

and that thus there was no necessity for keeping up so large a staff. Accordingly, I decided upon the reductions which have been shown in the Estimates, and to which the leader of the Opposition has referred. One gentleman has had notice of retirement, but Mr. Maitland, the chief Government Geologist, since then has fallen ill, and has been away on sick leave and long service leave. He is expected to return to duty about the middle of next month. Thus we have been compelled to keep on one officer more than otherwise we would have done. In making the selection of the men to be retired, I did not act upon my own knowledge, since I know only one or two of the officials closely. I left the matter to the recommendation of the chief officer, subject to the approval of the Public Service Commissioner. I quite agree with the leader of the Opposition that the gentleman who has notice of retirement is deserving of consideration. As these Estimates provide for his services until about the end of next March, I shall have time to consider the position. Since these Estimates were last before the Committee, there has been a change in the department. I think I have attained my object of stirring up the department, of getting things done a little more practically and a little more quickly, and therefore more satisfactorily. The effect has been to advertise the department, and to bring it into closer touch with public requirements; and the public have taken advantage of the opportunity to make certain demands upon the department. Possibly those demands may involve the necessity for the retention of the officer who has been alluded to by the leader of the Opposition.

Vote put and passed.

This completed the Estimates of the Mines Department.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

BILL—VERMIN.

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

House adjourned at 12.21 a.m. (Wednesday).

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 27th November, 1918.

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

[For "Papers Presented" see "Minutes of Proceedings."]

BILL—CRIMINAL CODE AMENDMENT.

Order of the Day for the third reading read.

Standing Orders Suspension.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.35]: I desire to move without notice—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to permit of the passing of the Bill through its remaining stages at this sitting.

The explanation is a simple one. The Bill is down for the third reading, and in the ordinary course it would be put through that stage and passed, and returned to the Assembly. But if we pass it now it will go back to the Assembly with Clause 7 reading in a manner which I am sure hon. members do not desire. Clause 7 originally provided that prosecutions for the offence of having unlawful carnal knowledge must be begun within six months, and for the offence of attempting to have unlawful carnal knowledge within three months after the offence has been committed. By an amendment the clause was made to read that both classes of prosecutions must be begun within three months. Subsequently the Bill was recommitted and the clause was restored to its original form. The Bill was again recommitted for the purpose of reaffirming the previous decision of the House, which was reaffirmed by a substantial majority. I was under the impression that the clause had been restored to its original form by the amendment; that is to say, that in relation to both offences a prosecution must be begun within three months. But it appears that the form of the actual amendment was that "three" be inserted in lieu of "six" and so the provision now reads:—

A prosecution under this section must be begun within three months after the offence has been committed, and for the offence of attempting to have unlawful carnal knowledge, within three months after the offence has been committed.

I have discussed the question with Mr. Kingsmill and he agrees to treat it as a consequential error, but he properly holds that the error cannot be rectified except in Committee.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [4.40]: I support the motion for the reasons given by the leader of the House. All hon. members agree that it is absolutely necessary that no amendment should be made in Bills except by the Committee of the House.

The Committee must be aware of what is going on. I hope that hon. members will acquit me of any desire to stickle over a form, but the introduction of any other form of making amendments is very dangerous. It is absolutely necessary that these amendments should be made by the Committee. It is for this reason that I support the motion, and I hope hon. members will agree to it. It is quite a formal matter, but it is necessary that it should be done in Committee.

Question put and passed.

Recommittal.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Bill recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clause 7.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 7.—Repeal of Section 188 and substitution of new provisions:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I move—

That in Subclause 3 the last three lines be struck out.

The subclause will then read:—“A prosecution under this section must be begun within three months after the offence has been committed.”

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

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill again reported with a further amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—FORESTS.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [4.43]: When the leader of the House, in introducing the Bill, said it was the most important Bill that had been brought down this session, he gave us another example of that modesty which has been already referred to by Sir Edward Wittenoom as indicative of genius. I think he might have gone a great deal further in regard to the importance of this Bill and said that it was the most important that has been introduced for a good many sessions. Because it is a Bill which marks a new epoch in the administration of the affairs of this State, a recognition of the fact that any State, any industry, to be successful, must be governed on the most modern scientific lines. Again, the importance of this Bill is not confined to this State. The conservation of forests, the using of the reserves of Nature to the utmost extent in the most judicious manner is a matter of importance not only to the State but to the Commonwealth, to the Empire, and even to the Allies. That being so, I think it is necessary that hon. members should give to the consideration of this Bill a mind free from prejudice one way or the other, a mind not wedded too much to the theoretical aspect

of the matter, nor guided to too great an extent by considerations of expediency. So only can we hope to arrive at a conclusion, and to put upon the statute-book a measure which will be a credit to us and assist to develop the industry and make it a lasting one instead of only an ephemeral one, as it might be if the present state of affairs were to continue indefinitely. Now there has always been on the part of the British people a strange reluctance to husband their resources. Perhaps I am not right in saying “a strange reluctance,” because the circumstances of the British Empire have always been such that England, the wanderer amongst nations, the taker-up of new countries, has never thought it worth while to be niggardly, to look to the future. The world was wide; there were always new countries to develop; there were always new forests to be taken up. It did not occur to the British, as it has occurred to some of the Continental nations, that it is necessary to conserve, to the utmost, the resources which a nation possesses. There was always among the British the thought, “Why conserve these resources when to-morrow we can go and get others?” But the world to-day is not as wide as the world used to be. The unoccupied spaces of the earth, or at all events those of them which are of any importance or substantial use, are being taken up; and it behoves us now to see that the resources upon which we depend, not only for our State welfare, but for our Imperial welfare, are put to the best and most legitimate use. It is very evident that there must be some fairly cogent reason for this when we consider that we here in Western Australia, in this year of grace of 1918, are to-day seeking to do what France, for instance, did somewhere about the year 1670. We are to-day framing laws for the better conservation of our forests. Those laws were framed in France, to be accurate, in the year 1669. So we are to some extent, if I may say so, behind the French people in the endeavour to husband resources and to make the best use of national wealth. France acted, as I have said, in 1670. Germany has been a keen nation of foresters for, I suppose, the last 200 years at all events; and with that thorough and practical, and I will not say sordid, recognition of things essential, the Germans through all the troubles they have had of reconstruction, disintegration, and reconstruction again, have apparently held fast to the idea that the forests are a very important part of the wealth of their country. Not so the French. The forests of France suffered materially during the two revolutions which shook that country at the end of the century before last, and in the middle of the nineteenth century, to so great an extent that from somewhere near 20 million acres of State forests, now there are only about three million acres. The United States of America, having had their forests exploited in very much the same way as the British dominions, decided years ago that it would be well if they guarded this source of wealth more keenly; and to-day America is an example, at all events to us, of what can be done in the way of forest conservation. If some of the American practices

were introduced, or sought to be introduced, into Western Australia, those people who see in a modest little Bill such as this things to be afraid of, would, I believe, faint with horror. In America they have gone a very long way towards doing all that can possibly be done to conserve forests for all time.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: A modest little Bill this is, you say?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Yes, comparatively. The part of the British Empire which has done most in the way of forestry is undoubtedly India. But, after all, the forestry movement in India is of comparatively very recent growth. India started its first forestry department in 1864; and that department has succeeded beyond all expectations. To-day India's forestry is a model for the rest of the Empire. But France and Germany created forests.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They did not preserve them.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: To a very great extent they also preserved them. The forests were natural; but now, instead of being what are called wild forests, they are cultivated forests. Luckily we in this State are not in as bad a condition with regard to the saving of our forests as are some of the Eastern States. We still have a good deal more to save than they have. That being so, surely it behoves us the earlier to take steps towards saving what we have left. Hon. members no doubt are aware of the early history of forestry in this State. Perhaps I should not say "forestry," but the early history of the getting of timber in this State. The Government started, and perhaps quite rightly, too, with granting what are known as timber concessions. Undoubtedly some of the concessions were pretty wholesale in their scope. They were granted for large areas, and rights were granted to some of the concessionaires which were extremely liberal. For instance, there was one concession—I do not know whether the rights are still held; I suppose they are—which included not only the right to a very large extent of country for the purpose of cutting timber thereon, but also the absolute right to two ports. I forgot now whether those ports have been handed over formally to the State or not. However, those concessionaires had the right to prohibit the entry of ships into those ports, to prohibit the berthing of ships at the jetties in those ports, and to prohibit if necessary the landing of goods. In fact, those people had practically a small principality. I do not at all blame the Government of those days for so acting. When most of these early concessions were granted, the State, as hon. members know, had somewhat of a blank outlook. There seemed then to be very little in front of Western Australia; and if by making even these very great concessions the Government of that time considered it possible, as they did, to improve the outlook of the State, they were quite justified in doing as they did. So far as I can see, most of the concessionaires of those days handled their concessions well—better, indeed, for their employees than they did for themselves. It has

always been to the credit of the timber people of Western Australia that they have invariably, as they are doing to-day, and especially the big holders, made the most liberal provision for their employees that any employers reasonably could make. I recall an incident in the early history of Western Australia; I daresay there are gentlemen here who will have heard of it; I have it on reliable authority. Once the possession of one of the towns on the southern coast of this State passed temporarily out of the hands of Western Australia. The town was taken by a force—unarmed, it is true, but still a force—which landed from ships lying in Geographe Bay; and they held it for I think about 24 hours. The people who held it were the crews of certain Yankee whalers who had a disagreement with the inhabitants of the town then known as the Vasse and now known as Busselton. The Yankee whalers practically had possession of the town until they were driven out again, so to speak, with great slaughter, by the hurriedly summoned employees of the timber stations in the vicinity, notably those of the old Ballarat mill and of the Quindalup mill. That is an episode of Western Australian history which is not very generally known, but I have every reason to believe my account to be absolutely correct. So that even in those early days Western Australia owed a great debt, which since has increased enormously, to the physique and determination and bravery of her timber workers. The next development in the history of the forests of this State was the amendment of the law so that timber leases could be granted, which amendment was made in 1898. Then, again, the granting of further timber leases was prohibited, and saw mill permits came into vogue. But by this time the forests of Western Australia were being worked, if I may use the expression, as if there were no hereafter. They were being worked as what may be termed a finite asset of the State, they were being worked as one works a quarry or a gold mine. There was no thought of the future. There was no attempt to see that only that timber was cut of which the cutting would improve the forest. There was no idea of forest regeneration. It was on account of those things that we now wish, so to speak, to set our house in order. I have said, or I have inferred, that in every country there are assets which may be divided into two principal classes, one of which I call finite assets—that is, those assets which, when disposed of, do not recur—and the other of which I call infinite assets, such as agriculture, which by using improve. I consider the thanks of any community are due to those who can convert a finite asset of the State into an infinite asset. I think all of us would acclaim as a benefactor in the highest sense of the term the man who could invent a process by which a gold mine, reef or lode, which was being worked could be replaced. And that is what we are trying to do with our forests. I venture to say that the examples which are given us by other countries will, if hon. members will be guided by the trend of public thought and of public action elsewhere, enable us without difficulty to

achieve what we aim at regarding our forests. But in order that this may be done, we must have a settled and fixed forestry policy; we must work to a plan, and that plan must be the plan which is adjudged the best for us to work on by those who know best. That means that we must have continuity of policy. It is for that reason the control of the forests of the State is sought to be placed, by this Bill, in the hands of the Conservator of Forests. As Sir Edward Wittenoom has remarked, it is necessary that every precaution should be taken to ensure that this control is placed in the right hands. I think Sir Edward himself will admit that it would be an impossible proposition to place the control of our forests, if we wish to make anything out of them, directly in the hands of a Minister, who is here to-day and gone to-morrow, possibly a Minister who does not know very much about the subject. Sir Edward Wittenoom said that he had not until yesterday met our present Conservator of Forests. On that head I sympathise with Sir Edward and sympathise with the Conservator. If their acquaintance had been longer, I feel sure that both gentlemen would have been happier as the result. I myself have had the pleasure of knowing the Conservator of Forests ever since he has been here. Indeed, I may say I knew him before he came here.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: How long has the Conservator been here?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Three or four years, I think. Before that gentleman came to this State, Mr. D. F. Hutchins, who as a forester is known throughout the world, having completed the survey of the forests of Australia, during the course of which I had the honour of meeting him and being of some assistance to him, I hope, in seeing that he got around the country as quickly and as comfortably as possible, wrote me a letter telling me what he thought of Mr. Lane-Poole, the present Conservator of Forests, and his opinion was a high one indeed. I had the pleasure of forwarding that letter on to the Hon. P. Collier, who was then controlling forests, and on the recommendation of Mr. Hutchins and many other gentlemen Mr. Lane-Poole got the position which he holds to-day. So far as my personal opinion goes, which I hope is not entirely biased by personal friendship, I think that we have been extremely lucky, if we wish to treat our forests in a scientific manner, in having obtained the services of a man like Mr. Lane-Poole. He has had a great deal of experience in other parts of the world and a thorough training.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: What parts of the world?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: For instance, in South Africa and the Sierra Leone. The hon. gentleman will be surprised to hear that when he came here to a new country he knew more about our forests than the people who had been living amongst them, for the reason that he had been looking after eucalyptus trees from their infancy in the places I have named. Part of the policy, which is abso-

lutely necessary for the conduct of the Forestry Department, is the preparation of what are known as working plans. These are dealt with in this Bill, and it is necessary that, as foresters have to take very long views indeed, and have to look ahead as much as 50 or 60 years, and perhaps longer, the working plans shall be based upon a scheme which is not subject to sudden and violent alteration at the will or whim of any person, and that these plans shall not be subject to such violent alteration is laid down in the Bill. One of the most important parts of the working plans is that of stocktaking of the forests in this State. With regard to stocktaking, there disappears a very great deal of unnecessary dread which agriculturists and pastoralists feel in regard to the forest policy. The classification of the forests, which I understand has been proceeding for some time, will be of much more advantage to agriculturists themselves than they realise, because it will save many settlers from going on to totally unsuitable land, and will lay down and map out that land which is suitable for the cultivation of forests as against that which is suitable for cultivation for ordinary agricultural purposes. I think hon. members, more especially those who know the South-West, realise that there are scores of settlers who have undertaken a proposition in that part of the State which will never be of any use to them, and undertaken it on land which, if devoted to its proper purposes, namely, the growing of timber, instead of the growing of cereals, vegetables, and stock, would return to the holders of it and to the State generally very much larger profits than ever it would under the care of a struggling and very often unskilled settler.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They would have to be Methuselahs.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Not necessarily. The hon. member is not quite right. I said that the profit to the State would be far greater. I would remind the hon. member that we are here to protect the interests of the State and not of any individual. That is an aspect of which we must not lose sight. We are here as State members and it is necessary to remember that. I believe that a certain amount of unfounded alarm has been felt by persons who hold pastoral leases in portions of the country which undoubtedly will be proclaimed as forest reserves. I say unfounded alarm, because I do not think any alarm need be felt by these persons because they have what is, after all, only a change of landlord. I think the Forestry Department will prove just as kind a landlord as the Lands Department, and I have no doubt that if the Forestry Department is conducted, as I believe it will be, in a proper manner, the grazing possibilities of the land will be improved instead of diminished. I think hon. members will agree with me that a great deal of the forest land is not what one might say is the best adapted for grazing that could possibly be had, though, at the same time, I have no wish to run down any of our broad acres. With regard to the jarrah country, we know that the bulk of that on which our jar-

rah forests grow is not suitable for anything else but jarrah, and the country that karri grows on, hon. members will agree with me, from the experience the State has had of Denmark, is better to look at than it is to work.

Hon. J. Ewing: Is that so?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I think so.

Hon. J. A. Greig: That is quite correct.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: If hon. members will visit Denmark, where there has been the greatest development in the State so far as using the karri lands for agricultural purposes is concerned, I think they will be converted to the opinion which I hold. The Bill has had a great deal of criticism, I am glad to say fairly friendly criticism so far, from two classes of people—first of all from the hewers, and secondly from those people who may be called the big millers. With regard to the hewers, a difficult position has arisen. Hewers are a body of men quite exceptional in every way. In the first place, the work upon which they are engaged is nearly all contract work, and work the principle underlying which is payment by results. They have shown a great deal of independence of character in taking up this occupation. In the second place it is an occupation which calls for the highest physical qualities, power of endurance, strength and skill, and these are the marked characteristics of this body of men. They were, before the war started, an exceptionally fine body of men in character, I think, and in physique. When the war made its claim upon the British people, as was only naturally to be expected, these men responded in even greater numbers than any other class of men within Australia, at all events, and they have established a claim for gratitude on the part of the Empire of Australia, and of this State, that it is extremely hard to withstand, nay, impossible to withstand. When, therefore, we find that these men, having gone away in great numbers and having distinguished themselves as one would expect such a body of men to distinguish themselves, now say "Do not take away from us our source of livelihood and do not make the industry in which we were engaged impossible for us to continue in," it is absolutely impossible that any Minister or any Parliament should say no to such a demand; and, therefore, there has been embodied in this Bill a recognition of the fact that these men must go back to their former occupations, at all events those who were engaged as hewers before the war.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: If the Conservator permits them.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Yes.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: He has the whole say.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: The hon. member is not quite right there. If he will read Clause 24 of the Bill he will see that it provides that hewers can go back, who were engaged as hewers before the war. The hon. gentleman has, however, also included hewers going back to country which has been cut out for milling purposes. We do this with our eyes open. We recognise that the only claim that these people have to retard the progress and the conservation of the forests of Western Australia

is a purely sentimental claim, and we are paying a debt of gratitude which is owed by the Empire, and by us as part of the Empire, to these people. I am convinced that, as the principal aim of forestry is to make the utmost use of our natural resources, the encouragement of an industry, which is the most wasteful of all the industries connected with forestry, is a bad thing for our forests. I think most people, even the hewers themselves, recognise the same thing. I hope, therefore, that these people will realise that it is for sentimental reasons alone, and not because of any other reason, that they are allowed to take up an occupation which they were in before the war. With regard to the big millers, they have been engaged in business in a way that I can only describe as being upon a most enormous scale. The speech of Sir Edward Wittenoom last night, which showed the magnitude of the operations of these gentlemen, was most informative and interesting. I could almost wish that, for the benefit of the forests in Western Australia, the scale upon which the business was conducted was not quite so large. I could do so for this reason, that to keep all these branches going and these huge mills in operation, and to satisfy the claims of all those skilled employees whose places had to be kept for them, a tremendous lot of the timber of the State has had to be sacrificed, I am afraid, for not so great a profit to those who handled it, or to the State, as might have been the case. During the whole of the history of forestry in Western Australia I feel that we have parted with one of our greatest national assets without getting an adequate return for it. It is a pity that this should be so, and an even greater pity when one recollects that not even those who have been handling this great national asset have got as much out of it as might have been expected. Possibly we may cure that state of things in the future, but that state of affairs has only to be cured and ended by conducting our forests on scientific lines. Sir Edward Wittenoom was speaking at some length about the necessity for preserving in their entirety the rights of concessionaires, timber lessees and holders of saw milling permits. I do not think this Bill takes away in any manner at all the rights which are given to these people under the charters, leases and agreements which they have made with the Government.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: It takes away hewing.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: The hon. gentleman knows well, or I think he does, if he has read the instruments to which I have alluded—I do not wish to anticipate any answer from the Colonial Secretary in this regard, for I am speaking purely subject to correction either by the Colonial Secretary or by Sir Edward Wittenoom—that it is an established fact that in every one of the instances where charters, concessions, leases, and sawmill permits have been issued, it has been explicitly stated that whatever rights are granted are granted subject to any regulation or legislation that the Parliament of Western Australia may think fit to bring into being. The possession of concessions, or timber leases, or

sawmill permits, does not place any of the holders outside the law of the country and the law of the country is determined within these walls. That being so, I do not think the hon. member is quite right in saying that this Bill takes away any of the rights in question. As a matter of fact, I think that the Government are treating these gentlemen fairly liberally. Sir Edward Wittenoom alluded to the war concessions which had been made. If this Government had caused the war, if it was through any action or default of the Government that the war had come about, one would say that the moral obligation lay on the Government for making certain concessions to persons who had suffered through the war, but the war is a common calamity. It has affected to a greater extent the Government of the State than the holders of various timber tenancies, so that I think the Government are fairly liberal in proposing to make the concessions continued in the Bill. Personally I should have no objection as a private member, if Sir Edward Wittenoom could induce the Government, as I think he would be able to do, to pass the further amendment of which he has practically given notice. Speaking again as a private member, I do not think he has much chance of passing that amendment, because it strikes me that it would be an unusual thing for this House to deal with it. At the same time let me remind the hon. member that it is not necessary for any amendment of the sort to find its place on the Notice Paper for the Government to carry out this further concession to him and the timber concessionaires if they so wish. It is purely a matter of arrangement through the Treasury. If the Treasurer can be induced either by his own good will or by his colleagues to remit royalties to the extent to which they have been paid during the period of the war, there is nothing in the world to prevent him doing it and it does not warrant legislative authority to do it except perhaps a line in the Estimates. I do not think any body would object to it. We all recognise that those companies have been very hard hit and they have been hit harder on account of the magnitude of their operations by the fact that the war brought everything to a standstill, and while the Government are under no obligation—because they are fellow sufferers in the war—to go to the assistance of those people, I certainly think that very few members will object to their doing so. At the same time I do not think they want legislative authority which the hon. member desires to obtain by the amendment, reference to which has been made by him. I have spoken of royalties and I have already stated that in my opinion we have not got as much out of the forests of Western Australia that we should have had. If we compare the rates of royalty paid in Western Australia with the rates of royalty paid in other parts of the world hon. members will agree with me that we have suffered grievously in that respect. For instance, let us take South Africa. In computing royalties, the habit is, amongst people who deal with this class of work, to

compute royalties at per cubic foot of timber, and we find that in South Africa the royalty paid per cubic foot on timber is $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. Coming back to Australia we find that the royalty paid in Queensland is 2d. per cubic foot; in Victoria, it is $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. per cubic foot; and in New South Wales it is also approximately $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. per cubic foot. The average royalty paid throughout Australia per cubic foot, is .72d., which is practically three farthings. Now hon. members will be surprised to learn that in Western Australia the royalty per cubic foot is .35 of a penny which is about one third. So that we are paying about one third of a penny for the rights and privileges for which in South Africa they pay $4\frac{1}{2}$ d., for which in Queensland they pay 2d., for which in Victoria and New South Wales they pay $1\frac{1}{4}$ d. That has been going on for a number of years. Mr. Hutchins who wrote a most informative book on Australian forestry, has made out that in the course of 100 years the bad forestry policy of Australia has lost us a sum totalling £588,000,000. These are fairly large figures and they are founded on what might have been if Australia had been up-to-date enough to follow the practice of other parts of the world. It is an almost shocking thing to contemplate, but of course it is rather late in the day to try and make it good. Yet I hope it is not too late. I hope Western Australia will emerge from the position she has been in hitherto and indeed we might say the whole of Australia, and that instead of wasting our natural resources, we shall husband them so that they may be of value, not only to the State, but to the individual as well. I have also alluded to the fact that in the cutting of all timbers in Western Australia there is a great deal of waste. I have said that the hewers are the most wasteful and therefore the most to be deprecated of those engaged in the industry. I understand that the percentage of timber sold or delivered to timber felled by the hewer is about 25 per cent. That is that a quarter of a log which is felled by a hewer goes into actual consumption. That I think hon. members will agree, is not a satisfactory result. It is a wasteful process.

Hon. J. Ewing: The waste is 75 per cent.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Exactly, I understand also that at the big mills, cutting as they are for their bare lives and cutting big stuff, the waste of timber is something like 50 per cent. I understand also that with the spot mill conducting matters in a more leisurely but a more careful manner, the average obtained from the logs cut is about 72 per cent., and if the aim of the Forestry Department is to make the greatest possible use of our valuable resources, it is obvious that much of this class of work is deserving of encouragement. I have often said in this House and have much pleasure in repeating it, that I am of opinion, and the longer I live the more firmly it becomes fixed in my mind, that the wealth of any country lies in the small holder. This Bill aims at creating in the forests of Western

Australia a large number of small holders working as much as possible for themselves and working under a system which, judging from past experience, is more economical and better than any other system we have tried in the State. For that reason the Bill deserves the support of hon. members. There has been a great waste of timber in the State. Timbers have disappeared which I fear will never be replaced. Some of the agricultural lands in this State had timbers taken from them indiscriminately and in a wholesale manner, timbers, the value of which we are only just now beginning to realise. Hon. members know one of the most valuable timbers is Wandoo. A timber that is also valuable for structural and manufacturing purposes is morrell and that only grows on the best land. Furthermore, it is an extremely easy timber to burn, and when that is the case, it is good-bye to that timber. York gum again has been destroyed by the thousands and hundred thousands of acres. Cabinet making woods are also in course of disappearance. These comprise banksia, sheoak, jam and native pear, the value of which woods, as I have already stated, we are only just now beginning to realise. It is a pity it should be so. It is part of the business of any well organised forestry department to stop that waste and show the people who hold the land or who are going on the land, where these timbers grow, the best way to make use of them, and to devise means for making use of them. The leader of the House, and Sir Edward Wittenoom both said what a pity it was that these magnificent timbers of ours, such as jarrah, should be used for the purposes for which they have been so largely used in the past. I am glad to think that in other parts of the world there is quite a revulsion of feeling in respect to valuable hardwoods. In those countries where forestry is practiced, such as France and Germany, they are beginning to use as sleepers, inferior timbers or inferior parts of good timbers. In France I understand most of the railway sleepers are made out of branch timber of the oak and in other countries, even where hardwoods are available, the tendency is to use creosoted soft wood or soft woods which have been put through some preservative process. When I was in the Malay States last year, I at the request of the Government, made inquiries about the possibilities of trade, and it may not be out of place to mention again that the report which I prepared has been studiously disregarded. In the course of my inquiries, I interviewed the general manager of the Malay States railways, the gentleman who did not come to Western Australia to see our railways. I interviewed him with regard to the possibility of arranging for sleepers for the extension of the Malay States railways. I was at once disabused of any idea that there was any trade possibility in that direction, in the first place, because they have timbers—I hope hon. members will not think me un-

patriotic when I say so—timbers equal to jarrah and karri, but they think so highly of them that they regard it as a sin against the national policy to use them for such a despicable purpose. They now are using the soft woods in place of the hard woods I have mentioned. Two of their best known hard woods are called mirban and chenghal, both of which are equal to our jarrah. Mr. Anthony, the gentleman in question, declares that they are better than our jarrah. That of course may be due to local prejudice, but instead of using them now, he is putting down a local timber called meranti. Hon. members who have been in the North-West will know it as Singapore Cedar. This is creosoted and Mr. Anthony found by substituting this inferior timber, that he gets better value even though replacements are more frequent than in the case of hard wood. I think that that feeling is growing throughout the world, that nations are beginning to find that it is folly to use for any purpose an article which is too good for that purpose; and therein I hope will lie at least part of the salvation of the forests of Western Australia. I have heard, too, that this is being done in many other countries. So it is possible that, in the future, this incentive to waste our forests may not occur. But there are other uses to which these magnificent timbers of ours, jarrah and karri, can be put, and to which I do not think sufficient attention has been called throughout the world. In Western Australia we have always been inclined to judge the capabilities of a timber by the test of whether it would make good fencing posts; as if fencing posts and sleepers and paving blocks were the highest ideals in the uses of timber that men can think of. We have sometimes doubted, and even condemned, karri, because it will not last, or we say it will not last, underground. I ask hon. members to consider what the percentage of timber used above ground is to the percentage of timber used underground. I think there is a very much greater percentage used above ground or above water than there is under ground or under water.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: How would you class a sleeper?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: It may be classed as underground. We in Australia have been using imported soft woods for purposes for which we should have used our own timbers. I do not think we need cast our minds back any farther than over the last few days to see an instance of that. I hope that our visitors did not notice that the stand on which the children were singing their welcome was constructed of oregon.

The Colonial Secretary: Of jarrah.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: When I saw it under construction there was a great deal of oregon in it.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: But they pulled it down and corrected the error.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I am glad to know that is so. But that is not the only instance. Hon. members know that there are hundreds, even thousands of other instances which suggest that wherever there is a chance people

put in oregon and other imported timbers. Why, I do not know. Perhaps on account of lightness or perhaps on account of cost. But I think it would pay anybody building for any time to use our own magnificent timbers rather than those of other countries, and I hope that in future we shall endeavour to be more patriotic, more especially seeing that this form of patriotism redounds, not only to our credit as citizens, but also to our credit at the bank. That being so, I hope that to a very much greater extent our own timbers will be used.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Is jarrah not too good to walk upon?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I do not quite grasp what the hon. member means. I am not idealising jarrah. I think it is very good to walk upon, especially for the hon. member, who requires something substantial under his feet. Part of the Bill deals with forestry fires. Therein lies one of the greatest difficulties in connection with the Bill, because I think it is not impossible, in regard to the prevention of fires in forests, fires spreading from forests to private property and vice versa, to come to some co-operative arrangement between the Forestry Department and the settlers whose holdings adjoin the forest, whereby joint action can be taken. I think it will be too much to throw the whole of the onus of guarding against forest fires on the settler, and I feel sure that for the preservation of the forests and of private property some *via media* could be established whereby each would bear a fair share, whether of expenditure or of labour that may be necessary in this connection. I fancy a great deal depends on the ideas entertained. Some years ago, before I had an opportunity of learning better, I used to think that our Australian forests were none the worse for a fire. But I have long ago dismissed that idea. Anybody who takes an opportunity of looking into the matter and seeing the actual effect that fires have on the inner structure of trees will be converted to the same way of thinking. Personally I believe that if we can keep fires out of the Western Australian forests we shall render available to our use a timber which should be amongst our most useful timbers. I refer to the red gum. I think that many of the faults to be found in that timber are due to the fires which occurred while the tree was growing. If those fires can be kept out of the forests I believe we could make out of red gum a timber which would be one of the most useful of the eucalypts. It is one of the strongest and the lightest of our eucalypts and, that being so, it having the strength without the extreme weight, anything that we can do to render it available should be done. Then, again, our cabinet making timbers, sheoak and native pear especially, are extremely susceptible to fire and are practically destroyed by any fire going through the forest. That being so, it behoves us to make such provision in the Bill as may be necessary to give the Forestry Department sufficient power to cope with this enemy.

Hon. J. Ewing: What are you going to do with the enormous undergrowth?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: As soon as the Forestry Department gets going there will be no occasion for the hon. member to entertain any fears about the undergrowth.

Hon. J. Ewing: But I do fear it.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I do not think the hon. member need have any more fear about the undergrowth in this country than has been felt in other countries. The subject has been dealt with in other countries and, no doubt, it will be dealt with in this. I have alluded to the fact that a very great deal of waste occurs in connection with the cutting of our timbers for commercial purposes. So far, I am sorry to say, no steps have been taken to make a proper scientific use of that waste. We are to be congratulated, therefore—and it is an additional reason for placing in the hands of the Forestry Department as much power as is compatible with efficiency—on the fact that we are to have established in this State a laboratory for the purpose of dealing with these forest products, especially waste products, which will render the forests of Western Australia a great deal more profitable to the State. For this waste I have alluded to, in one branch of the industry represents 75 per cent., in another branch 50 per cent., and in the best and most economically conducted branch 30 per cent. of the timber handled. If this waste can be rendered of commercial value, it will be seen how much it means to the State.

Mr. G. J. G. W. Miles: Which is the 30 per cent. branch?

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: The spot mill. I should like to assure hon. members of my conviction that in trying to introduce into this State a system of scientific forestry, we are not working up to any empty ideal. The best way I can bring that home to the minds of hon. members is, perhaps, by asking them to study for a moment what has been the experience in other countries. Germany would not have been nearly so hard to beat, either in physical or in financial resources, if it were not for the careful management, practically for centuries, of the German forests. The German forests before the war were returning to the coffers of the German State no less a sum than 16 million pounds per annum net revenue, the gross revenue being 21 million pounds. Spread over a great number of years, that goes a very long way towards building up a fighting fund. It is just as well to know that they have been putting this money by. Germany, too, employed on her 35 million acres of forests no less a population than five million persons. While 1½ million were directly employed in the forests in actual forestry work, the remainder were engaged in work directly related with what might be called the secondary industries in connection with those forests. That, of course, is a state of affairs which must be a long way ahead of any country where forestry is in its infancy. But it must hearten those who have

forestry at heart to know that such a position is attainable if right methods are used. Then take France. France has suffered greatly in her forests through internal dissension and through reversals of policy. The French State forests now cover three million acres, and before the outbreak of war the total area was being increased. The revenue was £2,250,000 per annum. Around some cities in France, within an hour's journey by rail, are two great forests, the forest of Compiègne and the forest of Fontainebleau. This has an area of 36,000 acres. It is not only a forest, but a pleasure resort, where visitors may go and spend their time in the happiest possible manner. But it is more than a park, for the revenue from that park amounts to £1 per acre per annum. There are a good many famers in Western Australia who would be extremely glad to have their incomes based on £1 per acre per annum. So hon. members will see that, as carried out in other countries, this scheme of forestry is not barren of result, that it builds up the finances of a State, and builds up the people of a State by giving them at once a lucrative and healthy occupation. I hope hon. members will bear this in mind when dealing with the Bill. Again, another instance. Outside the city of Brussels, and coming right up to the end of the streets of the city, there is the forest of Soignes. The annual revenue per acre from that forest—I forget the exact acreage, but it is fairly large, I think about 20,000 acres—is 18s. 7d. There again it is a pleasure park, but a pleasure park which a good deal more than pays its way. None of the revenue is derived from money charged for access to the park; the revenue is derived solely from the sale of forest products and from license fees, and from the fees paid for the use of the forest for commercial purposes. Bearing that in mind, I think the House will agree that the objects for which we are working are more than ideal. We have something real in front of us in the example of these other countries; and if we are late in starting, still we must remember that to reach the state of affairs I have described needs an early start and much application. I hope, therefore, hon. members will not rob themselves of the chance of making our forests what they should be, of turning them from a finite asset into an infinite asset, of handing over to the generations to come after us the affairs of this country in a better condition than when we took them over. That, I think, is a duty which we owe to humanity. It will undoubtedly be a sin against the generations to come if for the profit of this generation our forests, or others of our national resources, are destroyed utterly beyond all hope of regeneration, and if the generations to come are left to carry the burden which we have incurred in the very working of that evil. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, and I hope it will receive careful consideration from hon. members.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley debate adjourned.

BILL—FRUIT CASES.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [5.49]: I do not intend to make a speech on this Bill.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member will sit down, then.

Hon. J. EWING: I shall not sit down for a moment, Sir. I do not intend to delay the House by speaking at any length. Perhaps I expressed myself rather crudely. The reasons given by Mr. Duffell and Mr. Clarke yesterday are sufficient to lead me to believe that this Bill had better be postponed until next session.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. EWING: I feel that the reasons given by the Honorary Minister for placing the Bill on the statute-book at the present time are insufficient. The Honorary Minister has stated that the measure cannot come into operation until 1920, and that a delay till next session will necessitate the giving of further notice after the measure is passed. I suggest to the Honorary Minister that he should now give the necessary notice to those connected with the fruit industry, that he intends to bring in this class of legislation. Thus the difficulty he has mentioned will be overcome. But if one reads the list of things to be done by the fruitgrower, one must conclude that the present time is most inopportune for introducing such legislation. There should be a breathing space, to give those concerned time to go into the matter thoroughly. Trials and troubles should not be imposed upon the fruitgrowers at this juncture. That seems to me a good and sufficient reason for recording my vote against the passing of the Bill at present. In the course of the Honorary Minister's remarks, I interjected the question whether the Bill had been placed before the fruitgrowers and their association. The reply I received was, "Certainly not; the first intimation is the placing of the Bill upon the Table of the House." I think the Honorary Minister has taken a wrong view of the matter. The fruitgrowers and their association, and other people concerned, should have an opportunity of perusing this Bill before it is submitted to Parliament, so that suggestions may be given to the Minister by practical men, whose suggestions would probably be better than those of the departmental officers. I intend to cast my vote against the second reading.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON (North-East [5.52]: I shall support the second reading of the Bill. I have listened to hon. members opposing the measure, but they have not attacked what I consider the main principle of the Bill and the main reason for its introduction—the establishment of a uniform fruit case in this State. That is a matter which has never yet been settled by those who have been dealing with it, namely, the fruitgrowers' associations. They still appear to be arguing as to what is the best size for a uniform case, what timber should be used, and so forth. Therefore it is about time the Government took a hand and established something for the bene-

fit of the whole State; for the benefit not only of the fruitgrowers, but also of the consumers. One reason rendering the establishment of a uniform case essential is the provision of the timber, which will have to be cut for the manufacture of cases. The provision that the standard size shall not become operative until a future date to be specified, is a wise one. It will enable those affected by the Bill to get into line by that date. I am not prepared to argue against the other objections taken by those who, I admit, are intimately connected with the industry; but I consider the Bill is justified if only in order that it may settle the question of the uniform case. Mr. Sanderson, in referring to the study and investigation already devoted to that question, had to admit that the fruitgrowers' associations have not been able to give us a lead. They do not know themselves what they require.

Hon. A. Sanderson: And you propose to teach them?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: No. But the fruitgrowers have not any consideration for the consumers of the State, for the general population; and as the fruitgrowers have not been able to make up their minds on the subject, it is time the Government took a hand and settled this question, just as Governments have settled many other questions about which experts have haggled for years. Possibly the trouble in such cases is that there are too many experts. As regards the branding of the cases and the kind of timber to be used, I candidly admit I am not prepared to offer an opinion. If the opponents of the Bill had given even one reason why a uniform case should not be established by means of this measure, I might be prepared to vote with them. But they have not done so. They have not come forward with any counter proposals. They have simply said that the experts cannot make up their minds on the question. The matter should not be allowed to drift longer in a haphazard manner, and therefore the proposal of the Government is worth consideration. Possibly there may be a good deal of reason behind the objections which have been raised on other aspects of the measure, but I want the objectors to give me a sufficient reason why the uniform case should not be established now. Perhaps the clauses dealing with contentious matters might be postponed. However, the main principle of the Bill is the establishment of a uniform fruit case in this State, and for that one reason I shall support the second reading, of course reserving to myself the right to vote in committee against any clause other than that which embodies the main principle.

On motion by Hon. C. F. Baxter (Honorary Minister), debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.58 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 27th November, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers Presented" see "Votes and Proceedings."]

QUESTION—"ULYSSES" STRANDING INQUIRIES.

Hon. T. WALKER (without notice) asked the Honorary Minister: Has a reply yet been received from Melbourne in regard to the placing on the Table, in compliance with the order of the House, of all the papers in connection with the stranding of the "Ulysses"?

The HONORARY MINISTER replied: A reply has not yet been received, although we have telegraphed again. I will consult the Premier later on in the evening, and if we cannot get a reply in the course of a day or two we will take a chance and lay the papers on the Table of the House.

QUESTION—RAILWAY APPEAL BOARD, CASE OF PORTER OAKES.

Hon. T. WALKER (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways: Has a reply yet been given to the official who waited upon him in reference to the case of Porter Oakes, who was fined by the Railway appeal board?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Yes, to-day.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. HARDWICK, leave of absence for two weeks granted to the member for Kimberley (Mr. Durack) on the ground of urgent private business.

MOTION — FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST, HANDLING GOODS AND WHEAT STORAGE CHARGES.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [4.43]: I move—

That in the opinion of this House, the practice of the Fremantle Harbour Trust in handling all goods on the Fremantle wharves should be discontinued, and such service should be optional with shippers; also, the charges for storage of wheat at Fremantle wharves are unwarrantably high and should be in conformity with the rates charged for similar accommodation in the Eastern States of the Commonwealth.

Some little time ago, when I rose to my feet in this Chamber, the leader of the Opposition, in a somewhat humorous vein, twitted me with bringing certain things forward as the first fruits of my trip. That may have been so, and the information I have to give to the House to-day may be regarded as the second fruits of my trip. I have been to the Eastern States, and found out that what I stated in this Chamber was correct.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not on the wharves.