distinctly said they should have power to act.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I was wrong in saying that. I shall not trace the history of the group settlement scheme from the inception, because hon. members know the position. When we brought the people to Western Australia, we boasted that we were placing on the land people who had not a shilling in their pockets. We practically promised them that they were there for life, that they would have security of tenure, and that if they worked they would have a home for themselves and their families and a living for the rest of their lives.

Mr. Sleeman: There are a lot of the settlers in the city now.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is so. It is more than ten years since the inception now, and the position has gone on just the same. I am sorry that the situation to-day is more chaotic than at any previous stage in the history of the scheme. Some of the cows purchased for the group settlers were not cows at all. At a meeting at Manjimup on Saturday, I heard something that I consider worth repeating. Mr. McLarty had told the meeting that some settlers, instead of paying their interest, had bought six-cylinder motor cars. One man interjected that he had a cow that had three blind teats and only one good one. He said: "I do not know about six-cylinder motor cars, but I have a one-cylinder cow." That complaint seemed to be rather general, because they talked about the unsuitable cattle that had been provided for them. What seems to be the burning problem concerns the eviction notices. Since the settlers were taken over by the Agricultural Bank after their holdings had been revalued—I believe the valuation was a fair one—the interest, taking into consideration their land, their stock loans and their implement loans, works out at about £98 per settler per annum. The Agricultural Bank trustees require their interest from the settlers they have taken over, and they have based their charges on

the 10-cow standard. Many of the settlers have not reached the 10 cow basis and, as one having a practical knowledge of the industry, I claim we cannot expect the settlers to pay their interest until they reach the 20-cow basis. During the period of arriving at the 10-cow basis, the settlers have endeavoured to build up their herds, but many of the dairy cows they have are merely heifers that will not reach full productivity until their third calving. Parliament should lay down a policy to govern the situation. We have millions of pounds involved in the group settlements and we should determine just what should constitute a living for a man on the land before we expect him to pay any interest. At present the interest represents £8 a month. That is what the Agricultural Bank require the settlers to pay out of their cream cheques. I have a list of between 40 and 60 settlers whose average cream cheque amounted to about £6 a month. Out of that they are supposed to pay £8 a month as interest! It cannot be done. If a man has six or eight in his family, we should allow him at least £100 for living expenses, to be taken off his holding. He should receive that allowance for living, clothing and so on, and £100 will not be very much. Then another £50 must be set aside for the purchase of fertilisers, concentrates, calf food and so on. If we do not make provision under that heading it will mean that next year the settler will not be able to feed 10 cows, let alone 20 cows. Then we must allow another £20 for medicine, horse shoeing and mending implements. That means that we should allow at least £180 before a settler should be expected to pay any interest charges whatever. On the present 10-cow basis a settler is earning from £80 to £100 off his block. It is useless to talk about side lines. When the original estimates were framed to establish what a group settler could earn, butter fat was bringing 'from 1s. 6d. to 1s. 9d. per lb. To-day butter fat is bringing from 1s. 1½d. to 1s. 3d. a lb. It was also expected that pigs would be a profitable side line. Those are the only two side lines I claim the settlers can go in for in the extreme South-West. In time they may go in for fat lambs 'and possibly Angora and Chinchilla rabbits. I believe both will thrive in the group settlement areas. At present all that the settlers can concentrate on and depend upon is cows and

pigs. Poultry is useful only to provide for the requirements of the home. When group settlement was established bacon pigs were bringing 9d. to 11d. per lb.; to-day baconers are bringing only 4½d. per lb. Consequently members will see what a big drop there has been in prices. The only sidelines that the settlers can produce are commodities required in the home. Men on those holdings should grow 65 to 70 per cent. of their living requirements. Many settlers are not doing that. If the Government agreed to a Royal Commission to inquire into all the disabilities and a standard were set for the group settlers, I do not say that eviction notices would not be necessary. But the people are crying out for a Royal Commission on account of the eviction notices. The settlers have been threatened for months, and that takes the heart out of the best of settlers. If a man is not paying his interest in full—and only 40 out of 1,700 are doing so—he receives an eviction notice, and that spoils his heart for his work. He says, "What is the use of continuing? I may be evicted. I can only see rocks ahead and no daylight. What is the good of protecting the bank's security when I am going to be evicted?" Amongst the settlers, there is talk of using force to prevent the bank from carrying out their intention of seizing goods, chattels and stock belonging to the bank. It is known that when the police and a foreman went to exercise the bank's authority two or three months ago, the other settlers banded around the holding and the authorities were defied. The Government are aware of that but have taken no notice of it. The settler concerned is still on his holding.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a bit of direct action, is it not?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, and the settlers are threatening to use force. They make no secret of the fact that they are prepared to resist eviction by force.

Hon. P. Collier: We cannot have this Bolshevism here.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am not preaching Bolshevism. Many men are preaching it, from political motives, I believe, and we are wondering where the Government stand. The settlers say there are not sufficient police to put the whole of the group settlers off their holdings.

Hon. P. Collier: One prominent man in the Nelson electorate who preached that was the local organiser of the P.P.A.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I believe there is some truth in that. However, that is the tone of the settlers. I have attended several meetings of the settlers, and they are prepared to resist, by force if necessary, any eviction.

Mr. Sleeman: I would not support a Government that did that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Should not a Royal Commission be appointed immediately? I should like to see an inquiry by a Commission of practical men outside of Parliamentarians—men who have been on the land and who understand the conditions—and the Government should undertake to give effect to the Commission's report. Otherwise, if effect is given to the eviction notices, I am afraid we shall not have a settler left in the South West. Either the Government should agree to the appointment of a Royal Commission or the Premier should instruct the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank to allow £180 for living expenses before collecting any interest.

The Premier: Some of the settlers have never tried to do anything.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I quite agree with that, and some of them will never try to do anything. Still, I venture the opinion that 80 or 90 per cent. of the group settlers are genuine, hard-working men. I should include the women also, because they work as well as the men, and work many hours a day. The 80 per cent. are desirous of staying on their holdings for their own sake and for the sake of their families. But how disheartening it is when eviction notices are issued! It is disheartening for men to continue when they know the impossibility of paying their interest. The Premier knows, and every member knows, the class of stock on the group settlements.

The Premier: A lot of it is very good stock.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, but has the Premier seen a lot of the heifers imported from New South Wales? After 10 years of group settlement the Government are establishing dairy herds at big expense against the people in the State who are building up dairy herds.

The Premier: It should have been done years ago.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: What is the use of doing this when our own people are building up herds? Generally speaking, the stock is of a very inferior quality.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I reiterate my statement.

The Premier: It is the best obtainable.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Perhaps so.

The Premier: Mr. McLarty told me that he saw those at Manjimup and they were a very fine lot of cows.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I saw the cows at the Manjimup show, but only the best were exhibited. Generally speaking, the cows are of very inferior quality. Our herds are going through the process of being built up.

Hon. P. Collier: Inferiority is not altogether confined to the stock, either.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I agree. In a few years time settlers will have a good class of stock, because of the quality of beasts provided. Another thing that is breaking the hearts of scores of good settlers is the sterility of cattle. There are settlers with 10 or 15 cows who are getting no increase. The department have tried to combat the disease, but it still continues.

The Premier: The position in that respect has much improved.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes. In some places sterility has effected 75 per cent. of the herd.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: At one place it was 75 per cent.

The Premier: The man you have in mind had only two cows.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, he had 10, I think. Before the Government can expect to receive interest, surely, for the sake of humanity, settlers must be given decent living accommodation.

The Premier: They have decent houses.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, and a decent climate, although it is very wet in winter. I do not know whether they have decent beds, but they have not decent clothes to dress in and they have not decent food to put in their mouths. Go to Northcliffe, one of the poorest centres, and the teachers will tell you that in winter time the children are under-nourished and under-clothed and not fit to learn their lessons.

The Premier: They are a fine healthy-looking lot of kids.

Mr. Coverley: Is not that the place where they established a school in a swamp?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes. When the people at Northcliffe told me they were receiving £8 a month—the people on the new groups—I told them they were particularly fortunate, because thousands of people in Australia were receiving much less than that and did not have a house to live in. The settlers with 10 cows have had all their contract work cut out and they are averaging only £4 or £5 a month, and on that families of eight and ten have to live. To do that is impossible and some inquiry should be held. I am desirous of making the settlers contented and keeping them on their holdings, and to do that a fair unbiassed inquiry by practical men is necessary in order that a standard might be laid down. On present prices, at least 20 cows are necessary if a man is to pay £8 a month interest and live. He has to produce at least £300 a year from his farm before he can pay interest and live decently. That is why I am advocating the appointment of a Royal Commission. I am not blaming any Government for the mistakes of the past. We have to overlook the mistakes and the losses made on group settlement. I believe that in years to come settlement will prove a blessing to Western Australia. Already we have been able to stop the leakage to the Eastern States for supplies of dairy produce.

Hon. P. Collier: How can those inferior cows be producing butter?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Leader of the Opposition knows that the cows on the groups are not up to standard.

Hon. P. Collier: But if they are so inferior, how can they be producing butter?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If a settler has 50 inferior cows they will produce a certain quantity of butter, whereas 25 good cows would produce the same quantity.

Mr. Patrick: What about the pastures?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Some pastures are very good, and I believe the settlers could carry more stock. It does not take any more pastures to feed a good cow than a bad one; in fact a good cow needs less. I do not wish to blame the administration. I do not wish to blame anybody at this stage. I wish to wipe out the past and forget the loss. Some of the present settlers will have to go because they are misfits. I believe some of them will never make good. But we should

put the scheme on a proper basis, weed out the unfit settlers, put suitable people in their places, and give them a chance to build up homes for the future.

Hon. P. Collier: That is what the bank authorities are aiming at doing now.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But when the bank authorities send out eviction notices by the dozen and by the hundred, the Leader of the Opposition will agree that they should follow up their threats by action or not send out notices at all. It is no use holding this over the heads of people who cannot pay their interest. I do not blame the bank. Mr. McLarty is one of the fairest-minded men in the State.

Hon. P. Collier: Why is he doing this unfair thing?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: He is endeavouring to collect his interest.

Hon. P. Collier: No, he is trying to do the fair thing.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: These settlers are under the Agricultural Bank, which is endeavouring to collect its interest. That is why Mr. McLarty is sending out eviction notices. There are families in the group settlements where the boys are aged up to 24 and 25 years. These young men have nothing to do, but are endeavouring to help their fathers on the farms. They receive on the average only £6 or £7 a month. Boys and girls are kept on the farms. They cannot get a day's work anywhere because they are settlers on the land.

Hon. P. Collier: Thousands of families to-day have to live on £6 or £7 a month, without having any land upon which they can produce half their food supplies, and where they have a house that is rent-free.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I agree that these people should grow 65 per cent. of their requirements, but some are not doing it. Out of the £6 or £7 a month, they are supposed to pay £8 a month in interest to the Agricultural Bank, otherwise they are served with eviction notices. The whole foundation of the scheme is wrong. So much a month should be allowed for the living expenses of a family, and this could be arrived at by the returns and through the inspectors. An allowance of at least £50 a year must be made for fertiliser and topdressing for the following year, otherwise the land will not feed a rabbit. No land in the South-West will respond without being fer-

tilised. In the Northcliffe settlement there is a set of conditions which does not prevail in any other group settlement. Some settlers there are from 35 to 40 miles from a railway, have to transport all their fertiliser that distance, and quite 25 per cent. is added to the cost of marketing their produce, compared with the cost of other settlements. Everything at present is in a state of chaos. The settlers are all discontented. They do not know whether to go on or to march to Perth in a body. I heard a lot of foolish talk down there about the settlers laying down their tools and bringing their wives and families to Perth as a protest against their condition. That is not a protest. I told them I felt confident that if they approached the Leader of the Opposition nicely he would help them to get a Royal Commission appointed. He has always been a fair man where justice is required.

Hon. P. Collier: Oh yes! You cannot put that over me.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I told them I thought the Premier would not hesitate to appoint a Royal Commission. When it is appointed I hope he will select practical men, who have a knowledge of dairying and pig-raising in the South-West. I hope, too, that Parliament will act upon their recommendations. The Premier thinks the settlers should go in for many more side lines. They cannot do this when they are 200 miles from their market. They have grown potatoes and all kinds of vegetables, but everybody else may be doing the same thing. They have sent hundreds of bags of cabbages to Perth and have had only a few stamps in return.

The Minister for Lands: I understand that vegetables are being sent from here to supply people at Manjimup.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Why condemn the settlement because some people are doing this?

Hon. P. Collier: Those are the fellows who are making all the noise.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No, the good men are making the noise also. Only 40 out of 1,780 of the settlers have paid their interest.

The Premier: That is not right.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Mr. McLarty told me that was the case two months ago. Some have paid some interest, and others have paid none at all. The man who has paid £2 or £3 a month in interest has been dubbed a fool.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the point.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: That is one of the reasons why I am advocating the appointment of a Royal Commission. The settler is considered a fool by the other fellows, and he considers himself one. I have told them they must pay as much as they can, whether it be only £1 or £2 a month, and that when the time comes they will receive more consideration. They replied, "Why should we pay if the other fellows do not?"

Hon. P. Collier: You are giving the whole show away.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am telling the truth. The man who is paying £2 or £3 is receiving eviction notices just as is the case with others who have not paid anything. Those who do not attempt to grow their own requirements are misfits and the sooner they are off their holdings the better. I am putting up a fight for the man who is attempting to do something, for the hundreds of good men in the district. The Premier knows they are anxious to make good, and are striving to do so, but they have no chance of paying their interest. For the waster and the man who will not work and does not try I have nothing to say. I would not ask that one of them should be put back on the land. If Mr. McLarty is permitted to make a living allowance to the settlers and to give them something for fertilisers, etc., I believe he will carry on the scheme fairly. This motion applies to all settlers, soldier settlers as well as other Agricultural Bank clients in the South-West.

Hon. P. Collier: It applies all over the country.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes. The motion that will be moved by the member for Beverley (Mr. J. I. Mann) deals with the same question as it arises in other parts of the State. The position is practically the same all over Western Australia.

The Minister for Lands: If these people do not pay their interest, who will pay it?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: How can they pay it when they are not getting enough to live upon? This is a Government scheme. It was not the case of a man getting a loan from the Agricultural Bank, losing his money, and having to go off his block. This scheme was brought under Government control, and has been controlled and managed by three Governments. The Minister has asked who will pay the interest. The settlers cannot pay until they reach the 20-cow

basis. If a cow could be depended upon to give a cash return of £15 a year, it would be looked upon as a fairly good animal.

The Premier: I suppose cows occasionally have a calf, which can be sold.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is said that 75 per cent. of the cows have not had calves. Half the calves may be bulls, and would not be worth more than £2 at a year old, and the heifers would be worth only £3 at that age. People have an erroneous idea of the value of these cows. The New South Wales stock, which comprises little runts which would not be worth more than £3 in the saleyard, have been put in to the settlers at £17, and cost the Government £19. Many of them are sterile, and have been sold. If an allowance was made for the progeny and everything else, the settlers would not get more than £350 gross from 20 cows. Then there would be the boys and girls of the family, who would be helping in the running of the farm, and they would have to be clothed and fed.

Mr. Patrick: You are sketching a gloomy position.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Yes, but a true one.

Hon. P. Collier: How did the early settlers live 70 years ago?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: They lived under different conditions. Many of them only had kangaroo to eat in those days. They had big runs, and fattened off their cattle and sold them. The Government have invested a lot of money in this scheme. If they want to get a recoup for some of it, and put the scheme on a basis that will be satisfactory not only to the settlers but to their children, they should agree to the appointment of this Royal Commission. In connection with the early settlement of Victoria, it was the children who came after who reaped the benefit.

Hon. P. Collier: There was no Government assistance in those days.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: No. Perhaps the fault in this case is that too much Government assistance has been given. They have, perhaps, been dependent too much upon the Government; and that support is cut away from them now. But the same conditions apply. The Government have to see those settlers through, and equip them thoroughly. As soon as the motion is carried—as I hope it will be—a basis must be laid down so that settlers who cannot make a success of their holdings shall go off them and other people, who can succeed, may follow in their footsteps.

MR. WANSBROUGH (Albany) [10.2]: I support the motion, with a view to assisting the genuine settler. According to my observation, there have been some misfits amongst the settlers, but also many good, genuine men. Should the motion be carried, I hope it will not be confined to group settlement. All South-Western settlers should receive consideration from the proposed Royal Commission. Undoubtedly the group settler is having a very bad time now, but so is the older settler. I do not wish to make any disparaging remarks concerning Agricultural Bank officials. The field inspectors, I believe, are anxious to assist the settlers to do their best; but they must act according to instructions which represent Government policy. The two previous speakers have not quoted figures indicating the position of the settlers, but some half dozen statements have been prepared by settlers in my district. I propose to quote those statements as showing that all is not well with the group settlers. I have here three statements originating from what is known as the aristocratic group settlement of Denmark. The three settlers in question are on the swamp settlement, and have been growing potatoes, and potatoes only. They have not been allowed to put down pastures or anything of that description. One of these settlers in 1929-30 had three cows. Of these one was re-possessed by the department for butchering. He had two Eastern States heifers. With all due respect to the Eastern States, I say that had the department supplied him with Coolgardie goats he would have been better off. Those Eastern States heifers could have been put in one's pocket. In this section of the group it is not possible to rear pigs, because of the cold and wet; and it is not possible to grow pasture because the land is under water for seven months of the year.

Mr. Patrick: It is a God-forsaken place, apparently!

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The land is all right, but the settlers are too far away from the market. These settlers have been growing potatoes to be sold at £2 10s. or £3 per ton.

The Premier: Potatoes have been £10 a ton for some time.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: But there are no potatoes in our district now.

Hon. P. Collier: Is there any possibility of making a success of that land?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Not in the circumstances.

Hon. P. Collier: Then the land had better be abandoned.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: The Premier, in reply to a letter from me, said that if these people were hopelessly involved he was not prepared to grant any further advances, but that if the Denmark storekeeper cared to finance them he could have the first lien on the crops. That amounts to handing the whole project over to private individuals.

The Premier: Those settlers could have made considerable money out of potatoes.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I shall quote their earnings and their costs.

The Premier: It is no use under-stating the thing.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I shall not do so. I shall quote—

The Premier: Those figures need considerable checking.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: This man's earnings in 1929-30 were £207 5s. 3d. from potatoes. His outgoings, required to produce that income, were £264 4s. 4d.

Hon. P. Collier: How were his outgoings made up?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: By seed potatoes, manure, bags, railage, cartage, certificates of seed and sealing, planting and digging, storekeeper's account and horse feed, totalling £264 4s. 4d. The potatoes had to be certified before he was allowed to plant them. This left the man to the bad, on the year's transactions, by £56 19s. 1d. Another settler for 1929-30 had an income of £218 19s. 11d. His expenses, required to produce that income, were £200 1s. 3d. Thus he had an income of £18 18s. 7d. to feed and clothe his family, and to pay interest. Naturally, he paid no interest. How could he? His family were five in number. He had three cows and four Eastern States heifers, two of which were not in stock. He had no pigs.

The Premier: You were down there with me when they asked for these cows.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: That is the funny part about it; the men were there for five years before they had any cows at all.

The Premier: As a matter of fact, they have beautiful hills on which to house their

cows and pigs, and to fatten them if they put in crops.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Yes, but every two months the cattle have to be removed lest they become "coasty." How can pigs be reared on the coast hills?

The Premier: Of course they can.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: On sand hills! How is one to produce the stuff to feed them if the land is under water for seven months of the year?

Mr. Brown: How about a drainage system down there?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: In this particular locality a drain was put in. At the top end it was 10 feet wide and 5 feet deep. At the bottom end it was 4 feet wide and 18 inches deep. The flow was too big for the drain. What is the good of a drain that is a mile wide at the top end and half a mile wide at the bottom? The water gathers volume as it flows. The third of these three settlers states his earnings as follows:—For 1928-29 his total income was £317; for 1929-30 it was £120; and for 1930-31 it was £38. This last was a wash-out year. His costs for 1928-29 were £219 12s.; for 1929-30 they were £301; and for 1930-31 they were £134 2s. 10d. These figures left for the three years a deficit of £257 14s. 10d. Yet this man is expected to pay his interest. Another settler is supposed to be on a 10-cow basis. Actually he has nothing of the sort. His earnings for the nine months December to August totalled £42 16s. 11d., and every cheque paid him by the butter factory suffered a deduction of 10 per cent. for Agricultural Bank interest.

The Minister for Agriculture: Does he grow any feed for his cows?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Yes, and he has to cut it by hand because the department will not supply him with a mower.

The Minister for Works: Does he want a man to drive the mower?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: No, he does not. He has one of the best holdings in the district, but his income for the nine months was only £42 16s. 11. There is the case of another man with a wife and seven children, four of whom are practically adults. He has been doing contract work and his total earnings from August 31st of last year to October of this year were £91 7s. 1d. He is supposed to pay interest and maintain his wife and family on that. He has 74 acres cleared and 63 under pasture, but he

has been supplied with only five cows, three of them Eastern States heifers which will never come into profit.

The Premier: Surely they are not all bad cows in your district.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Very few good ones come to my district.

The Premier: Of course the good ones all go to the other fellow's district. Yet the Busselton man says that all the good ones go to your district.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Here is another settler with a wife and family. His income from contract work and cream combined during the last 12 months was £75 8s. 6d. He has only five cows, three of which are Eastern States heifers. As his cream goes to the butter factory, 10 per cent. is deducted for bank interest.

The Minister for Agriculture: What was the amount of his cream cheque?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: For October and November of 1930 he had none at all, but for December it was 12s. 9d. and for January of this year £1 5s. 10d. For February it was £1 13s. 7d., and for March £1 4s. 3d.

The Minister for Works: How many cows has he?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Only two in milk. The others are classified as cows, but I would call them Coolgardie goats.

Mr. Sleeman: Is he a 10-cow man?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: He is supposed to be. In April of this year his cream cheque was 18s. 7d., in May it was 12s. 7d., in June it was 5s. 7d., in July it was 14s. 3d., and in August it was 11s. 8d.

The Minister for Works: How many cows did you say he had milking?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Only two; he is supposed to have five, but three of them are Eastern States heifers. Yet he is expected to pay his bank interest. As the settlers send their cream to the factory, the factory is authorised to deduct 10 per cent. for bank interest.

The Minister for Works: No wonder he sent very little cream there!

Mr. WANSBROUGH: How could he send any more, with only two cows? And this man has to send his cream 36 miles by road. I do not propose to go any further, but I hope the House will agree to the appointment of a Royal Commission, not for the sake of assisting the ne'er-do-well, but to assist the genuine settler. Of the 191 group settlers in the district, at least 75 per cent. are real triers. I may

say that only 32 of them are fully stocked to the 10-cow basis. No wonder the settlers are complaining and becoming uneasy. Unless something is done to relieve them of their anxiety, I am afraid the Denmark group settlers will leave in a body.

The Premier: Why not admit that at least one settler is doing well? Do you want to do harm to the whole district?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: I do not know of one settler down there who is doing well.

The Minister for Works: Our information was very different from that.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: Apart from the two or three settlers adjacent to Denmark, not one in the district is doing well.

Mr. McLarty: Do you suggest they ought to abandon their holdings?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: No, for I believe that if they are given a fair spin, they will come out on top. The greatest cause of the trouble in Denmark is the wasting disease amongst the stock. One settler during the last 12 months has lost 14 cows and 45 heifers to that disease. How can he be expected to go out and buy fresh cows every month? It is true that only during the last two years has the disease affected adult stock. I will say for that man that he went around the country spending his own money on the purchase of heifers.

The Minister for Works: There have been settlers in Denmark for many years, but we have never before heard of the wasting disease.

The Premier: Oh yes, we have.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: It has been in the district for 25 years, but it has now become acute. The department should find out what is wrong.

Mr. J. I. Mann: They are investigating now, are they not?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: That is true. They have been investigating for the past eight years.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, eight months.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: It has been going on ever since I have been in the House. In fairness to Denmark and to the group settlers I must say I believe that, given fair consideration, those men will pull through. Here I want to make an appeal to the Premier. We have in the district a man who has been a settler and has been through this wasting disease. He was an Agricultural Bank client, but was kicked out. For the

last four years he has been studying the disease, and as a result of the remedy he has prepared, cows that were treated three years ago are still well to-day. I can say for his remedy that cows which six weeks ago were unable to stand up have again gone back to profit and fat.

The Minister for Agriculture: He ought to be on a thousand a year, that man.

Mr. WANSBROUGH: It is up to the Government to send their experts to go into this matter with this individual. He is not asking for any elaborate price for his remedy. While he says he has the cure, he claims he does know the cause of the trouble. I have no doubt that he has the remedy, and it is up to the departmental officers to ascertain the cause. All the man asked for is a fair go and to be given a block in the neighbourhood.

The Premier: What about the cure first?

Mr. WANSBROUGH: It is worth £10,000 to the State if this man has the remedy for the disease. I do not ask the Government to give him £10,000, but by giving him a block, we can give him a start in life in a district where he can be of assistance to Western Australia.

On motion by Mr. McLarty, debate adjourned.

BILL—ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [10.21] in moving the second reading said: The Electric Lighting Act of 1892 empowers local authorities either to make their own current or to make contracts with those who, under the Act, are called undertakers, to make current for them and to reticulate it through their districts. The Act contains no power, however, for any local authority to enable an undertaker to pass through their district in order to supply electric current to another district. A company at Collie is manufacturing current on a large scale and is in a position to supply local authorities within an extended radius of that centre. Although many local authorities desire to permit the company to carry its lines through their respective areas, they have not the power to grant the license or way leave

necessary to enable that to be done. The Bill will give any local authority power, if it sees fit, and on such terms and conditions considered necessary, to allow the company or any other similar company, to carry current by means of poles and so on through their district to other districts.

Hon. P. Collier: I think that power, amongst others, was included in a Bill I introduced some years ago.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I think it was. Probably no member of the House will take exception to the principle embodied in the Bill. There may be details that have been overlooked, or mistakes in drafting, but I do not anticipate members will find exception to take to the principle itself. There is one phase respecting which hon. members may desire information, and that is regarding the license that any local authority can grant for way leave. It is provided that the license shall be for a period not exceeding 21 years, but it is also provided that with the consent of the Governor the license may be for a period not in excess of 50 years. That may seem a long period, but if a company is to extend its lines over considerable distances to supply the requirements of a local authority, a term of 21 years is rather short. It may take that length of time to get the capital back. As the position is entirely at the discretion of the local authority granting the license, the power seems to be quite safe, as it is subject to check by the Government of the day. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

BILL—COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. A. L. Davy—West Perth) [10.25] in moving the second reading said: The method of finance which companies frequently employ is the issuing of preference shares. That is to say, the share has a preferential right to profits made by a company paying dividends. Such preferential shares include quite a number of different types. There is the ordinary preferential share without any cumulative rights: there

is the cumulative preference share, and shares that are preferential but also have the right of participation in any surplus after the ordinary shareholders have got the same rate as the preference shares. Those represent three well-known divisions of preference shares. In these hard times, and particularly in view of legislation we have passed this session, it seems desirable—that opinion seemed to be held by a number of members if we can judge by the interjections from time to time—that some relief shall be granted to companies that pay preferential shareholders and which are in difficulties. With respect to cumulative preference shares, it may be that in these hard times the accumulation of indebtedness on preferential shares may debar ordinary shareholders from being paid any dividends for many years. That arises from the fact that not only have the preferential shareholders the first right to any allocation of dividends, but also arrears of non-payment have to be made up before the ordinary shareholders can participate in dividends. The result might well be that companies would have to go into liquidation because of the burden imposed upon them in that regard. The Bill proposes to give power to companies or shareholders of companies—

Mr. Patrick: Ordinary shareholders?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, all shareholders, to alter conditions attaching to any particular class of shares, preference shares, and so on.

Mr. Patrick: Would that apply to debenture shares?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They are not shares.

Hon. P. Collier: Have they not got the power to consent to that course now?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: There must be a unanimous consent.

Hon. P. Collier: Preference shareholders have surrendered their rights on many occasions.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: They can do so, but as the law stands to-day it could only be done by the unanimous consent of all the preference shareholders. The Bill will enable the shareholders of a company by special resolution which has to be carried by all the shareholders, to agree to the proposition. This has to be confirmed by each special group affected and the decision has to be subsequently confirmed by the

court, before which any particular person claiming to be affected, can protest.

Hon. P. Collier: Does that mean consent by groups unanimously or by a special majority?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is provided that there shall be a three-fourths majority. It is thought that would be sufficient. If a company has 20,000 first preference 8 per cent. shares held by 500 people, and three-quarters of those holding the share value in the company are prepared, in order to lengthen the life of the company—it would amount to a modification of the conditions—it would seem reasonable that they should be permitted to make the alteration. In order to provide against the possibility of a brutal majority inflicting hardship on a minority, we provide that the resolution must be confirmed by the court.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you mean by the Supreme Court?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. I think the proposition is as far as we can go. I consider that the measure should not go further, but I believe it is safe to go as far as I propose. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX ASSESSMENT ACT AMENDMENT (No. 3).

Second Reading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [10.31] in moving the second reading said: It will be remembered that when we were discussing the Land Tax and Income Tax Bill, a suggestion was made that payments might be spread. This Bill makes provision for the spreading of payments by arrangement with the Commissioner of Taxation, and the payments may be made month by month or periodically to suit the taxpayer. This will be a convenience to many people, particularly salary and wage earners, because it is rather a trial for them to have to pay their taxation in one lump sum. A monthly deduction would not hurt them so much. Apart from that consideration, hundreds of taxpayers have asked whether it would not be possible for them to meet their obligations in that

way. It will be seen from the Bill that they must apply to the Commissioner of Taxation and arrange terms.

Hon. P. Collier: Arrange with the Commissioner whether they pay monthly or quarterly?

The PREMIER: Yes, or periodically.

Hon. P. Collier: Any period would be by arrangement with the Commissioner?

The PREMIER: Yes. A business man might say he would like to pay quarterly. The arrangement will no doubt be of convenience to the taxpayers because they will have an opportunity to pay over the whole year instead of in one lump sum. The tax for last year may be spread over the rest of this year, instead of taxpayers having to pay in one sum. So long as we get the money month by month and have it in by the end of the financial year, it will be quite satisfactory to us. It is necessary that some taxpayers should be allowed to pay at periods other than monthly. That may be more convenient to traders. If an instalment is unpaid on the due date, there will be a penalty as usual. If any amount be overpaid, the excess will be refunded. If there be any underpayment, the balance will have to be made good by the taxpayer at the end of the year. Members realise that there are exemptions and deductions, and so far as they can be calculated before the monthly payments are decided upon, they will be calculated. We do not want anybody to pay more than he ought to pay. If there is a small balance either way, it will be adjusted. I direct members' attention to the provision authorising employers to deduct from wages, salaries, bonus or other money taxable under the Act for the payment of any amount due to the Commissioner. It is advisable to make that provision in this Bill. It does not mean that employers are to do so, but they may do it if an amount of tax be outstanding. The other provisions merely make it legal for an employer to deduct the tax at the request of the Commissioner. The amendment will be a convenience to the Treasury as well as to the taxpayer, because the money will be coming in steadily over the 12 months instead of being confined to the last few months of the financial year. The Treasury has to make its payments for salaries and interest month by month, and therefore it will be a convenience if we are able to collect the tax in the same manner. It will be quite satisfactory to me, as Treas-

urer, to get the money in this way, although we shall have to wait longer for some portion of it. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.36 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 18th November, 1931.

	PAGE
Hon. Sir Newton Moore, M.P.	5277
Question: Railways, station earnings	5277
Leave of absence	5277
Assent to Bill	5277
Motion: Railways capital account, to inquire by committee	5277
Papers: Irwin coal deposits	5284
Bills: Loan (No. 2), £2,450,000, 1R., 2R.	5283
Electoral Act Amendment, returned	5284
Dividend Duties Act Amendment, report, 3a.	5284
Stamp Act Amendment (No. 4), report, 3R.	5284
Industries Assistance Act Continuance, 2R.	5284
Electric Lighting Act Amendment, 1R.	5291
Forests Act Amendment, 1R.	5291
Appropriation (No. 2), 1R.	5291
Land Agents' Act Amendment, 2R.	5291
Land Act Amendment (No. 2), 2R.	5291
Swanbourne Reserve, 2R., Com. report	5295

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

HON. SIR NEWTON MOORE, M.P.

THE PRESIDENT: I wish to announce that I have invited to take a seat on the floor of this Chamber Major-General, the Hon. Sir Newton Moore, a member of the House of Commons, who was born in this State, was a former Premier of Western Australia, and who has rendered great service not only to Western Australia in Western Australia, but also in England.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, STATION EARNINGS.

HON. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Are the figures published in the "West Australian" of the 17th inst., relative to the earnings of several railway

stations in this State, correct? 2, If so, why is Geraldton station, with a revenue of £235,547, graded as 2nd class, and Bunbury, with a revenue of £190,129, graded as 1st class? 3, Was it through an oversight in this connection that the recent action was taken to promote and transfer the station-master from Geraldton to Bunbury?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, Revenue is a variable factor, and is only one of the considerations affecting the classification of stations. At the present time, owing to the decline in timber traffic the earnings of Bunbury have diminished considerably, but for the year 1928 preceding the date of the existing classification the respective earnings were: Bunbury, £279,911; Geraldton, £167,711. 3, No.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. A. Thomson, leave of absence granted to Hon. W. T. Glasheen (South-East) on the ground of ill-health.

ASSENT TO BILL.

Message from the Administrator received and read, notifying assent to the Land Tax and Income Tax Bill (No. 2).

MOTION—RAILWAYS' CAPITAL ACCOUNT.

To inquire by Committee.

HON. A. THOMSON (South-East) [4.35]: I move—

That, in the opinion of this House, a Committee should be appointed with the powers of an honorary Royal Commission—1, To inquire into and report upon the Western Australian Railways' Capital Account with a view to reducing the amount upon which the Commissioner of Railways is expected to find interest and running costs. 2, To make such recommendations to Parliament as the Committee or Commission may deem desirable to enable the railways to meet the competition of motor transport.

Members will agree with me that finance, particularly railway finance, is a matter of great importance, and that the Railway Department is one of the biggest spending departments of the State. In moving this motion I am giving the House an oppor-