

Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 25th November, 1910.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 10.30 a.m., and read prayers.

BILL—HEALTH.

Report, after recommittal, adopted.

BILL—PHARMACY AND POISONS ACT COMPILATION.

Second Reading.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. J. L. Nanson) in moving the second reading said: On the 3rd August of last year the Legislative Council passed a resolution affirming that the Pharmacy and Poisons Act and its amendments should be compiled in accordance with the Statutes Compilation Act, 1905. The Legislative Assembly concurred in that resolution and the compilation was prepared accordingly and laid on the Table during the present session. The Bill of which I now move the second reading consists of four clauses and appendices (A) and (B) and will be passed in the ordinary way. The appendices cannot be amended. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question—put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

BILL—MOUNT LAWLEY RESERVES.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. L. Nanson) in moving the second reading said: The reserves which form the subject of the Bill are situated on the

Inglewood Estate, Mt. Lawley, formerly the property of Mrs. Slade, now in New South Wales. The estate was surveyed into allotments and a plan was duly lodged at the Titles Offices. This plan showed two reserves, one between Second and Third avenues, and marked "recreation reserve," and the other between Fifth and Central Avenues, and marked "school reserve." Mrs. Slade disposed of the whole of her estate except these reserves, which continued vested in her, subject to the rights of the purchasers of the allotments to a continuance of the dedication of the reserves for the purposes mentioned. Subsequently Mrs. Slade surrendered the reserves to the Crown, and the object of the Bill is to enable the purposes of the reserves to be changed so that a public school may be built on the reserve between Second and Third Avenues, while the reserve between Central and Fifth Avenues, originally intended for school purposes, should be dedicated to recreation purposes. The reason for proposing the change is that the reserve originally intended for school purposes occupies a low-lying position, and is not regarded as suitable for a school, but is regarded as suitable for recreation. Unfortunately, in the past some of our State schools have been placed on low-lying land and have, in consequence, occasioned a good deal of trouble. Ultimately, we may assume, a school will be erected on this reserve, possibly in a short time.

Mr. Scaddan: It will depend on your length of office.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: Not necessarily. It is now proposed in the Bill that the land in question should be revested in the Crown. Accordingly, by Clause 2, the parcels of land are revested in the Crown; by Clause 3 the reserves are dedicated to their respective purposes, and by Clause 4 the permanency of the reserves is ensured in the interests of the purchasers of the allotments by making them Class A reserves. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. SWAN (North Perth): I do not propose to object to the second reading

of this Bill, but I think that it is a pity that the Minister for Education did not go a little further and tell the House what had been done in connection with this matter. Perhaps it would be just as well for me to tell the House something about it. Prior to the present Minister for Education taking office it had been decided to build a school at Inglewood.

The Minister for Education: Not decided.

Mr. SWAN: It had been so far decided that an amount placed on the Estimates last year for that purpose was passed by the House. The only difficulty in the way was the fact that the Government did not control all this particular reserve. The present Minister for Education did go so far as to secure control of this reserve ostensibly for the purpose of having the school erected, but after that was fixed up he politely informed me that the school was not to be gone on with, saying that schools were more urgently required in other parts of the State. He paid not the slightest regard to the fact that his predecessor had thrashed out the question as to whether or not this school was required, had decided that it was required, and had placed an amount on the Estimates. What I do not like about the whole matter is that the Minister informed me that the Works Department considered that the amount placed on the Estimates was insufficient for the building of a school. However, the people concerned in the matter considered the amount quite sufficient, and after being informed by the Minister that the Works Department regarded it as insufficient, I inquired at the Works Department and was informed that the officers there had never been consulted and had never expressed any opinion on the matter. There is no object in opposing the Bill, but the action of the present Minister for Education is so peculiar and so unjustifiable that I must take this opportunity of telling hon. members what was done. He seems to give not the slightest regard to what was done by his predecessor, although I have always understood

that a Minister considered himself in honour bound to carry out the wishes of his predecessor, and that if he did not do so he must have had very good reasons. Considering that the Works authorities told me that they had never been consulted in the matter, it is up to me to want to know something about it. It appears to me that the principal consideration with the present Minister is as to who represents the constituency in which the particular question arises. Possibly if somebody sitting behind the Minister had represented this locality, a school would have been gone on with. In any case, the action of the present Minister is very unsatisfactory, and to my mind very unmanly.

Mr. HOLMAN (Murchison): After what we have heard from the member for North Perth, I think we should have more information on the matter than we have had. The Minister, in introducing the second reading, merely mentioned casually about some reserves, but gave no information of any value and produced no plans showing the situation of these reserves; in fact, he did not give members an opportunity of knowing what was being dealt with. The member for the district is justified in making a complaint if he was unfairly treated. He stated that a promise was made that the school would be constructed, but that owing to the faulty method of the present Minister the building of the school had been prevented, although the matter had been decided by the House when the amount on the Estimates was agreed to. In all probability what the member for North Perth says is correct, that it all depends on who represents the district and what condition the Minister's liver is in when he deals with a matter. I do not know the situation of these reserves, and I certainly think it has been the custom in the past to place lithos. on the Table showing the position and what is proposed to be done. Surely members are entitled to know what are the positions of the reserves and whether or not it is necessary to effect the proposed changes. I might draw attention to the fact that on other occasions, when

matters like this have been dealt with, we have had lithos. showing the exact position of the reserves and a full account of the conditions which brought about the necessity for a change. Surely members are entitled to that information, if only out of courtesy. On all occasions when we have been vesting reserves or changing their purposes, it has always been the custom to place on the Table lithos. clearly defining the position, but the Minister to-day moved the second reading after about two or three minutes, and gave no information whatsoever. The member for the district referred back to a promise which a previous Minister had made, and showed that the whole affair had been thrown overboard owing to the fact that the Minister's liver had been wrong at the time. Has the Minister no plans showing the position so that we can refer to them and know precisely what is being done? I consider that it would be better, when matters like this are being dealt with, if it were made a practice to place lithos. on the Table so that members might be in a better position to understand the question under consideration.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. J. L. Nanson): In regard to what the member for Murchison has said, I desire to state that there are plans here and that I will be very happy to hand them over to the Committee. The remarks of the member for North Perth do not really deal with the subject matter of this Bill. If the measure were not passed the effect would be rather to delay than to expedite the erection of a school; but I fully recognise that on a matter of this kind the hon. member naturally takes the opportunity of giving publicity to the delay that has taken place in erecting this school. Perhaps it is just as well that I should deal with the matter now, as that I should wait till the Estimates are being considered. This school was applied for as far back as April, 1907, and at that time the Chief Compulsory Officer received instructions to visit the district and report as to the necessity or otherwise for the establishment of a school at Inglewood. He then reported that the re-

serve which had been set apart for a school was not suited for the purpose, the land being low-lying, and it is in order to secure a suitable piece of land that this Bill is now being introduced. The Chief Compulsory Officer also went into the question of the probable attendance and he reported that at that time there were 47 children of school age, that the district was one which should increase considerably in the future, and that there were a number of other schools within the children's reach, viz., a school at Norwood, $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles distant, a school at Maylands, $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant; and another at Highgate, also $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant. That was in 1907. The matter dragged on, and the local progress committee from time to time made representations. I find that in August, 1908, on further application being made, it was pointed out that the block of land was unsuitable, and that an endeavour would be made to obtain a change of the reserve.

Mr. Swan: It was also pointed out that that was the only difficulty in the way of getting a school built.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: That was not the only difficulty although it was certainly the initial difficulty. It was absolutely essential that the position of the school should be on a suitable site. We do not want to perpetuate the mistakes of the past and put schools on low-lying ground.

Mr. Swan: I was informed that that was the only difficulty.

THE MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It is not the only difficulty. We find that in about the middle of August last year the Chief Compulsory Officer again reported on this school, and he pointed out that the local conditions were apparently about the same as they were when he made his previous report in 1907. There had not been, he said, much increase in settlement, and later on he pointed out that there were 51 children of between the age of 4 and 14 years residing over a mile from either the Maylands, Norwood, or Highgate schools, and that between Walcott St. and First Avenue there were many others but they would be within distance of other schools. Then in May, 1909, the Inspector General of Schools reporting

to the Minister in regard to the application for that school, stated—

An investigation has just been held by the Chief Compulsory Officer, who reports that there are 51 children between 4 and 14 years who are now more than a mile from any of the existing State schools. None of them, however, live more than a mile and a half from a school, and there are good roads. While a new school would no doubt be a great convenience to them, it cannot be considered as an extremely urgent matter, many children in the country having considerably greater distances to walk. I recommend that they be informed that the matter will be considered when the new Estimates are being drawn up, but that it is impossible at present to make any definite promise.

The then Minister for Education (the present Premier) replied to that minute, stating—

If, as you state, the children of this district are all well served by schools within a maximum distance of a mile and a half, and if there are good roads, and the schools that they can attend are not overcrowded, I think it would be bad policy to even suggest that we would consider the building of another school when the Estimates are being framed. It appears to me that we shall require every pound that we can possibly raise for schools in outback and other districts, where, up to the present, no accommodation is provided.

That is the minute of my predecessor, whose decision I am accused by the hon. member of overruling.

Mr. Swan: It is strange I did not get that information. It is entirely different to the information given to me.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: the information has been on the file and was obtainable if the hon. member wished to obtain it. I was under the impression the hon. member had seen the file.

Mr. Swan: No; we have to take the word of Ministers.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It was possible for the hon. member to

move for the papers to be laid on the Table. Then the secretary of the Mount Lawley Progress Association was informed by the Inspector General—

I regret there is very little probability of our being able to build during the coming financial year. It seems probable that every pound available will be required for places where children have no possibility of attending school at present.

The matter was brought up again by the Progress Association, or by Mr. Ward, I am not sure; it does not appear on the file whether he represents the association; at any rate, he is a resident, and wrote asking that a school might be established, and he was informed to the same effect. Then there were petitions in favour of the school again, and the chief compulsory officer was again instructed to report in September of last year, and he pointed out that all the additional families that had come into the district were within a mile of an existing school, except two, and that these two families were not much over a mile away. He pointed out also that there were three families in a remote position in the bush, over 2½ miles from the school, who did not reside in the Inglewood district. Then, in reply to a petition, a letter was written to the member for the district, pointing out that all the families in the district were well served by schools within a maximum distance of 1½ miles, and that in view of the fact that it would be a somewhat difficult matter to find funds for providing additional facilities for those settled in remote districts where schools did not now exist, I could not see my way clear to recommend building in this suburb at present. That is a letter forwarded by myself to the hon. member. That letter was in accordance also with the departmental view of the position. I admit the hon. member has shown the utmost energy in the matter, and done everything possible for his constituents. After receiving this letter, he again approached me with a view to getting a school provided, and

I again informed him apparently to the same effect as I have previously done. Well, it appears that on the past year's Estimates a sum of £250 was provided for building this school, and the report of the Inspector General of Schools in regard to that amount was that to build a standard room for 50 children would cost £400. He further pointed out that this would probably be insufficient, as the number of children in the neighbourhood was over 50, but that it might be sufficient if we confined the admission of children to infants and to the first and second standards. He said also that in order to spend the money provided on the current Estimates it would be necessary to provide at least £150 on the new Estimates.

Mr. Swan: So you struck the lot off.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The sum of £250 was placed on the Estimates last year by an error. I suppose the amount had not been struck off the draft Estimates. These Estimates are controlled by the Works Department, and this particular item, I suppose, escaped observation when the draft Estimates were being overlooked by the education authorities. Otherwise, if we had decided to go on with the school, we should have provided a sufficient amount to build it; but, as will be seen from the extracts I have read, it was never believed by my predecessor, or by myself, that a sufficiently good case had been made out for a school. The position is, not that there are not sufficient children in the locality to attend a school, but that around the district there were three other schools all within an easy distance; and while I am ready to admit that if financial considerations did not enter into the question at all, if we had an abundance of funds with which to provide schools within an easy distance of children wherever they are required, there might be some reason for providing this additional facility, where we find that no child has to walk at the most more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles to a school, and that most of them are within a mile of an existing school, and few are more

than a mile and a quarter away, and we find that demands for schools in remote outback districts are exceedingly difficult to supply, then it is the duty of the Minister for Education as far as possible to husband his resources and see that the money at his command should be spent where it is most required.

Mr. Collier: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: There is absolutely no reason to connect the refusal of this school with any political considerations, and I think the hon. member must be quite convinced of that.

Mr. Swan: It is the only reason I can see for it.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The reason I have pointed out to the hon. member is that three other schools are serving the district within easy distance. That is the sole reason. Schools are built by the Education Department absolutely apart from political considerations. I have dealt with this matter at some length because, as it has been brought up by the hon. member, perhaps it is more convenient to deal with it now than at a later time when the Estimates are under consideration. I am glad to notice the hon. member does not wish to oppose the second reading of the Bill, because if the Bill were not passed it certainly would not assist in the erection of a school, and one hopes that ultimately the number of children may so increase in the district that there may be justification to build the school; but at the present time it is one of those matters that must wait and probably will have to wait whatever political party is in power. I do not suppose for a moment that any hon. member opposite, who may happen at a later stage to occupy the position of Minister for Education, will merely build the school to please a political supporter.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Taylor in the Chair; the Attorney General in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Reserves revested in His Majesty:

Mr. HOLMAN: The Attorney General might give the information previously asked for in regard to the need for more recreation facilities for this district. It was intended by the Bill to convert an area of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres, devoted to recreation, to school purposes, and to change an area of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres from school purposes to recreation purposes. An area of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres would be of very little use for recreation purposes, and there did not appear to be any other reserve for public recreation in Inglewood. An area of $1\frac{1}{4}$ acres might be sufficient for children to play in, but it would be no use for sports for adults, whereas on an area of $2\frac{1}{2}$ acres a game of football might be played, or picnics held. There would be a large population in the near future in this district, as the place was growing very rapidly, and some adequate means of recreation should be provided.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The position was that this land had been reserved by a private individual, and it was subdivided for building purposes, and the two reserves were made, one for recreation and the other for school purposes. Unfortunately the school reserve was on low-lying ground, and the recreation reserve was on high ground. If there had been any objection by the residents on the estate to the transfer, there would have been merit in the contention of the member for Murchison, but the progress association knew exactly what the Government were doing, and the member for the district also knew. The matter had been pending now for more than two years, and it was generally recognised by the people in the locality that the exchange would be beneficial. He was not prepared to give a promise that the Government would make the enlargement asked for, because it would involve a promise to buy land from private individuals before even the fact could be ascertained for what sum it would be possible to buy that land. Attention might be drawn to the fact that there was a recreation reserve at Monger's Lake

which was not a great distance from this position.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: One had to take notice of the progress association and also the member for the district, but at the same time we should allow plenty of room in a country where we had close on a million square miles, and very few people occupying it. We should leave this ground for a recreation reserve, and if we wanted a school then we could buy another acre of land. With regard to Monger's Lake the Attorney General had referred to the strip of land around it as a reserve, but it should be pointed out this was three or four miles away from the estate. It was the duty of the Government to reserve more land around that lake; it was one of the few places where there was a fine sheet of water within easy reach of the City boundary. Around this lake there was a reserve of only about 30 feet, which was not enough for a bullock dray to go along, and the Attorney General declared that the fact that we had this 30 feet around the lake for about a quarter of the distance was a reason for not increasing the reserve four miles away. The Government should take a more generous view of the question of reserves, and endeavour to have as many as possible not only in the towns but in the country, and in this way spread the people out. The idea of jamming everyone between the railway line and the Swan river was bad, and there was no necessity for people to crowd in a place like Western Australia.

Mr. HOLMAN: The Attorney General had referred to the recreation reserve at Monger's Lake, but how was it possible for a man who ceased work at 5 o'clock to go and change, and then go to that locality for recreation. It was four or five miles away from the Inglewood estate.

The Minister for Education: Do you want us to give an undertaking to purchase land?

Mr. HOLMAN: An undertaking should be given that the people should have something in return for that which was about to be taken away from them.

The Minister for Education: I am not going to give the undertaking.

Mr. HOLMAN: It would have been an easy matter for the department to have purchased an acre of land alongside, or in close proximity to the present recreation reserve No. 12726, and then the children would have had two and a-half acres for recreation purposes as well. If this purchase had been made the position would have been much better than that which existed at the present time, and if the progress association had been treated fairly there would not have been any necessity for them to give up their recreation reserve at all. Although the land was becoming more valuable every year, it would be more business-like at the present time to purchase another acre alongside this reserve. Monger's Lake was all very well for the people who lived in close proximity to it, and the people there were to be congratulated on having such a fine sheet of water, but, for the purposes of recreation for the people who were living on the Inglewood estate, it was absolutely useless. The only time when these people could visit Monger's Lake would be on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. The Minister, even now, should make inquiries in the direction suggested, namely, the purchase of another acre of land.

Mr. SCADDAN: The owners of the Inglewood estate had cut up their land into as many blocks as possible, and made the streets as narrow as they could, and limited the size of the recreation sites in order to obtain the greatest result possible from the sale of the land. Unless the Government took steps to prevent this kind of thing in the future, we would have our town thickly populated, while immediately outside the subdivided estates the people would be able to live under better conditions. It was an absurdity in a country like ours that people should live in houses built on land having frontages of 16 feet, 18 feet, and up to 30 feet. In Subiaco there were many places where the houses built had only 18 feet frontages. These houses were long and narrow, and the people who occupied

them lived under conditions which certainly were against the health of the community. With regard to the Bill itself, it appeared that the Government could have met the difficulty better by asking Parliament to change the purpose of these two reserves. The difficulty about the reserve set apart for a school was that it was low-lying land, and the Government desired to have the school on higher ground. That was a most commendable idea and one that should be carried out in respect to all school sites. But what was the use of transferring the recreation reserve to a block an acre and a quarter in extent unless, indeed, it was intended to limit the recreation ground to croquet? At least five acres was required to make a recreation ground suitable for the Australian class of recreation. The Government ought to watch closely the subdivision of private estates and insist upon proper provision for the recreation of the people, and the reservation of suitable land for schools. In the circumstances he was afraid we would have to allow the clause to remain, otherwise the people would be without a school for a long time to come.

Mr. Swan: They will be without a school while the present Ministry remains in office.

Mr. SCADDAN: That was scarcely likely. He believed the Attorney General fully realised the necessity for erecting the school. The Government ought to be able to secure a piece of land which would better serve the purpose of a recreation ground than the proposed reserve, when they could dispose of the one under discussion.

Mr. SWAN: The proposed reserve was useless for recreation purposes. Seeing that he had advocated the transference of the two reserves he owed some explanation to the Committee for not having at the same time insisted upon the provision of a proper recreation reserve. That he had overlooked this was due entirely to the concentration of his attention on the provision of a proper site for a school. The Minister had suggested that there were other recreation reserves available to the people of Inglewood as, for in-

stance, Monger's Lake: It was a brilliant suggestion, serving to show the Minister's want of knowledge of the district. Inglewood was considerably nearer the Swan river than Monger's Lake, and, so far as he was aware, there was no other recreation ground within anything like reasonable distance of the locality. Unless the Government were prepared to purchase adjoining land the proposed recreation reserve would be quite useless. There was a necessity for the provision of a recreation reserve, but there was for more necessity for the provision of a school. He had not had a fair deal from the Minister in regard to this matter, and at a later stage he would take the opportunity of placing the whole of the facts before hon. members.

Mr. Price drew attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung, and a quorum formed.

Mr. HOLMAN: The Minister should inform the Committee as to what he intended to do in regard to the suggestion that he should purchase additional land adjoining the proposed recreation reserve.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: It was a matter that did not affect the Education Department, but no doubt the Minister controlling reserves would be prepared to consider the suggestion.

Mr. HOLMAN: In the event of it being found possible to secure a suitable area for recreation, would the Minister agree to dedicate the reserve mentioned in the Bill for the purposes of public recreation?

The Minister for Education: The better course would be to consider the enlargement of this proposed recreation ground, namely, the existing school reserve.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

BILL—LEEDERVILLE AND COTTESLOE MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory) in moving the second reading

said: The measure has been prepared with the object of placing under the control of the Leederville municipality a certain proportion of railway land dividing Leederville and Subiaco, and under the control of the Cottesloe municipality a small area comprised in the second schedule of the Bill and lying between the Cottesloe and Peppermint Grove districts. When the boundaries of these local authorities were defined a small portion of railway land was left out of any municipality and became a sort of no man's ground. The Leederville municipality had agreed to the alteration contemplated in the Bill. I am not advised as to whether the Cottesloe people have done the same, but presumably they have. Throughout the State, wherever municipalities or roads boards are proclaimed, the railways runs through their districts. In this case a small portion of the railway land was left outside any defined district. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. GILL (Barkatta): This Bill does not require much discussion. I have made myself acquainted with the desire of the Leederville people, and I am in a position to state they are thoroughly in accord with the object of the Bill. With regard to the Cottesloe people, I do not know how they feel on the subject.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1910-11.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the preceding day on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and the Annual Estimates: Mr. Taylor in the Chair.

Mr. PRICE (Albany): If any justification were needed for rising to speak on the general debate on the Budget, it is certainly provided by a letter appearing in to-day's paper signed by James Gardner, a gentleman who, I believe, at one

time occupied the position of Treasurer in a previous Parliament of this State. Therein he states that the present Treasurer was guilty of making such a shocking misstatement as the writer had never before heard made by any public man. Now I have on occasions read in certain sections of the Press the Colonial Treasurer referred to as "figure faker Frank."

The Premier:—That was the hon. member's paper.

Mr. PRICE: The hon. member does not own a paper, but if he did he might use that term. Certainly, after the challenge made in to-day's paper one must of necessity have some doubt as to the reliability of the figures laid before members by the Treasurer. Just here let me re-iterate the protest put forward by the leader of the Opposition when speaking on this debate yesterday, that there seems to be an absolute disregard on the part of the members sitting on the Government side as to what actions are taken by the Ministry in connection with the finances of the State. Justification for these remarks was shown throughout last evening when at no time during the speech of the leader of the Opposition were there more than nine members on the Ministerial side, and most of the time there were but five, four of whom were in a greater or lesser state of somnolence. And these are the gentleman who are attending to the business of the country and considering the State's finances—the gentlemen who will record their votes for and against certain proposals, and will eventually go before their constituents and point out that they supported the Government who had done so much for the development of the State! The Treasurer in making his Budget Speech laid great stress on the fact—I was almost going to term it the alleged fact, but I am prepared to accept the figures of the Treasurer—that our per capita loan indebtedness was 9s. 3d. less at the close of the last financial year than it was in 1903; but the Treasurer conveniently omitted to mention one factor, which has a very important bearing on our loan indebtedness. He failed to point out to this Chamber that from 1905—and

I take that time because that is the commencement of the present Government's term of office—the population of the State has increased by nearly 12 per cent., whilst the loan indebtedness has increased by nearly 21 per cent. That is a position which might cause hon. members to seriously consider whether we should go on in this borrow and boom style which has so far characterised the administration of the present Government. There is another consideration which lends to these figures peculiar significance. This extraordinary increase in our loan indebtedness per head of population becomes far more serious when we have regard to the fact that, during the period to which I have referred, our population, so far as the producing part of it is concerned, has decreased rather than increased. We find on looking at the statistics that the proportion of females and children to the producing section of the population has very largely increased during the past five years. A fact which must be considered when dealing with our loans and their allocation is that women and children cannot be expected to help in the return of revenue to provide sinking fund and interest on our loans; so that although the population has increased 12 per cent., that increase has been mostly in the non-producing elements. In 1905 the number of females in proportion to males was 69 per cent., whereas at the present time the proportion is 72.29 per cent. Whilst the females are increasing, the male section of the population is not increasing by any means so fast as the amount of our loan indebtedness. Furthermore, we find the Treasurer making a very strong point in stating to this House that so long as he remains in his present position he will continue the raising of loans for certain public works. In this connection it is interesting to look over the records of previous Administrations. We find that from 1901 to 1905 the total amount expended from loan on roads, bridges, and public buildings was the infinitesimal sum of £1,250. Compare that with the record of the present Administration, who from 1906 to the end of the last financial year spent from loan on roads and bridges £56,517 and on public

buildings £393,006, or a total of very nearly half a million pounds spent on works which during the years 1901-5 were provided from revenue. That fact requires very serious consideration, not only from members on this side of the House, but from every member who takes an active interest in the affairs of this country, and certainly from those citizens who are called upon to decide who shall represent them in this Chamber; because, if it was possible from 1901 to 1905 to pay for the whole of our public buildings, and roads and bridges from revenue, surely there can be no justification for the extraordinary expenditure from loan which the present administrators have persistently indulged in. The Treasurer waxed quite eloquent when he told members that he estimated a surplus of revenue over expenditure at the end of the current financial year of £1,009 and he told us that the deficit, which has so long been hanging over the heads of our administrators, will disappear. And one can easily understand that such will be the effect if the Government are allowed to continue the course they have followed since first they entered upon their administrative duties. If they are to be allowed by members to continue the reckless expenditure of loan moneys upon works which should undoubtedly have been provided for out of revenue, it will be a very simple matter for them to show a surplus. The protest I desire to make is against actions such as this, and I desire to express my sincere hope that the Government will cease a policy which, as was pointed out last night by the leader of the Opposition, must inevitably lead to very considerable trouble in this State; because at the present moment we are carrying the biggest debt per head of any State in the Commonwealth; our rate of interest is the highest of any State in the Commonwealth; and that kind of financing must inevitably lead to trouble, trouble which the people in this State will have to face.

Mr. Jacoby: Our average rate of interest is lower.

Mr. PRICE: If the hon. member will look up the statistics he will find that it

is higher. Our loan indebtedness is the highest.

Mr. Jacoby: You said rate of interest.

Mr. PRICE: The rate of interest is the highest.

Mr. Jacoby: Average rate?

Mr. PRICE: Yes.

Mr. Jacoby: I think you are wrong.

Mr. PRICE: I have not the figures available at the moment, but in looking them up yesterday I certainly found our average rate was the highest. Certainly our loan indebtedness is the highest. It may be claimed that, although our loan indebtedness is the highest, we have certain assets; but what, after all, are our assets?

Mr. Jacoby: Our percentage of wage-earners is higher.

Mr. PRICE: I have admitted that our percentage of wage-earners or producing population is higher than in the Eastern States, but I have pointed out that this is gradually decreasing. Although we are increasing our loan indebtedness, the percentage of wage-earners in the community is gradually decreasing; consequently we are parties to bringing about a state of affairs which must mean financial chaos. No matter how we attempt to blind ourselves to the real facts, there they are. Another matter which I desire to refer to is the very specious manner in which the Treasurer arrived at the statement that our per capita loan expenditure was 9s. 3d. less at the close of the last financial year than it was at the close of 1903, and he arrived at it in this way, and it will show the justification for that somewhat alliterative cognomen bestowed upon the Treasurer by certain newspapers. He took the gross loan expenditure at the close of the financial year as £73 4s. 11d. per capita, and deducted from it the unexpended portion of such loan authorisation, which reduced it to £66 10s.; but for 1903 he took the loan indebtedness and did not deduct what might have been the unexpended balances of loan at that time. If I take the figures as supplied by a gentleman who certainly has no interest in putting forward misleading figures, I find that instead of the loan indebtedness being £66 10s. per head or £73 4s. 11d., according to the figures

supplied by the Treasurer, it is, according to the *Statistical Register*, £73 6s. 5d. Of course this is only a small difference, but it shows the way in which figures are juggled and made to prove almost anything. But it is a matter for very serious consideration when we find this kind of thing. I might explain in regard to the interjection made by the member for Swan a few minutes ago, and it is only just that I should point it out, that I took the annual interest payable per head of the population as £2 15s. 10d., and that is the highest rate of any.

Mr. Jacoby: In Queensland it is £2 17s. 7d.

Mr. PRICE: Yes. Although in New South Wales it is £1 19s. 7d., and in Victoria £1 10s. 4d., the average for all the States is £2 1s. 8d., so that we are paying something like 14s. 2d. more per head each year than the average for the whole of the Australian States.

Mr. Jacoby: If you look at the average rate of interest we are paying you will find we are one of the lowest.

Mr. PRICE: That is so, but the difference is not so pronounced as in the other cases. The difference is less than 5s. per head, whereas in the other case there is a difference of 14s. 2d., so that, after all, no matter how much we may juggle with figures, the position of the State with regard to its loans is undoubtedly worse than that of any other State. I have already pointed out that it was very hard to follow the figures laid before the Chamber by the Treasurer. It has been said that one can take figures and make them prove almost anything. After all, the most reliable figures we can take are those supplied by the Government Statistician, who certainly has no interest in putting forward misleading figures. In fact, were he to attempt to mislead the people he would make himself amenable to the Act under which he holds his appointment. I have already pointed out that from 1901 to 1905 the loan expenditure on public buildings, roads and bridges, was practically nil, or totalled £1,250; but in 1906 on the two items of roads and bridges and public buildings there was nearly

half a million pounds spent from loan funds; and during the same period the loan expenditure on railways and tramways, harbours, rivers, lighthouses, roads and bridges, public buildings, water supplies and sewerage, development of gold-fields and development of agriculture increased from £372,000 to £1,028,000, an increase of £700,000 per annum in loan expenditure on these matters. It might be as well to point out that in some items there has been an extraordinary decrease. I refer particularly to the development of our gold and mineral resources. Whereas in 1907 a sum of £97,000 was spent in the development of our gold-fields from loan fund, last year the amount spent was £35,587. I take no exception to the amount spent; I am merely pointing out that there has been a big decrease there, yet we find the expenditure from loan is continually on the increase. Any work that can possibly be charged to loan account is charged to loan account, and every effort is made by the Government to so manipulate the finances as to make it appear that their expenditure is well within the limits of their revenue, but it is palpable to anyone who analyses the figures submitted to us by the Treasurer that this squaring of the ledgers has only been brought about by a wilful transference to loan account of charges that should be made to revenue account. This has been the method of finance adopted, and it is one to be deplored, and I hope the time will not be long in coming when an alteration will be made and we shall enter upon a system of just, fair, and clean finance. Now, let me refer briefly to the manner in which the Premier has arrived at his estimated surplus of £1,000, or, to give him every penny of his estimated surplus, £1,009. We find that the chief increase in revenue estimated to be received by the Treasurer is in connection with the railways. The Treasurer estimates to receive an increase of £106,603 from railways. We are told by the Treasurer that he considers we shall have that increase because last year we had an increase of £74,000, and during this year

there will be a large number of other railways opened up. Granted there will be a large number of other railways opened up, and that it is possible there will be a large increase in the receipts from our railways, increased receipts involve increased expenditure; and although the Treasurer has anticipated a net increase of 50 per cent. over what he secured last year—

The Minister for Mines: That is really an under-estimate.

Mr. PRICE: It is really an under-estimate, but what I am going to point out is the fact that this year he has only allowed for £44,000 in increased expenditure in connection with our railways. Until during the last two or three years it was the practice of the Government of the day to provide out of revenue for replacing obsolete rolling stock. That has been wiped out, and this £44,000 increased expenditure in connection with the railways has to cover everything in connection with the rolling stock, engines, upkeep of existing lines, and all that kind of work. Anyone who has followed the conduct of railway administration during the past two or three years must realise that this State is taking a grave responsibility in connection with the management of its railways. We are cutting down expenditure in all directions. Let me here anticipate the statement that the rate of wages has been increased on our railways. The Minister for Railways is looking over, so I may as well anticipate. But, whilst the average rate has been increased, the efficiency of the staff has not been kept commensurate with the increased responsibilities. We find that during last year 300 odd extra miles of railways were opened up but that the administration has not provided sufficient for the working of this additional length of railways. The permanent way has not been kept in that state of repair that it should have been kept in, and that is a fact, if we are to believe those who are in a position to judge. I am quite convinced of this, that between Perth and Fremantle the permanent way is not nearly as good to-day as it was four years ago. The Minister has only to sit in a railway carriage be-

tween these two places to become well aware of that. One could ride along that line at one time without feeling a jar or a bump, but to-day it is one succession of bumps indicating that the permanent way is not kept in that state of efficiency which was previously the case. It is not so much in connection with the permanent way as in connection with the engines and rolling stock that grave danger exists through the adoption of this cheese-paring policy. We find that from this £44,000 increased expenditure there has to be provided increased rolling stock which is necessary to cope with the additional traffic, and as the Minister for Mines is doubtless aware, last year on the Great Southern line whilst eventually the increased traffic was coped with, the Commissioner himself freely and publicly admitted that so great was the increase that it was almost impossible for him to deal with it, and that it will be almost impossible to cope with it during the coming season unless there is a large increase in the number of engines and the quantity of rolling stock. To allow £44,000 is absolutely ridiculous when we take into consideration the fact that the Treasurer estimates that during the current year there will be an additional 529 miles of railways added to our working railways. If we are going to increase our mileage by 529 then we should require more than £44,000 for the additional rolling stock and engines necessary to work that increase in our mileage. But, whilst the amount estimated as increased expenditure is kept down, it helps the Treasurer to bring down a Budget indicating that he will have a surplus, and if there is a greater surplus than that mentioned in his speech, he will lay the credit to himself for being such a splendid financier. Thus he is misleading the people in the hope of securing certain political benefits in time to come. Let us see the little dodges, if I may so term them, which are worked by the Treasurer in arriving at the estimates of his revenue and expenditure. I have pointed out in connection with our railways, that the amount mentioned for expenditure is absolutely ridiculous if the railways are to be kept in a proper state of efficiency. If, when we had hundreds

of miles less of railways than we have to-day, it needed a vote of from £30,000 to £40,000 per annum for the renewal of obsolete rolling stock, how can we expect an increase of only £44,000 to-day to be sufficient to deal with the very largely increased expenditure which must arise not only in connection with the rolling stock but in connection with the upkeep of railways generally. While on this matter, let me point out that last year when introducing the Estimates the Treasurer estimated that his revenue from public works and buildings—that is rents other than lands, hire of dredges, traffic receipts from railways under construction, Broome water supply, etcetera, would be £9,500. As a matter of fact he received £21,891, or an increase of £11,891. The biggest item of revenue under that heading came from traffic receipts from railways under construction. Last year the total length of railways constructed was 300 odd miles. I am speaking from memory now. This year the Treasurer tells us that the construction will amount to an additional 529 miles. If we are going to have increased railway construction, we might assume that we shall have increased revenue from those works during construction, but instead, we find the Treasurer estimating his receipts from the sources I have named this year at £10,000. Although there will be a large increase in the number of works which are revenue-producing, we find that he reduces his estimate from what he actually received last year by over one-half. One might reasonably ask why it is, or how it is, that such a reduction has been made. The reason thereof is somewhat significant. When railways are constructed by the Public Works Department the revenue derived therefrom is passed into the Consolidated Revenue of the State, but when the railways are constructed by contractors those outside contractors collect the revenue which comes from the line. It would be interesting to know, whether, when the Government are dealing with these tenders, they take into consideration the amount of money received on account of carriage during the course of construction, because we have evidence that it is a considerable amount, and should certainly be taken into con-

sideration when the Government are dealing with the matter of departmental as opposed to private construction of public works, particularly railways. I must protest against the Premier laying before this House estimates which are palpably misleading. Take another item, Lands and Surveys, and we find that last year the estimate of the Treasurer from lands and surveys, survey fees, etcetera, was £16,500 and the actual receipts were £20,994. Yet what do we find the Treasurer doing on this occasion? If we are going to have that progressive land development policy which we are always hearing Ministers brag about, and if it is to continue, then we should naturally assume that the returns from lands and surveys, and survey fees particularly, would keep well up to the average of last year, and we would assume that the Treasurer in submitting his estimate would say "We secured last year £20,994 from lands and surveys, and as we are determined to keep this developmental policy of ours going I can estimate that we shall receive the same amount, or nearly the same amount, during the current year." But what do we find the Treasurer doing? We find that he estimates that from that source he will receive £12,000 or a reduction of £8,000 compared with what he actually received last year, and it is by such figure-faking as this that the Treasurer persistently and consistently endeavours to mislead members with regard to the finances of the State. There are many other matters in connection with the Estimates of revenue to which I might refer, but I doubt not many of the members of this Chamber will speak upon them, and they will all be properly thrashed out before the item which we are at present discussing is eventually dealt with. Turning to Public Accounts submitted to this House at the same time as the Estimates, we find some rather interesting items. One of the first things which meets my eye is the item: "By advances to be recovered, No. 1, Denmark stores, £3,248 1s. 6d." If that item represents anything, it represents certain grass seeds upon which the rats and mice have been having a fine old feed during the past couple of years. I

do not know any other stores at Denmark. How we are going to recover that portion of the item I do not know, but I take it that will be the largest portion of this £3,248. I was at Denmark a few days ago and saw there something like 10 tons of grass seed stored in a shed, and upon this grass seed the rats and mice were having a fine old feast. We are informed the advances upon this may be recovered; yet when settlers ask to purchase any of it they are distinctly told, "No; you cannot have it." Evidently the Government prefer, or the officers of the department controlled by the Minister for Lands and Agriculture prefer, to allow rats and mice feed on the grass rather than let the settlers have it at a reasonable price.

Mr. Johnson: It is paid for out of loan, so it is all right.

Mr. PRICE: I am reminded that this is another item of the frenzied finance indulged in by the present Administration—buying grass seed with borrowed money to stow it in a shed at Denmark in order that the rats and mice may feast upon it. There is one item here in regard to which I would like some information. I have endeavoured to obtain some knowledge as to what is meant by it, and perhaps the Minister for Lands, if he deigns to speak on the Estimates, may give us some information with regard to the item, "ringbarking stores, credit £3,539 16s. 1d."

The Minister for Lands: They are re-funds—stores sold.

Mr. Johnson: Mostly bad debts.

Mr. PRICE: I am inclined to agree with the member for Guildford that they are mostly bad debts, but I am not prepared at present to say that. I hope the Minister will give us some information on it. As regards the Denmark stores, I sought the information first hand myself.

Mr. Heitmann: Oh, there is no harm in it.

Mr. PRICE: I do not say there is, so long as the people do not buck. But I trust the day will not be long in coming when the people will buck at this kind of finance, and buck so effectively that there will be a complete change in administration.

Mr. Johnson: They are only waiting for the opportunity to change it now.

Mr. PRICE: They are hardly likely to get that opportunity while the Minister for Lands hangs on. I refer to these two items because one of them in particular has come directly under my own notice, and I certainly think the second one requires some explanation. Now, whilst touching on the Lands Department, and while the Minister is here and seems to be displaying a little interest in what is transpiring, I may take the opportunity of protesting against the action of the present Government in connection with the statement of receipts and expenditure as placed before members in regard to the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act. We have here, in No. 37 of the public accounts, a statement that by no casuistry can be regarded as either fair or reasonable; nor can any hon. member arrive at a definite conclusion with regard to the operations on any one of the estates mentioned. It is supposed to be a statement of receipts and expenditure, but a balance sheet it absolutely is not. Because if we are to take it as it appears before us we should conclude that there has been £214,275 19s. 6d. spent in connection with repurchased estates. If members will look it up they will find that the purchases amount to £164,226 10s. 3d., and survey expenses, interest, etcetera, to £50,049 9s. 3d., making a total expenditure in connection with repurchased estates of £214,275 19s. 6d.

Mr. Angwin: Does that include the Avondale estate?

Mr. PRICE: You inquire later on; I have not reached the Avondale estate yet. We find against this expenditure that debentures have been issued to the amount of £164,226 10s. 3d., which item corresponds with the purchase money of the estates. Then, when we come to the receipts allegedly received from this estate, we find that they have been £111,125 6s., which indicates that there has been a very considerable loss in connection with these repurchased estates. The fact is we are only shown here the actual money received, and no account has been taken of the purchase money not yet paid. Con-

sequently, the statement is absolutely worthless.

The Minister for Lands: This is the cash statement.

Mr. PRICE: But hon. members require to know, not only what cash is received, but our actual position in regard to these repurchased estates.

The Minister for Lands: The under secretary's report will give you that.

Mr. PRICE: No. If the Minister will look up the under secretary's report he will find that it does not give us the names of each estate and what has been the full financial operations in connection with each estate. It is a matter that certainly should be laid before the Chamber, particularly in view of the fact—

The Minister for Lands: I think you will find it there.

Mr. PRICE: I have looked and I cannot find it—particularly in view of the fact that a very large sum from Loan Funds is being expended on surveys in connection with not only repurchased estates, but lands generally. The expenditure of Loan Funds on surveys is a proposition against which I desire to protest most emphatically. This is a work which, to my mind, certainly should be paid for from revenue, for the reason that the Government charge survey fees immediately the land is taken up. I realise a certain amount of survey is conducted and the land not taken up; but that is one of the main arguments against paying for it out of loan, because there has been, and in a State such as this there must of necessity be, a large area of land surveyed which will not be taken up for many years to come.

The Minister for Lands: You will find it on page 24.

Mr. PRICE: All estates?

The Minister for Lands: Yes; a detailed report.

Mr. PRICE: All right. The trouble is that this money has been expended from loan and in a certain percentage of cases the money will never be refunded. While it will be refunded in respect to that land which has been taken up, the Minister knows there are hundreds of holdings which have been surveyed but

which will not be taken up for years to come.

The Minister for Lands: Repurchased estates?

Mr. PRICE: No; I am not dealing with repurchased estates just now. But even on such areas there is sometimes land not taken up.

The Minister for Lands: Not much of it.

Mr. PRICE: I admit there is not much of it, but I know of one place where some of the land has not been taken up. I am not complaining so much in regard to repurchased estates; still I would like to see a detailed account of our operations in connection with repurchased estates, and I must protest against the expenditure of Loan Funds for the purpose of surveying land. I think it is a practice which cannot be too strongly condemned, one that cannot be justified under any circumstances whatever. The reason put forward was that we did not desire to overburden the settler. What benefit does the settler get from the fact that the survey is paid for out of loan? It only serves to encourage the Government in charging, as they have been doing, to Loan Fund works which undoubtedly should be charged to revenue. That is the position, and I trust the Minister for Lands will endeavour to induce his colleagues to allow him to use revenue instead of loans for the purpose mentioned, because we know that revenue from land is continually increasing. It is expected that the amount thus received this year will exceed what was received last year. I take it the Minister expects to receive more revenue from land this year than he did last year.

The Minister for Lands: Certainly.

Mr. PRICE: Then how comes it that the Treasurer is under-estimating the amount? The Treasurer has estimated from lands and surveys £8,994 less than was received last year. The Minister for Lands unwittingly confirmed the statement I made just before he entered the Chamber, when I said the Estimates were misleading. The Minister now admits that.

The Minister for Lands: We have sold the land at Bullfinch, you know.

Mr. PRICE: There again, the Government were particularly lucky, and I can only regret there are not a few more Bullfinches.

Mr. Walker: There is the Chaffinch.

Mr. PRICE: Yes; and we may have a few more birds of the same character; I sincerely hope we do. I realise the present Administration will use the windfall they have received to further their own political ambition. Yet ultimately the country must benefit, despite the fact that we have the present Government in power. I find that the Treasurer estimates that the wheat harvest this year will be from eight to nine million bushels as against 5,600,000 bushels last year, an increase of nearly 90 per cent., and yet we have Estimates placed before us which do not include any provision for coping with that enormous increase in the railway traffic.

Member: The estimate may not come off.

Mr. PRICE: I am showing the absolute fallacy of the figures. If the estimate does come off, then the Minister has failed in his duty so far as the Estimates for our railways are concerned, and if it does not come off he has failed to give the Committee the reliable information that we are entitled to expect.

The Minister for Lands: What is wrong?

Mr. PRICE: If the Minister had been in the Chamber all along, he would have known what is wrong. The Treasurer has failed to make adequate provision for the upkeep of our railways, and although there is only an allowance of £44,000 for increased expenditure on the system, we are told that the harvest will be nearly doubled. I hope that it will be, and I believe that there will be a big increase, but I fear that, owing to the cheese-paring policy of the Government and their frantic desire to show a profit at all costs, the railways will fail to cope with the increased traffic. I am quite convinced that the agricultural industry has developed at an enormous rate, but whilst the Government recognise on the

one hand that extraordinary increase, they persistently refuse on the other hand to recognise the necessity for coping with that increase. A mere £44,000 is to be the additional expenditure in connection with our railways.

The Minister for Lands: It will be ample.

Mr. PRICE: How can the Minister say that it will be ample when he knows that on the Great Southern line last year there was continual congestion?

The Minister for Works: Why did you not inform the Minister?

Mr. PRICE: Why should I inform him when he was very well aware of it? The Commissioner used every effort and did magnificent work in trying to cope with the traffic, but the Government forced him to do the work without providing him with the materials with which to do it. They are asking the Commissioner this year to cope with nearly double the wheat harvest of last year and to control an extra 530 miles of railway.

The Minister for Lands: That is very good, is it not?

Mr. PRICE: I am not condemning that, but I am condemning the Government in asking the Commissioner to do that extra work without providing him with the funds with which to do it. We are told that practically the whole of the £44,000 is required for the renewal of the rolling stock destroyed at Midland Junction.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We want hundreds of additional wagons also.

Mr. PRICE: And they will probably have to be provided out of Loan Funds.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why not?

Mr. PRICE: It is a most ridiculous and reckless method of conducting the finances of the State. I doubt not for one moment that this Government will endeavour to pay for the necessary rolling stock out of loan. I do not intend to deal at any length with the various departments because the items will be dealt with as we reach them, and one can with far greater effect deal with them when they are directly before the House than now.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There is not much time to deal with them in extenso before Christmas.

Mr. PRICE: If we cannot deal with them before Christmas we will be able to deal with them before Easter. I believe we can deal with them before the next financial year commences, and if we do not, it will not much matter to the Government; the Loan funds are always available, and when questions are asked Ministers can tell us with a broad illuminating smile, such as I see on the face of the Minister for Lands, that we are progressing.

The Minister for Lands: So we are progressing.

Mr. PRICE: I wish I could progress half as well as the hon. Minister has progressed. I would like to refer for a moment to the increased expenditure of £17,225 for education. I find the Treasurer pointing out that this increase is due to the extension of educational facilities in the agricultural areas, to the opening of a modern school in Perth, the extension of continuation and technical schools, and the general increase in teachers' salaries. He did not mention it, but it may be that the Government intend to build the University also out of this £17,000.

The Attorney General: Buildings are not included in that; they are on the Works estimate.

Mr. Walker: What is the £17,000 for?

The Attorney General: Salaries largely.

Mr. PRICE: I am pleased that the Minister made that interjection. I assumed that the £17,000 would include buildings, but if it refers chiefly to salaries I have no fault to find with it, although it is by no means excessive in view of the need for the extension of educational facilities in the agricultural areas. At the present time there is ample room for a big advance in that direction. Whilst I recognise that good work has been done, we must not allow it to lag behind, because one of the first things a desirable settler will inquire into before taking up land in a district is as to whether any educational facilities exist for his children. I would not object to a very

big increase for this work even if it had to come from loan, because the education of the children is a matter to which we cannot pay too much attention. There is just one other matter I may refer to before closing. I regret that the Government have not carried out the implied promise given in this Chamber last year when the Estimates were before us to reduce an item, which may be termed superfluous in connection with the conduct of the business of this Chamber. If our national Parliament can carry on, and if the President of the National Senate and the Speaker in the House of Representatives can conduct the business of their Chambers with decorum and dignity, without being arrayed in horsehair wigs and gowns, and without being attended by a gentleman such as the Sergeant-at-Arms, I certainly think this Chamber can do the same.

Mr. Collier: We have shown the need for our Sergeant-at-Arms; he has justified his position.

Mr. PRICE: Last year I protested against this item appearing on the Estimates, and there certainly was an implied promise by the then Premier that reasonable notice should be given to the present occupant of the post of Sergeant-at-Arms, and that during the ensuing year the matter would be inquired into with the object of reducing the expenditure.

Sitting suspended from 1 till 2.30 p.m.

Mr. PRICE: Just prior to the adjournment I was preparing to deal particularly with the departments, but before proceeding further in that matter may I again touch on the railway developmental policy, or so-called policy of the present Government. I term it the so-called policy because there is no definite policy, nor has there been anything in the nature of a definite policy with regard to our railway development on the part of the present Government. They wait for settlement to come along, and if the outcry is sufficiently loud they immediately start about the construction of a railway to still the clamour of the settlers. In proof of my statement that there is no settled policy, and to show, moreover, that the

lack of a definite policy is very seriously hampering the advisory board in their work, I have only to read to the House a part of the last clause of the report of the advisory board on the matter of railway construction in the country east of the Great Southern Railway. Clause 8 of their report reads—

As a system of spur railways to serve the country east of the Great Southern Railway had been initiated, we have been forced to recommend their extension; but we are of opinion that in future, before any further spurs are projected, a comprehensive system should be laid down, as we are unanimously in favour of a system of loop lines in preference to spurs.

The position amounts to this, that in this haphazard, slap-dash style of doing business, responsible officers find themselves forced through stress of circumstances to send in a report they do not agree with. They say they do not agree with this system, but they are forced to make certain recommendations because of something which has been done and which thereby curtails and cramps a scheme they would be prepared to submit, a scheme which they consider would be in the best interests of the State and which would be of a comprehensive character combined with a definite policy on the part of the Government. I trust the recommendations of the advisory board in this connection will receive due consideration from the Government. Some years ago, in 1904 I think, there was a definite railway developmental policy placed before the House, but the present Government did not agree with that policy, because it was calculated to serve the best interests of the State without regard to the desire of any particular supporters of the Government, or any other individuals. The State came first in that report, but, as usual, where the present Administration is concerned, the interests of the State had to be subordinated to the desires of their immediate supporters, and as a result that definite policy was abandoned; and to-day we have the advisory board, appointed by the present Government, condemning their system and telling us

they are forced to do something which they would not do were the circumstances not as they are at present. This lack of system in connection with our railway developmental policy seems to apply also with equal force to our agricultural development, because we find the Minister for Agriculture spending the whole of his time, or at all events a very large part of his time, talking very incessantly about wheat-growing, one section of agricultural development, and paying very little attention to any other section. Were the Minister alive to the possibilities of the South West, the time would not be long in coming when we should have hundreds of dairy farms along the South-West coast but the point from which that development should start is being cramped, and its progress retarded, because the Minister desires to cloak over and cover up his mistakes in connection with the administration of his department. I refer particularly to the Denmark estate. That should have been the starting point for the development of our South-West dairying lands, and undoubtedly a splendid starting point it would have made; but what do we find? The Minister places upon the Denmark lands such a charge that it is impossible for settlers to make a success of their holdings, and thereby he checks the settlers going on to the lands in that district, or further west from it, to open up the splendid area which extends from Bridgetown right through to Denmark. The Minister readily admits we have there a very large area of land equal to any of the dairy land in any part of Australia, yet at present it is lying practically idle for no other reason than that we have no definite policy, because we are aiming nowhere, simply drifting along. The drift is with us at present; but suppose the drift sets in in the other direction, suppose the Government were forced to do from revenue what they are now doing from loan, then we should be compelled to formulate some definite policy; and it is before the drifting sets in in the opposite direction to what it is at the present time, that I desire the Minister to set out some definite policy and have some definite goal which he aims to reach. It is no good talking about the dairying

industry unless we are prepared to do something. Going around to these little agricultural shows and gatherings of that kind, and talking about the possibilities of the South-West will not cause a single pound of butter to be produced, nor cause a single settler to take up land. But if the Minister will admit that he has made errors in connection with the development of the Denmark estate, and will at once be honest with members of the House, and tell us he has made mistakes, and that it is desirable in the interests of the dairying industry and in the interests of the State generally that there should be a big reduction in the charge which he is making for the Denmark lands, so as to induce people to take up these lands and develop them, he would be moving in the right direction and doing that which must inevitably cause a very large influx of population into that section of the State. I sincerely hope the Minister will seriously consider the suggestion I have made in connection with the Denmark estate, because if that estate is retarded, as it has been retarded by the maladministration of the Lands Department, it will continue to check the progress of the South-West portion of the State and the Denmark estate also. Let the Denmark estate go ahead, let us have there hundreds of thriving and prosperous settlers and they will induce others to go there. It can be done if we lift the burden from the settlers, which the Minister has already laid upon them. Now, just let me briefly refer to the proposed expenditure in connection with the various departments. We are told the Government have granted increases throughout the civil service. I spent some little time going through the Estimates placed before us; and without going through the smaller items, I desire to draw the attention of members to the remarkable fact that practically every head of a department has been granted a very substantial increase; and where from £50 to £100 increases have been given to heads of departments, one begins to doubt whether proportionate increases have been granted to the lower grades of our civil servants. Right throughout the Estimates we find the heads of departments with very substantial increases. The man-

ager of the Government Savings Bank receives an increase of £50.

The Minister for Mines: He deserves it.

Mr. PRICE: I do not say that the gentlemen who have been granted these substantial increases are not, in some cases, worthy of them, but I desire to emphasise the fact that it is not always the head of the department only who is worth the increase. In many cases heads of departments have built up their reputations at the expense of those under them, and if the increases were placed in a proper quarter they would be for junior clerks who are doing the work which heads are supposed to do.

Mr. Walker: Do you not know it is the heads of departments who govern the State?

Mr. PRICE: Judging from these Estimates there may be some justification for that remark, because if these gentlemen are governing the State they are very liberal to themselves. At all events they have had more honesty or pluck than members of the Chamber, who are not prepared to vote increases for themselves. These gentlemen have, on the other hand, persistently done it throughout the service. There is an increase of £25 to the Government Geologist, and for the Chief Inspector of Machinery, Mr. Matthews, an increase of £60.

The Minister for Mines: That is last year's increase.

Mr. Scaddan: Without authority.

The Minister for Mines: It was the result of the appeal board.

Mr. PRICE: The engineer in charge of the Mines Water Supply is to receive an increase of £50, but the most remarkable increase of the lot is one that I certainly shall require, and I think every hon. member will require, some information about—

The Minister for Mines: The hon. member cannot refer to the items at this stage.

Mr. PRICE: I am only referring to them as showing the trend of the policy of the present Government. The particular item that I was going to refer to is an increase to the Under Secretary for Lands of £50. I find that it is proposed

to increase that gentleman's salary from £650 to £700, and so it is right through.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is hardly in order in referring to the items; he can refer to the departments generally.

Mr. PRICE: One can hardly refer generally without referring to the items as showing the general trend of the Government's policy, which is to give to those who have. The higher the "screws" the surer are they of an increase, and in the Estimates we have before us these increases have been given almost without exception to the heads of departments. However, I do not desire to deal with the items, but simply to draw attention to the trend of the policy of the Government. I may, I think, be allowed to refer to the action of the Government regarding outdoor relief, and this is not the only case. If the truths which I am uttering are too much for the feelings of the Minister for Mines, I will spare him for the present, but these truths will only be bottled up until a later stage. While the present Government have been increasing by handsome amounts the salaries of the heads of departments, they have taken from the indigent poor of the State the money so to do. They have cut down outdoor relief, and have completely wiped out of the Estimates all provision for the indigent poor of our hospitals. The palttry amount last year was £1,500; this year the poor in our hospitals, so far as the Government are concerned, can lie and rot. If the Government have any feelings of compassion for the poor of the State, where are they? The item has been completely cut out. Last year we provided £2,300 for the indigent patients in the hospitals, and of that amount £2,293 was expended. This year there is no vote whatever for that purpose.

The Minister for Mines: I will show you later on that there is.

Mr. PRICE: If there is, I have not been able to find it. If it is by such means as these that the heads of departments are to secure their increases, I

say it is time that some very drastic and definite steps were taken in connection with these matters. I do not intend to speak upon this matter further. I have entered my protest against the practice of the Government using loan funds where they should use revenue, and I have also protested against a lack of definite and comprehensive railway development policy, and I have expressed the need for a definite agricultural development policy. With regard to the conduct of departmental affairs. I shall deal with it when we reach the items. In the meantime I trust before we proceed with the items we shall have some assurance from the Government that they intend to let us have a little more definiteness when the Estimates are laid before us, and give us an assurance that they will endeavour to alter their ways in regard to dealing with loan funds, and the expenditure from such funds.

Mr. A. A. WILSON (Collie): I feel I would be lacking in my duty if I did not say a few words with regard to the Budget on this occasion. I see the Chairman smiling because he feels that he will derive much amusement from the dialect in which I shall make my remarks. I wish at the outset to congratulate the country and the Government on the progress made during last year in the agricultural and mining districts, and in regard to mining, the coal industry particularly. With regard to the coal, I only want to say that I would not have named this industry in these few remarks but for the fact that certain interjections were made during the Treasurer's speech which I think were altogether out of place. In speaking of the increase in the coal mining trade, the Treasurer stated that there was something like an increase of 40,000 tons of coal when an interjection was made by an hon. member that this increase was brought about by exceptional circumstances. I grant that some of the circumstances were exceptional, but at the present time the trade is improving every month, and honestly speaking I can say that Collie coal is now finding its way on the market on its own merits. I desire to

make a statement of the monthly progress of coal since January, 1909, and to quote the figures for the corresponding months of this year for purposes of comparison in order to let members see how the industry has progressed. In January, 1909, 11,480 tons were produced as against 28,857 tons in January of the present year, representing a total increase of 17,377 tons. In February, 1909, the output was 14,311 tons, and in February this year it was 24,684 tons, an increase in favour of February of this year of 10,173. In the month of March—and I may add that the Newcastle coal dispute terminated in March of this year—the figures were 16,826 tons in 1909 as against 25,427 for March of this year, an increase of 8,601 tons. In April of last year the output was 16,723 tons as against 23,563 this year, an increase of 6,840 tons. In May of last year the output was 15,016 tons, and in May of this year 21,426 tons, an increase of 6,410 tons. In June of last year 17,659 tons were produced as against 23,535 tons, an increase of 5,876 tons. Then, in July, the increase is not quite so large. In July, 1909, the output was 18,112 tons, and in July of this year it was 19,143 tons, the increase being 1,031 tons. In August of last year the output was 17,951 tons, and in August of this year it was 21,209 tons, an increase of 3,258 tons. In September of last year it was 14,869 tons as against 20,061, an increase in favour of this year of 5,192 tons. I consider these figures speak for themselves, and show that while the Newcastle strike did assist the Collie coal trade to some extent—

The Minister for Mines: It gave it an impetus, and now we are holding it.

Mr. WILSON: Before the strike came along the industry was increasing, but there is no getting away from the fact that the Newcastle strike did shove it along. Now the industry is proceeding by leaps and bounds, and I hope that in the near future the output will be twice what it is at the present time. With regard to the bunkering trade, I want to quote a few figures for the last three years. In 1907 only three years ago it was 1,447 tons; in 1908 it increased to 9,612 tons, while last year the total was 85,647 tons.

I believe the increase for the present year will be something over 100,000 tons. Speaking of the export trade, and the bunkering trade, I want to refer to the question of proper inspection of the coal for oversea purposes, and the sooner the Government attends to that matter the better it will be for all concerned. I drew attention to this last year, and I thought at that time that the Minister would have moved in the matter and got something done, but at the present time we rigidly inspect the timber which is going out of the country, and the wheat, but nothing is done with regard to coal.

Mr. Angwin: They do not inspect the wheat.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: I saw the hon. member for East Fremantle inspecting wheat the other morning, and he spoke rather adversely of it, and expressed the hope that something would be done. With regard to the inspection of coal I have already referred to the matter, and expressed the opinion that a company which supplies inferior coal or dirt to any oversea vessel, or for bunkering, in my opinion should have their leases taken away from them by the Government irrespective of what harm it might do that company. When I referred to the matter on the last occasion I offered to show to the Government places in mines where the dirt from the roof was absolutely blown down. I could take an inspector, or even the Minister for Mines down a certain mine in Collie where these places have been worked out years before and show that while the Newcastle strike was in progress the management sent down shooters to blow down the coal for the purpose of sending it away in vessels. These are absolute facts, and I could show at the present time where this kind of thing has been done. Surely that will be sufficient for the Government to take some heed of. I trust the Minister will do something in the matter, because by taking steps to stop so bad a practice he would be doing good to the country at large.

The Minister for Mines: You would have thought they were sending it to a smelter.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: Yes. It is hard for me to stand up and condemn an industry which I represent, but I think it is my duty to condemn the existence of such nefarious practices. We want to protect the worker as well as the companies. With regard to the railway consumption of coal I should be failing in my duty if I did not advocate the exclusive use of Collie coal on the Government railways. In my opinion it is justifiable, and we ought to be sufficiently patriotic to put it into effect. Reports have been put about concerning the origin of bush fires, but I think the origin of the bush fires has never yet been satisfactorily explained. There was a fire at Geraldton last year, but that was caused by want of proper spark arresters.

The Minister for Mines: We will get over the difficulty yet.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: I hope it will be soon, because the more the Government use the coal the more encouragement do they offer to others to use it. I will admit the Government have done good work in this respect, but there is still room for improvement. I want to say a word about the criticism heard from time to time concerning the increase in the price given for Collie Coal. It has to be remembered that while Collie coal has increased in price by 1s. 8½d., the price of imported coal has increased by 7s. 8½d. Newcastle coal has risen in three years time from 15s. 4d. to 23s. 0¾d., while in the same period Collie coal has risen from 8s. 9d. to 10s. 5½d., or an increase of 1s. 8½d., as against an increase of 7s. 8½d. per ton. In my opinion that is rather good business for the Government, however much the critics may condemn it, because it gives the Government a fair fuel at a fair price. I want to speak on the matter of the inspector's reports in regard to accidents. I find that the inspector has reported on the accidents, but he does not, in my opinion, put the case quite clearly. He tries to belittle the accidents because he does not consider them serious. There are other men besides the inspector who have had many years experience in coal

mines, and they are of opinion that it is not necessary for a man to have his leg cut off before you can call it a serious accident. In his report the inspector says—

There were no fatal accidents during the year. The non-fatal accidents totalled 79, 49 of which were classed as "serious" and 30 as "minor." Of the accidents, 15 occurred on the surface. Five were caused by "falls," and 59 were "miscellaneous underground." Many of the accidents classed as serious cannot reasonably be considered as such, as shown by the fact that in eight cases the injuries were "contusion of finger," but as the injured persons were incapacitated for a fortnight or more, with our system of classification they come within the category of "serious."

Well, I have known of fingers being lost, and the doctor generally puts down "contusion of finger" in the certificate he gives.

The Minister for Mines: Would not your better course be to introduce these details on the Mines Estimates? I would then be able to enter into them with you. We will have a general debate on the Mines Estimates.

Mr. A. A. WILSON: I am only speaking generally on the matter. I do not agree with the definition of the inspector as to serious accidents. After all, the inspector is only one who by favouritism has secured a position to which, perhaps, the ability of other men gave them at least an equal right. I do not say this because the present inspector is in his position, but I want to show that there has been unfairness in the matter of prosecutions. For example, the inspector says—

Another colliery manager was fined 5s., with costs 2s., for having men working underground for longer periods than allowed by the Statute.

A manager has to pay 5s. and 2s. expenses. There were practically three cases in that one case. I went to a good bit of trouble in reporting other cases to the State Mining Engineer, Mr. Montgomery,

and I got into bad odour over it; and here in the cases put forward we have the manager paying 5s. and 2s., or 2s. 4d. for each case. Practically speaking, if a manager is going to be let off for such a small fine it is no deterrent against his repeating the offence.

The Minister for Mines: Was it a first offence?

Mr. A. A. WILSON: Yes; the first offence he was convicted of, but not the first he was brought up on. I have known offenders fined 26s. for the first offence. When dealing with the items of the Estimates I shall endeavour to object to one man being engaged in the dual capacity of inspector of mines and inspector of railways. In my opinion it is unfair to the company, to the Government, and to the men who work under the company's manager. For example, an inspector of mines may go down a mine and find the ventilation insufficient; and the next day he may come along and tell the manager the ventilation will have to be improved. There may be a few words between the manager and the inspector, and the job may be finished to the satisfaction of the inspector. Then he comes along again in the capacity of railway inspector and demands an improvement in the quality of the coal being furnished. In my opinion, the inspector of coal should not be at the same time the inspector of ventilation. In passing I want to say a few words in regard to the timber industry. The member for Forrest will be able to deal exclusively with this question, but as I have a few timber workers in the Collie electorate I feel I shall not be trenching upon my friend's preserves by touching upon this matter. I am pleased to note that the timber industry is going ahead by leaps and bounds, and at the present time we are exporting more timber and paying better wages than ever before. But while we have reason for satisfaction in this regard there is one point which I would like to see settled upon an improved basis, namely, the provision of compensation for widows and children of those who have lost their lives in the industry in years past. I have in mind the case of a widow and four child-

ren now in Victoria, whose husband and father was killed while working timber on the new concession at Collie. Being partly a contractor, earning so much for so many sleepers a day, he did not come under the Workers' Compensation Act and, consequently, his widow and children are now practically starving. I think a royalty should be put on all export timber in order to provide a fund from which such widows and orphans could be compensated and provided for for at least some little time.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why not bring these workers under the Workers' Compensation Act?

Mr. A. A. WILSON: If that could be done I should be very pleased, but failing that I think some other steps should be taken to provide for the widows and orphans. I notice with pleasure that the Premier intends to complete certain railways; they shall have my support. On the question of the Wagin-Darakan railway, personally speaking, I should be pleased to see that project postponed for a certain time because, in my opinion, that railway should not go in the direction followed by the survey. If it be put on the list for construction I shall do my best to have it postponed for a certain period. One more subject, and I am finished. I come to the question of coronial inquiries. One justice of the peace in Collie, Mr. John Johns, has been struck off the list because he refused to do certain clerical work not actually within his province. In my opinion, Mr. Johns has been harshly treated by the Crown Law Department, having been cut off from his position as justice of the peace. For years past he has taken hundreds of cases, and simply because he refused to write out the depositions of witnesses during a coronial inquiry he was asked to resign, and in a fashion not too gentlemanly at that. He was asked to resign with a pistol at his head.

The Minister for Works: Who wrote to him?

Mr. A. A. WILSON: A gentleman named Hampton. The correspondence is here, but I do not think I will inflict it on the House. However, here is the letter

written by Mr. Hampton to Mr. Johns. It reads as follows:—

Sir,—With reference to your letter dated the 19th inst., addressed to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, which has been forwarded to this department, I am instructed by the Hon. the Attorney General to inform you that in order to prevent further inconvenience to the public, and to save further unnecessary expenditure the clerk of courts, Collie, was instructed to obtain assistance in order that the inquest on the body of Winifred Paynter should be completed.

May I say this inquiry had been adjourned three times in order that a clerk might be secured. The department, after three adjournments, thought it necessary that a clerk should be furnished to take the depositions. The letter goes on to state—

It has never been the practice in this State to provide justices with deposition clerks, and, as you are aware, you yourself have in the past made no demur with regard to taking depositions when necessary. On the occasion under review you made no complaint whatever to this department with reference to having to take depositions, but you adjourned the case from time to time at considerable expense, to say nothing of the inconvenience cause to jurors and witnesses. I am now instructed by the Hon. the Attorney General to ask you to state whether you are prepared to continue the work of a justice of the peace as in the past, more particularly in regard to yourself taking depositions when acting as coroner and sitting as presiding justice in courts of petty sessions and on preliminary hearings, failing which I have to suggest that you should retire from the commission of the peace.

During the last two years Mr. Johns has taken 153 petty session cases, in addition to licenses and coronial inquiries, and also been visiting justice of the peace to the gaols; and he was asked curtly to retire simply because he could not fall in with the wishes of this gentleman named Hampton in regard to these inquiries. If a justice of the peace is illiterate the

Crown supplies him with a clerk, and in this case I think Mr. Johns was within his rights in asking that a clerk should be supplied, because the case was one of a certain difficulty. Sometimes when a justice of the peace goes to trouble and expense and care in taking the depositions, it happens that the magistrate before whom the case subsequently comes pokes fun, if I may use such an expression, at those depositions because they do not happen to have been put in legal form. In this case Mr. Johns was a man of pluck, and he refused to be badgered by the department, refused to be made a saddle-back just to meet their convenience, and finally refused to withdraw from the Commission. The result was that last month his name was dropped off the Commission, and notice to that effect was posted in the Court at Collie. I maintain that when a man gives his time to the Crown, as Mr. Johns did, a certain amount of consideration should be shown him, instead of the Government taking a high-handed action and asking him to resign from the position. I hope the Government will investigate the circumstances of this case and restore him to his place on the Commission which he so ably filled. There is no man in Collie whom Mr. Johns has not helped at times, and if he made a mistake, which I do not admit, it was up to the Government to try to amend the position instead of damaging it by compelling him to retire. I do not intend to say more just now, but when the vote for the Stipendiary Magistracy is before the Committee I shall be able to speak as I desire. I shall take the opportunity when I come to that vote of asking the Minister his intentions, and I trust that he will be able to assure us that he can give Mr. Johns his position back again.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest): It is my intention to offer a few remarks before we finish the general discussion on the financial statement, with a view to directing Ministers' attention to several matters which I think should receive immediate consideration. I refer particularly to the Minister for Lands. I was reading only a few days ago that a considerable

amount of criticism had been indulged in in the Federal Parliament owing to the lateness in introducing the Budget there, and my old friend, Sir John Forrest, waxed very indignant because one month had elapsed between the introduction of the Budget and the continuation of the discussion. Here in this Parliament practically a month has gone by since the Budget was delivered, with the result that a great many members have forgotten the Treasurer's remarks and have to look them up again, besides having other important business to attend to.

The Minister for Works: It was not the Government's fault; it was by special arrangement.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Some of the delay was by special arrangement I admit, and as I said before I am not prepared to take up the attitude of Sir John Forrest and wholly condemn the Government's action. The preceding speaker confined himself principally to a matter that affected his particular electorate. I intend to do the same, and to deal particularly with an industry in which three thousand of my constituents are engaged, and I hope to place before the Minister some pertinent facts regarding this industry, and to urge the Government to adopt a different policy to that which they have followed in the past. I have on different occasions appealed to the Minister for Lands to pay a little more attention to the timber industry in this State, and I believe that every hon. member, no matter from what part of the State he comes, will recognise that an industry which has shown in profits out of royalties, licenses, and rents over a quarter of a million pounds during the last fifteen years, and resulted in a considerable profit on last year's operation, should be treated differently to what it has been treated in the past, so that everything possible may be done to preserve it for the benefit of the State. During the last session I pointed out to the Minister for Lands that it would be advisable to adopt in this State the suggestions which are being adopted to-day in New South Wales, where the Government are acting on the advice of responsible practical men who

were appointed as a Royal Commission to make exhaustive inquiries into the whole question of forestry in Australia. I have urged the Minister to adopt the recommendations of that Commission and bring them into force in Western Australia. On more than one occasion I have condemned the Government for their inertness and drift in regard to the timber industry, and I repeat that up to the present they have shown no sign of bringing about the very necessary reforms.

The Minister for Lands: We are getting a conservator.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Yes, we are getting a conservator. I was told last year that the Government were getting a conservator, but apparently nothing has been done. I am giving the Minister notice of a few questions I shall ask him later on, for I feel that if I allowed my remarks to go till we reached the item for Woods and Forests, it would inconvenience him to some extent, and he would not be able to give me on the spur of the moment the information I am desirous of obtaining. I wish to refer to the report of the Royal Commission, which I placed before the Minister not long ago. I notice that the Inspector General of Forests in his report has tabulated several sentences and suggestions from the Commission's report for the benefit of members of this House, and that report now lies on the Table. I am going to refer to a few other suggestions which I think are eminently applicable to this State. First of all I want to touch on the question of dealing with the timber areas, and in doing so I venture to say that the policy that is being adopted in New South Wales is one that can be pursued here with considerable advantage. One portion of the report of that Commission is to this effect:

Hitherto the condition under which the forests in the State have been worked have led to the depreciation of their standard value, and permitted only a small proportion of that natural reproduction which would have ensued under more intelligent treatment. These conditions allowed the best trees of each class to be felled and removed, leaving the crooked, over matured, and

other useless growths to remain standing as breeding-places for white ants; the forest floor meanwhile being littered with confused masses of fallen trees and debris, to act as feeders of bush fires.

I have pointed out on previous occasions to members that one of the greatest enemies to the forests in Western Australia is the bush fire, which sweeps along with such disastrous effect every summer, and that, having fuel supplied to it in the form of fallen timber and debris, the young saplings are attacked, with the natural result that swellings and other defects come into the timber. I think that we should adopt many of the suggestions put forward by that Commission in New South Wales in order to better preserve this industry for all time. I hope later on to deal with this question in urging the appointment of an up-to-date forestry service. A further recommendation of the Commission in regard to requirements that are essential is as follows:—

One of the first steps to be taken by an organised Forestry Department should be the improvement of the forests. This will involve, amongst other matters, the treatment of dead timber, debris, and refuse which now litter the ground, and the destruction of over matured, decaying, and useless trees, which in their growth retard natural reafforestation.

I know that I am going to meet with considerable opposition from the Minister a little later on when I bring up the question of the possibility or otherwise of our giving young growing timber a chance and allowing the forests to reproduce themselves, but notwithstanding any opposition that may be directed against my contention, I intend to deal exhaustively with the report, which I think should be considered by every member of this Chamber, and to carry out my duty to my constituents and to the State by urging that the utmost attention should be given to the timber industry. Further on in that report, when dealing with the appointment of a conservator, the Commissioners recommended that the conservator should be under a board of three Com-

missioners, that he should take instructions from these Commissioners, and advise them in regard to the technicalities of forestry matters. The report states—

We also think it essential that an acting Conservator with a salary of £600 per annum should be appointed on the recommendation of the Commissioners to, subject to their direction, take charge of the technical work of the department and the details of its working. If, during the first two years of office, the acting Conservator should perform the duties of his position to the satisfaction of the Commissioners we would recommend that he be appointed Conservator of Forests, with a salary of £700 per annum, and receive annual increments up to £800 per annum.

In this country we have never made any attempt to appoint a gentleman at a salary of that magnitude. We have been content to go on for the last five years having in the position of Acting Inspector General of Forests a gentleman, who though supposed to carry out the duties, has never received the salary of that position.

The Minister for Lands: I think he has been there about ten years.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: For fifteen years he has been in the service of that department.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: But he has never received the full salary.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I think it will be exceedingly difficult, even if we do get a conservator of forests, to keep him in this State, because the tendency seems to be not to give sufficient freedom for an officer in his position, and it has been forced home to us on more than one occasion that we have been unable to keep the services of the good men we have had in the State. I need not refer to the fact that the settlers are losing the services of so eminently a qualified man as Professor Lowrie; and again another important appointment which was under consideration was not completed. I do not know what the reason for it was, but there was a possibility of the State having a

rather brilliant gentleman appointed in charge of the Modern school in Perth. I refer to Mr. Jolly. That gentleman was practically engaged, but for some reason or other the agreement was not completed. He has since been taken up by the South Australian Government, the same Government that secured the services of Professor Lowrie, and they are paying him a high salary as Instructor of Forestry. According to the papers he is a gentleman eminently qualified for that position and for the work of advancing the interests of forestry in South Australia. They are paying him a very high salary compared with what is paid to other servants, in order to give him an opportunity of pushing forward the forestry system in that State. I understand that he has studied this question all through from A to Z, and I believe that he had experience in the forests of Germany and has taken a diploma at the University of Oxford for this particular branch of industry. However, Western Australia is not privileged to have the services of Mr. Jolly, who could have imparted to the younger generation a large amount of valuable information that would be of great advantage to this country. I want to say in regard to this conservation of forests that we will have to adopt a different attitude to that we have adopted in the past towards the office. If we are to have a conservator of forests who understands his business and who will be prepared to initiate reforms in this country we will have to give him a little more freedom than we have been prepared to give in the past. We will have to make him responsible to the Minister, but we must allow him to administer the affairs to a large extent of his department. It cannot be expected that a Minister of the Crown, Minister for Lands, or any other Minister, can devote the particular attention that is necessary to an industry of this kind. Therefore I say a different attitude will have to be adopted. At present everything in the Woods and Forests Department is subordinate to the Lands Department. It is absolutely impossible for the Inspec-

tor General of Forests or any of his officials to move a finger unless they get support from the Lands Department, support that is not very often forthcoming. A similar difficulty cropped up in the Eastern States, and the commissioners devoted special attention to it; that was the difficulty of having a Forestry Department merely as a hanger on to the Lands Department and thereby preventing the men who were trying to do their best for the timber industry of New South Wales from getting the consideration to which they were entitled. I shall make reference to that part of the report of these commissioners to show that a similar difficulty exists here, and should not be allowed to exist any longer; but, apart from that question, I want to deal with the expenditure that has been carried out in the Waroona district towards finding out what policy would be the best to adopt in bringing about the recuperation of forests in the cut-out areas. Some time ago a body of men were engaged in Perth to go to the Waroona district in order to experiment there by burning the dead timber and cutting down trees that would never be profitable but were sapping the moisture from the ground, and so thinning out the forest so that the good trees would have an opportunity to go ahead; but I regret to say that, as in many other experiments, there was so much bungling at the outset that it ended in failure. I am going to ask the Minister—and I hope he will grant my request before he replies to me—that the figures of that experiment will be placed before me so that I may have an opportunity of perusing them, because I fail to find in the report of the Inspector General of Forests or in the report of the Lands Department anything to show what the operations at Waroona cost or what was accomplished. I refer to this subject because it is a pet subject with me. I believe the State cannot start too soon finding out what is best for our forests and adopting a policy that will make them of permanent good. There are some other matters I shall have to discuss later on when I am discussing reports, but I want

to say now that I want the appointment of a conservator to be made because I believe we should come to finality in the matter. I believe the Government have been guilty of neglect during the last few years in not appointing either the present occupant, or some other person, and paying the full salary attached to the post. It is somewhat of false pretences to put a man in a position and pay him a considerably lower salary and expect him to do the work. I reiterate that if we are successful in getting a practical man, whether from the forests of the State or from the Eastern States, the Minister will have to completely alter his methods and give that man a little more freedom to deal with affairs as they crop up, and to deal with the industry in general. I emphasise this point because, whatever suggestion comes from the Woods and Forests Department, the Inspector General of Forests and his staff are powerless to move until they get the support, the advice and the authority of the officers of the Lands Department, who perhaps are as far removed from a knowledge of forestry as those who have never devoted the slightest attention to the subject. We cannot expect to have a good policy if we have to submit every item, every action taken in that department, to the scrutiny of officers who are not directly concerned or who are not responsible for the work carried out in that particular industry. I hope the Minister will take notice of my remarks in this direction, and I hope also that the Woods and Forests Department will be reorganised, and that an up-to-date building, as well as the other necessary equipments, will be provided in the near future. Here I would like to mention that the men engaged in the timber industry have, I believe, taken a somewhat commendable step towards making some provision for the future of this industry by taking the initial step towards establishing a scholarship to be competed for by boys in the South-Western district. The men working in that timber industry realise, even if the Minister does not, that we cannot go on increasing our export figures year after year, we cannot go on slaughtering our forests at the rate we are doing to-day and make no attempt

to bring them back to a reproductive stage. We cannot go on, I say, without finding that the industry is gradually slipping away from our midst, and, instead of being a permanent industry, becoming, as it is often described, I am sorry to say, even by people in Western Australia, a fleeting industry. There is no reason whatsoever why the timber industry of our State should be a fleeting industry. They have solved the problem in Germany and even in Japan, they are solving it in other continental countries; they are endeavouring to bring up the standards of forests in every country, and they are compelled to do so because the supply of timber right throughout the world has been diminishing to such an extent that immediate action is necessary to prevent a famine in the future. In that great country, America, perhaps the greatest timber country in the world, we find competent men, half a dozen of the best experts in America, have gone into the question, and they anticipate a timber famine in less than 15 years. Although we can look round us in this country to-day, and not only here, but in other portions of Australia, and perhaps see a lot of wooded land and virgin forest awaiting the feller's axe yet the fact remains that timber is not growing up to take the place of the timber we are slaughtering; and if we are to avoid a famine in the future, we should conserve all the cut-out areas, and we have already 150,000 acres of them in the possession of the Crown to-day. I am going to serve an indictment against this Government, and not only this Government but against past Governments as well, that they have failed to appreciate the importance of this particular industry, and failed to make any adequate provision for future supplies. It is useless, it is altogether illogical to argue for a moment that we can go on exporting a million pounds worth this year and just about a million pounds worth last year and possibly a greater amount next year, and sit down serenely and look forward to a good time in the future, during the next couple of generations at any rate. We owe a duty to prosperity in preserving this timber industry, and in making provision not only for the work-

ers engaged in it but also for the supplies for the State for many years ahead. The timber workers in the South-West, numbering many thousands, have taken an intelligent interest in this question, and have only wanted a lead, which lead I am pleased to say has been given by the member for Brown Hill (Mr. Bath) who is a keen student of education questions and has taken a particular interest in anything appertaining to the advancement of the youth of the State. The hon. member is one of the executive officers of these timber men, and he initiated a proposal which I believe will work out for the lasting good of the people of this country, that is, to have a scholarship open to the boys of the South-West so that it will give them some encouragement to improve themselves and to brush up their intellects and to strive to win one of these prizes, and then to strive to gain the highest position in the forestry of Australia, if it is possible to gain it. It will cost the timber workers over £600. They are paying it out of the funds of the union and are doing so in the hope that at least the interest of others will be aroused, and that some effort will be made, not only by the Government but also by the timber companies exploiting the areas, to make some provision so that perhaps by the aid of three or four scholarships we shall have in the future men thoroughly qualified to go into the whole of the phases of this important industry and decide on a policy which shall be in the best interests of the State. Unfortunately we have to admit that here in Western Australia we have—I am not going to blame the present Government for this, although perhaps they might exercise a little more caution—we have in the past been giving away with a lavish hand the great bulk of our timber country at a peppercorn rental to companies to exploit, and I am sorry to say on very long terms. The great bulk of the timber leases and concessions will not expire until 1925, and some of them not until 1938. We have on the fringe of the seaboard given to Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company a concession of half a million acres of country, and also a quarter of a million

acres near Perth for which they are paying £50 a year. After having gone on for something like 30 years or for a little longer on that particular area I think all the good the State will have of that quarter of a million acres will be some black stumps. Certainly we have been getting a little revenue, but I venture to say that the great bulk of the revenue has been coming from small men in the industry who are holding sawmill permits and are paying more in proportion to the State than this company that enjoys cutting over a quarter of a million acres for £50 a year. Further than that, we have a million acres held under sawmill permits. We are told that a policy of caution is being taken up by the present Government and that they propose to lock up a certain area for future State requirements and that they will not give approval to an area of country which in the future they will require for themselves; but I ask the Minister why approval has been given to the application of the Timber Corporation, Limited, Greenbushes, for an additional area of 75,000 acres. An application has been made I know for an area of 75,000 acres, and bear in mind that is a considerable amount of country.

The Minister for Lands: You know the greater portion of that is reserved.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I only know that application has been made and has been made for a considerable time, and I want to know whether approval has been given.

The Minister for Lands: Certainly not, it is reserved.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Approval has been given in the last two or three months for a fair strip of country.

The Minister for Lands: Not reserved land.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It may not be reserved, the particular area to which I am referring, but I certainly say there are many people in the State to-day who would like to have an opportunity of getting as large an area of country as Honey, Port and Company have obtained on the Marradong railway.

The Minister for Lands: Anyone could have taken it up.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But it is this sort of indefiniteness I wish to draw attention to. During the past three months the Minister has given an area of just on 30,000 acres to Honey, Port and Company. I do not care who it was given to for the matter of that, but he says anyone else could have taken it.

The Minister for Lands: Certainly.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Minister proclaims to the world that we have a reserve of 750,000 acres for future State requirements.

The Minister for Lands: That is so.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Since reserving that area the Minister has given away this other area which apparently was not a reserve, and he is prepared, I judge by his attitude, to give away more to-morrow. What I ask the Minister to tell me is where that three quarters of a million acres exists. It is no use drawing imaginary lines from one part of the coast to another and saying "That is all reserved for timber country"; it is no use pointing out boundaries running in certain directions and saying, "Timber exists there which is reserved for the State"; I say the Woods and Forests Department to-day is unable to give the information and the Minister is unable to give the information because the area does not exist.

The Minister for Lands: The reserve has been made.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Where?

The Minister for Lands: The blocks are on the map.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I have gone to the office, and I have been shown an area that is supposed to contain approximately 200,000 acres, possibly worth two or three loads to the acre; but apart from that one area, I have been unable to find out where the remainder of the 750,000 acres is. I say if we are going to have anything definite as to the future supplies, if we are to make provision by way of reservation we shall have to expend a fair sum of money in having a survey of the leases made, and a survey of the country supposed to be capable of growing marketable timber, and also have a classification made. The Minister has not the

machinery, and he knows that the Forestry Department is not equipped to cope with this, and the result is we give misleading information to the public by saying that we have three-quarters of a million acres.

The Minister for Lands: It has been reported by the Forestry Department.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But whereabouts is it?

The Minister for Lands: In various parts of the State.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I have been unable to find it, and I am concerned about it, because while I am urging the Government to take some action, and urging the Minister to pursue a vigorous policy with regard to this industry, which is practically the backbone of the South-West, I am told that the Minister has reserved three-quarters of a million acres.

The Minister for Lands: That has been done.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But where is it? And can the Minister tell me whether it is karri, or jarrah, or whether it is red gum or black butt. I have asked for the information, but up to the present I have not had it. I trust, however, that I will get it in the near future, and the people will have an opportunity then of judging what supplies we have for the future, and what will remain for export. Apart from the question of hard woods, I want to devote a few minutes to a subject that has been referred to before; that is the question of pine plantations. The Government have started an experiment in this direction, and, I suppose, no one will condemn them for launching out in connection with this experiment, but I am going to condemn them for planting pines at an excessive cost, when, I contend, with a little further inquiry pines could be profitably grown in the State on country that does not require £10 an acre to clear. I am going to ask that the figures in connection with this pine plantation also be made available, because up to the present I have not been able, from many of the reports, to find what the experiment at Ludlow has actually cost. I believe there is no one who will find fault with the Minister for adopting this policy

provided that the people of the State consider it should be adopted. I want to say that while we deplore the absence of pine forests in the country, and while we think it is necessary to establish areas, and lay down at an expensive rate, plantations in the South-West, we know side by side with that fact that the Government have granted an area of 170,000 acres in the Wyndham district supposed to carry marketable pine.

The Minister for Lands: It is not the same timber.

MR. O'LOGHLEN: But it is pine, and it is utilised for the same purpose as *pinus insignis* when it reaches maturity. I want information as to these forests in the North-West, and I regret to say, that owing to the absence of a properly equipped Forestry Department, we are in the dark, and all we have to guide us is one report from the stock inspector up there. If that report be correct I say that the Government have adopted a policy which will lead to national disaster and which should be condemned, namely, that of giving away 170,000 acres to three firms without making provision as to their own supplies. I want to give credit to the Minister for Lands because he stood out for the protection of the State during the negotiations for the granting of that area for 10 years to these three different firms. The Minister asked that a certain area be retained for Government purposes, but he was overruled. The Minister says that there is supposed to be 125,000 acres remaining that can be exploited by the Government. Is it reasonable to think that these companies, which are going to work over these areas of country, are going to pick out the worst of it and leave the cream of it for the State? Will these firms go back from the coast and leave the timber along the seaboard for the Government to exploit? The three companies have applied for and obtained the 170,000 acres in the North-West; the companies were floated in London to exploit this particular forest, and they have pointed out that it was a great national concern. It was not a matter that they should preach the virtues of, and that the State should assist them

by giving them a lease for 20 years and other facilities, and also give them extension of time in connection with the erection of their mills. I venture to say that these particular companies would not have approached the Government and secured those plantations had it not been for the fact that they thought they were going to do well out of them. Considering the importance of pine plantation in Australia to-day, the Government should have made adequate provision for themselves before parting with what was a national asset of 170,000 acres near the Cambridge Gulf. I want to give the Minister for Lands credit for trying to hold out for the State reserving a large area for future requirements. He pointed out that a monopoly would be given to the companies, and that the State would be squeezed between them later on. The Minister was overridden in that, I am sorry to say, by the Chief Engineer, the Chief Architect and the Minister for Works, who is now Premier. These gentlemen pointed out that if we gave away this immense territory the State could always buy at the market rates. We have had experience during the past couple of years of the State being able to buy at market rates in some instances, but in other instances the State had to pay through the nose for timber for its own railways. At Port Hedland a big increase was insisted upon by the timber companies of the State. The State should have first consideration and not come in at the heel of the hunt. I am going to enter my protest against the policy pursued, and I say that if the report of that timber country shows it to be as good as has been indicated in Mr. Stock-Inspector Halley's report the Government are deserving of censure for parting with that strip of territory. I have here extracts from that report. Mr. Halley states—

It is a solid forest 20 miles by 12, estimated at eight loads to the acre. Young's estimate is five to four; height 70 feet. diameter 6 to 30 inches. . . . Know all pine forests at Warrego, North-West Queensland, and never saw any forest approaching this in extent

or in wealth of timber. It is impervious to white ants and is ant resisting.

Mr. Jacoby: Does he mention the area?

Mr. Bath: There is 20 miles by 12 miles in that one forest.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The whole area is 170,000 acres.

Mr. Jacoby: Have they a concession over the whole of it?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Government have given a concession over 170,000 acres, and the Minister informs me that the State will have the right to go on to 125,000 acres. I do not know what area exists there; we do not know much about it.

Mr. Jacoby: What is the consideration given for the concession?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The usual concession; saw-milling terms. They must erect a saw-milling plant capable of cutting 40 loads a day. I believe they intend to erect a mill capable of cutting 60 loads a day, and they have obtained a permit for 10 years.

Mr. Jacoby: Are they permitted to export it.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Undoubtedly; it is the export trade they are after, according to their statements.

Mr. Gill: What will the State get out of it?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Practically nothing, and we are spending £10 an acre in the planting of pines in the South-West. Mr. Halley, who has had experience in the North-West, reported favourably and those three companies were so anxious about securing this concession that they dogged the Minister's footsteps, and I venture to say there was something there worth a little more inquiry, and something there for the State to retain until there was a better knowledge of the resources of that particular district. I certainly am not opposed to the planting of pines, but I am opposed to the planting of pines at a cost of £10 an acre in the Ludlow district when, I believe, there are areas throughout Western Australia which can be cleared and cut ready for the purpose at a comparatively low cost. I want to refer to what is being done in South Australia, because I believe that

South Australia has given an object lesson to the world on this particular question. They have gone in extensively there for pines during the past few years, with the result that their forests have reached maturity and are a source of revenue to the State of South Australia now. Mr. Walter Gill who, perhaps, is one of the most practical men in the Commonwealth in this connection, and who has been Conservator of Forests in South Australia for many years, gave some very valuable information recently before a Royal Commission, as to the growth of pines. He said—

To obtain the best results in the growth of *pinus insignis*, the trees should be planted about nine feet apart. If planted in this way the yield per acre, twenty-one years after planting, would amount to 24,000 superficial feet of timber which, at present prices in South Australia, would represent a value of £200 per acre after twenty-one years' growth, or an average of £9 10s. 6d. per acre per annum throughout the whole period, while the total cost of preparing the land, planting, and subsequent care, including the exclusion of rabbits by wire fencing, varied from £5 to £10 per acre.

No one will question the policy of planting pines in this or any other country, seeing that they are such a source of profit, but, I contend, the State should plant these forests as it would not pay private individuals to wait until the trees mature. I was interested in the remarks of Mr. Gill the other day in Adelaide, when he gave a lecture on forestry in South Australia. Mr. Gill, speaking only 10 days ago in Adelaide, said—

It should be the determination of Australia to plant all the timber it could, and never to take from the artificial forests before maturity more wood in any years than is equal to one year's production. Speaking of the *pinus insignis*, Mr. Gill said that South Australia was the first country to grow it commercially. A five-acre patch in Bundaleer, after 23 years' growth, had yielded 33,000 cubic feet of timber, which would have taken the best trees

in the German forests 60 years to produce. Four thousand fruit-cases had been cut from one acre.

It is impossible for us to over-estimate the importance of the policy of pine plantation, or the urgent necessity that exists for its vigorous carrying out; and seeing that it is going to be so reproductive an enterprise I think we should go about it in a different manner from that adopted in the past. I have all along contended that it was a mistake to go into the heavily timbered country in the Ludlow district when there were so many suitable areas elsewhere which could have been cleared for a few shillings, and which would have grown the pine to perfection. Between Tambellup and Albany, in fact right through that district, there are to be seen some magnificent pines. There is one river down there in particular, the name of which I have forgotten; but about that part there are some of the finest pines ever grown in the Commonwealth.

The Minister for Lands: It would cost a fearful lot to clear the land.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am not referring altogether to the heavily timbered country, but I say that between Tambellup and Albany there are thousands of acres of country that could be cleared at a comparatively small cost, and which would grow the pine practically to perfection. I remember that a day or two before Sir Newton Moore resigned he told me that any time I saw a likely bit of country that could be put under pine plantation at low cost I was to let him know, and he would be prepared to send Mr. Macfarlane down to inspect it.

The Minister for Lands: I have ordered an inspection of that country.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: My suggestion is that not only should Mr. Macfarlane inspect the country, but that it would pay handsomely to get Mr. Gill over to report on it.

Mr. Jacoby: What about the Conservator of Forests?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Conservator of Forests would be stopped at every turn he took unless some new methods were introduced into the department—he would

have no more freedom than those of our ladies who at present go about in hobble skirts. If we are going to subordinate the Forestry Department to the Lands Department we might almost as well have no such department at all; for if before the Forestry Department can spend £10 on some important improvement it is necessary to obtain the approval of half a dozen officers in the Lands Department, then clearly any progress in the Forestry Department is impossible. I hope the Minister will decide to reorganise the whole department, or that at least he will see that a different building is provided for the accommodation of that department. When I meet men who have been connected with timber in other parts of the world, I am ashamed to take them into the Forestry Department of Western Australia. It is a bakehouse in summer, and altogether impossible in winter. Unless some action is taken to equip the department, and give it a chance to justify its existence as a separate department, there is going to be a great deal of criticism with regard to it in the future.

Mr. Jacoby: It is the personnel that requires amendment rather than the offices.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: And we want some sort of a building as well; we ought not to be content with a building that would not suit a dealer in old clothes. This industry, which in Western Australia is responsible for the creation of so much employment, is deserving of better treatment.

Mr. Jacoby: Are they growling about the offices?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I do not know; they have not come to me about them. However I am growling about it. The Premier referred to the fact that of the value of every load of timber exported something like £3 was retained in the State. We all admit the importance of the industry; it has been of importance in the past, and it will certainly be of greater importance in the future, for it will not only create employment, but will bring revenue to the State. I was suggesting that Mr. Gill should be brought over from South Australia to report on

the soils of this country which in his opinion would produce pine forests at low cost. I believe the South Australian Government would be prepared to let us have the services of Mr. Gill for a few weeks, and I am convinced it would be the best policy to adopt. If the Minister thinks well of the suggestion I ask him, in the interests of the State, in order to save heavy expenditure and have more satisfactory results, that he shall get the Conservator of Forests in South Australia to pay a visit to our State and report on the areas—which, I think, exist in this country—capable of being cleared at comparatively low cost, and of satisfactorily producing pines. As regards the timber industry, I do not think there is any cause for alarm. I believe if we pay some regard to bringing back to the reproductive stage the cut-out areas, and so have country to operate on after the virgin forests have been slaughtered, we will be doing our duty and preserving the industry. I find on looking up the figures that an enormous amount of timber is used every year, supplies being drawn from all parts of the world. In some places they have stopped exportation, while in other places, in continental countries in particular, they have lifted their tariffs on hardwoods. Great Britain obtains over 80 per cent. of her supplies from other countries of the world, annually importing over 10,000,000 tons of timber at a cost of about £27,000,000 sterling, and is likely in the future to use considerably more. And while the supplies all over the world are gradually growing less I think we should set an example, or at least follow in the footsteps of New South Wales, and make some provision for future supplies. Apart from the question of pines, I believe if we had a properly equipped department we could turn our attention to the growth of other timbers as well, timbers that as a commercial product have won their way in other parts of the world, and which if cultivated would prove a fruitful source of revenue and profit. I refer particularly to the wattle; because in this country we are sadly neglecting the wattle industry which, if persevered in, would be a beneficial concern to the country at

large. Other countries have not been so backward in dealing with this industry. In South Africa they have obtained the seed from Australia, the home of the wattle, and have planted it with considerable success. The growth of the wattle in South Africa has been the means of affording employment to numbers, and profitable investment to those who have embarked in the concern. Thus from 39 packages valued at £11, produced in 1896 the figures have risen to 15,800 tons valued at £92,911, produced in 1905, and the present yield, taken from an area of between 30,000 and 40,000 acres, is valued at over £100,000 per annum. I believe as a means of increasing the productiveness of the State, as a means of establishing an important industry, we could, at any rate under a proper system of forestry, even go in for a plantation of wattles. If it can be done in other countries, surely it can be done here, the home of the wattle. We could, by proper methods, bring a new industry here, for surely it goes without saying that what they can do in Natal in this respect we can do; and if they can reap the advantage of over £100,000 per annum the Minister in charge of this department could well afford to give a little attention to this subject. I am going to appeal to him again to attend to this subject, and I hope my appeal will not be in vain, and that in the near future we will be able to show better results to the people of the country than we have done in the past so far as looking after this timber industry is concerned.

Mr. Jacoby: It would only pay on waste ground.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Surely it would pay even there. The whole of the evidence given by practical men before the last Royal Commission in Australia was to the effect that on the sand dunes right through the State the *pinus insignis* would grow. We have country here suitable for wattles. They are growing them in other countries, and here, I contend, we could grow them just as well without going to the enormous expense of clearing country to bring forests into existence. I believe also that such an expensive policy as is thought by some should be introduced is not necessary in

this State. Seeing that the Forestry Department has turned in a considerable profit during the years it has been in existence, I think it only a fair proposition that some of that profit should be expended in building up the industry. If those engaged in cutting out our timbers will not do it, if the companies refuse to contribute towards it, the State should devote some money from the proceeds of that industry towards preserving the life of the industry.

Mr. Jacoby: The department has not made any money.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Only a little over a quarter of a million during the 15 years of its existence. That is the actual profit after paying all expenses.

Mr. Jacoby: But the timber industry made that.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The timber industry governed by the department. There is no justification for the existence of the department without the industry.

Mr. Jacoby: The department could make money if they went in for forestry.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: That is what I have been trying to impress upon the Minister; that is why those timber workers in the South-West, working for 8s. a day, are prepared to put aside £600 to educate one of their boys in the forestry of the State. It has been decided that the boy shall be educated within the State if possible, and if it is not possible to get the necessary education here he shall be sent abroad for it. We are determined to call public attention to the crying evil of neglecting our forests. The men themselves voted £600 to train a boy for this position, and as a result of that resolution others will be prompted to take action as well. I trust not only the Government but the timber companies will come to our assistance and adopt such a policy as will lead to the establishment of a different system and the preservation of the industry. Now, just a word on the question of the State saw-mill that was erected some little time ago. When that saw-mill was set up, I, for one, hailed its erection with a considerable amount of satisfaction; because I recognised that if run in a proper manner it would prove a triumph

for State enterprise, and not only give the Government their requirements at a fair rate instead of their having to pay exorbitant prices to companies with very few competitors, but further than that, would give us some guide as to the actual cost of production. When we have at different times in the past endeavoured to ascertain the cost of production in this country we have been met with masses of figures that were beyond all understanding. It has been said that figures can prove anything, and I hailed with satisfaction the erection of a State saw-mill, because I thought it would give us a plain statement of what the real cost of production was. But while grateful that the mill was established I have to deplore the bungle that resulted after the mill was established. Engineers from the Railway Department who had never erected a mill before were sent to put this one up, although they had no qualifications for the work. Since then we have had experts, electrical and others, down from Perth to report on breakdowns of the machinery, and different phases of the faulty construction of that mill. Instead of the whole affair being given over to an expert who had large experience in that work in different parts of the State, the departmental engineers had too much say, with the result that the whole construction was defective, and the enterprise has not been the success which we anticipated. If there is one great drawback to the success of State enterprise it is in faulty methods, lack of sympathy, bad administration, and excessive cost, resulting in a very high cost of production, with the effect that the affair is condemned as a failure. Notwithstanding all the expenses incurred at the start, and notwithstanding the defective plans of the engineers and the faulty machinery, I believe that the State mill will justify its existence and supply cheap timber to the Government departments, and that later on it will be the means of bringing in such a system that the State can go in for further enterprises with profit to itself and advantage to the people. I know that in condemning a State enterprise it will be pointed out that

We advocated it, and that now we have it we are not satisfied. But I am condemning not the enterprise but the management. I am condemning the department in the first place for not putting up a modern and suitable mill. Having decided to put up a mill why did the Government not make a start in the right direction and establish a modern plant? We can get the finest workmen in the world, but unless they are given good machinery we cannot expect to get satisfactory results. The engine is not suitable for saw-mill purposes, it runs 25 revolutions over the allotted speed; the main pulley is too small, and the other pulleys are small in proportion; the belts are continually slipping, and when the belts slip the whole mill is hung up; the rip bench and iron puller are in a state of disrepair, and if the management require to get any supplies for carrying on the mill it is impossible to get them. The travelling bench is an absolute failure, and the docker is left swinging without any protection. The other day when I was there a man's fingers were cut off, and I believe that this accident was due solely to the faulty construction of that docker. The whole plant wants overhauling, and I hope that the Minister for Railways, who has control of the mill, will be prepared to take a few suggestions as to the improvement of the plant.

The Minister for Mines: It was only started temporarily.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: And that is going to condemn the enterprise.

The Minister for Mines: We were in a hurry.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Nevertheless, it has been a profitable thing to the Government. They have been able to get their own timber at fair rates, and I would urge that the saw-mill be brought up-to-date or that another mill be erected. Some of the finest timber in Western Australia is in the vicinity of that mill, and there is no reason why it should not be one of the greatest boons in the history of the State; and why the Government should not be able to cry from the housetops the success of this mill as one of the greatest triumphs of State enterprise. The mana-

ger has a difficulty in getting the necessary supplies for the mill. Whether they come from Midland workshops or other centres I do not know. I believe most of the machinery requirements are got from outside, and owing to the fact that there is no blacksmith in the vicinity of the mill there are frequent delays which, of course, mean expense. The State has secured the services of some of the best timber men in the State for the running of that mill; but owing to faulty gear and bad design it can only be summed up as a disgrace to the Government. I believe the State should establish a mill at least as good as those erected by private enterprise. If we are going to show good results and prove this to be a profitable venture we should be prepared to have that machinery laid down in such a way that there would not be these annoying happenings, such as the belt slipping off frequently and hanging the whole of the machinery up.

The Minister for Mines: We would not have got the mill for another 12 months, and we wanted timber.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I know that the Minister wanted timber, but what prevented the Government from spending an additional £1,000 in getting an up-to-date mill; was it lack of funds?

The Minister for Mines: No; it was a question of time.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I believe that an up-to-date mill, capable of turning out 30 or 40 loads per day, could have been erected with no greater delay. The trouble is that departmental engineers were sent to assist in the erection of that mill who had never erected a saw-mill before and, therefore, the State is the loser. I believe this State should have adopted the policy of private mill owners; they keep their machinery up-to-date and, consequently, are able to reduce the cost of production. I trust that even if it is a temporary affair the Government intend to erect a new mill.

The Minister for Mines: As soon as we are satisfied as to the timber area you can rest assured that we will have an up-to-date mill.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I thought the Minister meant that if he was sure the Government were not getting a fair deal from the companies he would erect a new mill.

The Minister for Mines: Oh, no.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There is no need for any misgiving about the timber area or about getting a sufficient reserve for State purposes. That area includes some of the finest timber in the country. If the manager had had any previous experience as a mill manager—I do not know whether he has had—and if the mill was running smoothly it could average some 25 loads per day; but owing to the fact of the whole thing being temporary and the erection having been bungled, the manager is not able to show such good results. The men are working very hard, but despite their best efforts they are not able to show the results that otherwise would be possible. That mill should be turning out from 22 to 25 loads per day, and it is only producing about 17 loads. I fear that through it being a temporary structure, the frequent losses of time, and the faultiness of the machinery, the cost will be so great that it will condemn it as a State enterprise. I pleaded for the erection of this mill, and I trust that the Minister will not look at it as a failure, but that he will recognise that this is only the initial stage and that the Government later on will have a worthy mill capable of turning out the whole of the Government supplies. I believe that at the present time the manager is engaged in turning out sleepers and that scantling and firewood are also trucked away, with the result that there is very little waste. I think the Government could with advantage give the mill an order for the whole of the timber requirements for our harbours and jetties. We have there some of the finest timber in the Commonwealth, absolutely sound and easily procured, and all the timber which the Government may require in the future could be obtained there at fairly reasonable rates, certainly much cheaper than it is supplied by private companies. With the

establishment of the State mill, when it is running smoothly and producing 40 or 50 loads per day instead of 17, perhaps in the near future, when the present Government are wedded a little more to State enterprise, we could with advantage to the community put the State in the position of a landlord and erect workmen's homes. I have pointed this out before, and perhaps a little later on I will be able to introduce a Bill to give effect to that proposal. I know many do not favour the idea of the State becoming a landlord, although the State is undoubtedly the finest landlord in the world. I believe that with the success of the State saw-mill, and the fact that it will be turning out 40 or 50 loads a day, the Government will be able to do something in the way I have indicated. In New Zealand they have established workmen's homes that are running at a profit to the State and are a boon to the working classes. In South Australia a Bill was introduced giving advances to the workmen to build their own homes and allowing them 50 years to pay off the cost. Here in Western Australia with State-owned railways and large forests, we could with our State saw-mill erect houses at a very cheap rate and charge rents which would give a fair return to the Government. It may sound Utopian, but if there is one thing that tends to the grinding poverty of the working classes it is the high rents they have to pay. At Nanga Brook some of the best workmen's houses in the State are in existence, built solely of timber. I believe later on—I know the Government will not be likely to favourably consider it now, but I think we could confer a lasting benefit on hundreds and on thousands of people in the State and could also launch out on an enterprise that would bring a large amount of profit to the Government. However, that is a matter for the future. I hope the State saw-mill will be recognised or abolished. When I say abolished, I mean to put the present one out of existence and bring a new one into existence.

The Minister for Mines: It will not be condemned.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: So long as I can get that assurance I am satisfied; but travelling throughout the South-West, particularly in country where you meet men who have been all their lives in the industry, and when you hear the tones in which the sawmill is discussed, it makes you feel—

The Minister for Mines: They do not know the facts.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I have endeavoured to put the best side of the case forward, because I had to defend myself. I have pointed out it was only a temporary structure and that we were all small once and had to grow.

The Minister for Mines: We could not get our timber and we had to rush.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: If the mill had been erected sooner, before the price was forced up on the Government for their supplies, we could have saved a good deal to the State. I hope the Government will now take the earliest opportunity of dealing with this question, and that they will erect a sawmill that will be a credit to the department and the State, and that the cost of production will be reasonably low. Whenever we stand behind the Government policy—and I will stand behind them every time, so far as they attempt State enterprise, and to prove, if we possibly can, that State enterprise has all the advantages—when we push the claims of the Government in this respect we do not want it to be pointed out that we tried our hands at it and it resulted in dismal failure; but we want to be able to prove to the critics, who are only too willing to condemn, that we are able to compete with them and at least protect the coffers of the State by having the timber produced at reasonable prices. This fact stands out clearly that to-day there is very little competition in the timber industry. There seems to be a network, a sort of honeycomb between the different companies trading under different names. I venture to say that outside the big firms, outside Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company, there is not too much competition in the State to-day. They own the great bulk of the sawmills and they have hundreds

of miles of railways and the finest timber country in their grasp. Further than that, in regard to the other companies that a few years ago succeeded in getting strips of forest from the Crown, if they have not been absorbed, at least there has been an honourable understanding between them; and we know what an honourable understanding in South Australia led to, how it fleeced the farmers in regard to their wheat supplies. If one company cannot complete an order there is no difficulty in sending a wire to another company and the other company comes to the rescue every time. With the exception of the State sawmill, the timber hewers, and one or two small men, there is that honourable understanding existing to-day that, if allowed to go without any opposition by the State or without the State protecting themselves for their own requirements, will lead to heavy charges for State requirements in the future. I compliment the Government in taking the initial step, small as it is, in the erection of a State sawmill. I believe this mill will justify its existence, if it has not up to the present time. I have explained that owing to blunders at the start the output practically remained stationary at five and six loads, and then went up to fourteen, and last week it went up to 19 or 20 loads a day; but it is impossible to account for a good output unless the machinery is brought up to date. The Williams mill, a similar structure, turned out, while it had the timber, something like 25 loads. If the State sawmill even keeps up its present output, I believe it will show that a saving has been effected and that the Government are not at the beck and call, or in the clutches of any company that likes to force the price up when it finds the Government in a fix. I want to refer, just for a moment, apart from that question of the State sawmill, which deals with the Minister for Railways, and with which I have concluded, to the report of the Acting Inspector General of Forests submitted to the House the other day. No account is given of the cost of the experiment at Waroona, nor of the cost of the plantation at Ludlow. We have the total receipts

and expenditure for the last 15 years. The report says that £228,305 has been obtained over and above all expenditure in connection with the working in this industry. Last year there was an increase of £2,065 over the previous year, the revenue for the whole twelve months being £31,549. I am not going to criticise the report to any extent, but I want to point out a few of what I think are defects with a view to having them avoided in the future. We have an item in the report "Timber licences; royalty on timber and sandalwood, £17,180." I do not think it would be a hard thing to keep these items separate. I do not think there is a large amount derived from licenses and royalties on sandalwood, and I believe it would be quite an easy matter to give the amount received from the hardwood industry and the sandalwood industry in separate columns. At present it is difficult to find out what is being received from hardwood and what from sandalwood.

The Minister for Mines: I think we could soon supply you with that information.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: This document is published in the newspapers on the goldfields and in the city, and for the sake of the timber industry and the producers of such a large amount of revenue I would like to have the figures in separate columns. Again I want to make an inquiry—I suppose I can make it when the Minister is absent from the Chamber, because he will read my remarks later on if they are worthy of record. In one portion of the report the Inspector General says—

A notable feature of this year's operations is that large areas of cut-over forest have been taken up under sawmilling permits, thus showing that, although large tracts of country have been cut over, they have not been absolutely cut out, as is the popular impression, and that they still contain sufficient timber to justify the erection of mills.

I want to know where they are. I believe I know pretty well every bit of timber country in the State, a good deal of it

at any rate, and I know where the good timber has been cut out and where large areas of it exist, but I want to know where this particular country exists that is justifying the erection of sawmills to cut over it a second time. The year I was born, in 1882, the manager of the Jarrahdale mill reported that the timber was cut out, but still the company have gone further afield. They have cut over the country at Jarrahdale certainly, but have gone further afield for 30 or 40 miles, and I say that if there is anywhere where there is a second forest in the State it is at Jarrahdale, and that is not much to boast about. I would like to know where the Inspector General secured his information that prompted him to write in this strain. He gives a table of figures showing the amount of wages paid on the goldfields and other places. Possibly this is introduced for the purposes of comparison with other industries. There are other matters, such as the question of re-afforestation. He says—

This important question is now receiving the attention of the department, and an area of typical jarrah country, which has been reserved for the purpose near Waroona, on the South-Western railway line, is now being treated.

It is over 12 months since a number of men were taken from the labour bureau who did not know which end of an axe to get hold of to carry out this experiment. As a result they were unable to do any work as they had no knowledge of the industry and no knowledge of the tools they were asked to use. The Government should either have got a few practical men to make the experiment a good one or not tackled it at all. I have asked the Minister before to-day to give me the cost of that experiment and the results obtained. We have in the report several extracts from the report of the Royal Commission in New South Wales, and I am pleased to say the Inspector General has published them in his report, because there are valuable suggestions contained in these extracts. It is not my intention to deal with them to a great extent with the exception of one little paragraph which says—

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the question of re-afforesting the

cut-out forests of the Eastern States is a simple one, and as the hardwoods of this State also possess in a remarkable degree the powers of natural reproduction, the question of re-afforestation here is equally simple, and really resolves itself into a matter of mere funds and the protection of the areas treated from fires.

"Mere funds" may mean anything. I propose later on to refer to another portion of this report where the Inspector General seems to throw cold water on the proposal to provide funds to carry out this work. There are a lot of matters here I had marked off but I do not intend to deal with this just now.

The Minister for Mines: Would it not be better to deal with them on the debate on the Lands Estimates?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I adopted that course last session and the session before, but each time the Minister told me he had not consulted the Inspector General of Forests, and as a result he could not give me the information I wanted. I do not want to worry the Minister day after day and sit on his doorstep to get information from him. I believe that by asking it to-day the Minister will have ample time to note my remarks so that when we come to the Woods and Forests Estimates he will be able to give me the information. I have dealt fairly extensively with the question of pine forests, and I intended to say more, but I will reserve any further remarks for the present. I want to point out that the Inspector General has an item about the replanting of jarrah forests. He says—

It has been urged of late by some that the modern scientific methods of forest conservation should be applied to our forests, and that they should be replanted when cut out. Supposing it were practicable to do this, the outlay would be enormous and the result very problematical.

I want to know who in any responsible position advocated the replanting of jarrah. During the last ten years I have been acquainted with the industry. I have never heard a responsible man advocate replanting because we know, as a matter

of fact, that such a policy would be very costly and, possibly, would not give too good results. We do not require to do it; the seed is there, and nature is so prolific that we do not need to aid it, except to give it assistance by destroying useless trees and allowing the young trees to have a chance. I do not know why the Acting Inspector General should publish this in his report because, as far as I know, no responsible man in public life, or out of it, has ever advocated such a policy. He states—

Again, at the present time, when the Crown lands of the State are being rapidly changed from virgin bush to cultivation, forestry upon scientific lines if not altogether impracticable is, at least, extremely premature.

I have always advocated that instead of getting men who had a good theoretical knowledge of the industry, we should get practical men who knew something about the growth of timbers in the country, and who could look after the forests. Further in his report we find—

Forest reserves could be set apart, dedicated to forestry for all time, and the modern scientific methods of conservation applied to them. Even then with high-priced labour it would not be a business proposition.

This question of high-priced labour is largely due to the policy carried out by the department itself, because if you send incompetent men, who know nothing about the matter out into the bush, no matter what you pay them, their's is bound to be high-priced labour. It is a better policy to engage practical men and pay them accordingly. The Acting Inspector General states further with regard to reafforestation—

This will entail the expenditure of large sums in building railway lines to open up our farm lands and aid in the development of mining, etcetera, and I do not believe the public of Western Australia would allow large sums of money to be spent on experimental work in our forests when those more pressing works are desired.

I do not know that the Acting Inspector General, or even a conservator of forests, if we had one, would be an authority as

to what the public desire in this matter, or an authority as to when the public would be prepared to lay aside a certain amount to carry out experiments and reforms. If we are going to preserve the industry that is fleeing, we should devote funds, be they large or small, towards it. The Acting Inspector General states further—

Even such work, however, cannot be done for nothing, and, as I have said before, the position is this: Is the State, with all its land being greedily sought after by the selector, prepared at the present time to expend large sums of money annually in improving its forest lands, and then afterwards alienate them under the conditional purchase clauses of the Land Act at a nominal sum per acre.

The idea is ridiculous. It is really bordering on absurdity to say that we are going to spend large sums of money in clearing the forest of useless timber, bringing it to a productive state and then selling it for agricultural lands. The Government who would do this should not be allowed to exist. Further on in the report, and I am referring to this because it deals with the particular industry with which I am connected, he goes on to say—

Timber, which is required for a great variety of purposes, is one of the things that man cannot do without, and trees must be cut down to supply it.

That is extraordinary.

It would not only be wrong but useless to stop the cutting of timber, as it could not be stopped without causing considerable injury, not only to those engaged in an important industry, but to the State as a whole.

Who has ever advocated the stopping of the cutting of timber? Apart from those few defects in the report, it contains very valuable information, which I believe, could be utilised with good effect by hon. members. I did intend to refer to other reports, such as that of the Under Secretary for Lands, and a few other matters, but I shall not deal with them now. I will have the opportunity later on of referring to the policy of the Government with regard to the building of agricultural railways and other matters. I

only desire to say a few words now with regard to the Crown Law Department, and the matter which was mentioned by my colleague, the member for Collie. I wish to supplement his remarks with regard to the treatment of Mr. Johns, a justice of the peace at Collie. Mr. Johns did not get the fair treatment that he was entitled to, when we consider the treatment meted out to other justices in the State. I want to enter my protest against the department making fish of one and flesh of another. Mr. Johns was asked to resign his commission as a justice of the peace, and he refused, because, he contended, he had a good and strong case. His name was struck off the roll of justices, and to give it more publicity it was displayed, marked with red ink, outside the office at Collie, and thus it was proclaimed to the world that his name was removed from the roster of justices. Contrast that with the action of the department with regard to other justices of the peace. Because Mr. Johns entered a protest against not being supplied with clerical assistance when he was carrying out the duties of coroner, his name was removed from the roll. Contrast that with the treatment of an hon. member in another place who, while being, perhaps, a leading resident in his own district, was convicted three times, on two occasions for allowing his cattle to stray in the streets, and on another occasion for dealing with the returning officer and abusing him, and interrupting him in his work. I refer to a justice of the peace at Pinjarra, who happens to occupy a seat in another place.

The Minister for Works: Are you objecting to the other man remaining on the roll?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am objecting to the Government summarily dismissing Mr. Johns, while another justice is fined £5 in the police court and no action is taken against him. Why this discrimination on the part of the Crown Law Department? Can that department justify it?

Mr. Price: Your claim is that Mr. McLarty's name should be removed from the roll.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: One man is convicted for breaking the laws of the coun-

try, and no action is taken, and another man makes a reasonable protest against having to carry out excessive duties, and his name is removed from the roll. I think an inquiry into the administration of the Crown Law Department is necessary. I was proceeded against by the Crown Law Department only a few months ago. At the time I blamed the police for that. It was a trivial charge, that of standing in the street, and I blamed the police for taking me before the police court, where the case was afterwards dismissed. I have found out, however, that I have been blaming the wrong people, because the usual practice when a charge is laid, is for the constable to go to the sub-inspector—who in this case was Mr. Lappin—who decides whether a summons shall or shall not issue. In my case a report was sent along, and it was sent back to the sergeant concerned to make out a summons; afterwards it was sent back to the sub-inspector marked, "no action to be taken." This was on the Friday or the Saturday, and on the Monday the Commissioner of Police was instructed to take proceedings. I want to say that the Commissioner would not go against the advice of his subordinates unless he was specially instructed to do so. The outcome was that I was taken before the police court. The Crown prosecutor, an officer receiving a salary of £700 or £800 a year, was sent to prosecute and an effort was made to obtain a conviction. I am not objecting to the fact that I was taken to the police court. If any hon. member offends against the law by standing in Barrack-street, and I certainly do not think that a heinous crime, or if he breaks the law in any other respect he should be prosecuted the same as other people. In my case, however, the magistrate dismissed it. It seemed to me that it was pure vindictiveness and spite in the hope of securing temporary advantage over a political opponent on the part of the Attorney General—who, I am sorry to say, is not in his seat—who gave instructions that proceedings should be taken, after a responsible officer had written on the

report that no action should be taken. I am not going to worry about it now, and all I will say is that if a Minister of the Crown is responsible for flying in the face of officers, who knew more about the case than he did, then the action he took was not to his credit. There are several other matters I was going to refer to, but the opportunity will present itself later on. I have dealt with the industry which is responsible for keeping in employment several thousands of my constituents, and I have dealt with it to give the Minister for Lands an opportunity of getting hold of the facts, and giving me a reply at a later date. I trust that as a result of the few words I have said to-day, a little interest will be aroused, even on the part of the Minister, and that he will adopt a different policy, and that he will reform this important department and take the best steps possible to preserve this important industry of the State, and make it a source of revenue for all time.

Progress reported.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Mines: Papers relating to the action *Faiching v. the Commissioner of Railways*, (ordered on motion by Mr. Gill).

House adjourned at 4.58 p.m.