

the State. One of the reasons why we are called upon to pay a high rate of interest at the present time is because we are largely overtaxed. Some time ago the Premier tried to show that we were taxed to no greater degree than were the people in other States. A week or ten days ago the "West Australian" published a leading article, in which it supported the Premier's contention, and proceeded to show how it was that we were not taxed more than the people of other States. The writer took from the Commonwealth Year Book the taxation per head in each of the States, and on those figures, it appeared that we were not taxed appreciably more. But one has to look at the method by which those figures are arrived at. We know as an absolute fact that the tax on the highest incomes in Victoria is 6½d., whereas here it is 4s. 7d. Yet on those figures it is shown that our taxation is about the same as that of the other States. How is that brought about? The "West Australian" says that, first of all, the other States pay a lot more in probate and death duties than do we. That is not a factor. It is not a question of how much a dead man is called upon to contribute in taxation. It is a question of how much the live man is contributing. The dead man has had his innings. He has been lightly taxed during his life and has been able to build up his business and make a competence, and when he dies there is something to tax. The "West Australian" takes one year's probate duties and adds the amount to the tax. To make a fair comparison it should add the tax that a person pays here year by year and set that against annual payments and the probate tax of Victoria. There a person is paying practically once, while here a person is paying a high rate all the time. It is the living man that is helping to develop the country. He wants all the margin of income possible to enable him to assist development and increase employment. The dead man counts for very little. The writer says that another factor is the stamp duty. That is not a sound argument. Victoria has properties of high value due to great development over many years. When those properties change hands, high stamp duties are paid. In a State like Western Australia development has not been very great so far; land values are not high and stamp duties consequently do not amount to much. That factor cannot be taken into account. Another factor is that the average tax per head is calculated upon the whole of the population. Before one can make an equitable comparison on that basis, he must first inquire what proportion of people in each of the State pay taxation. Here a very large number of people are exempt from taxation altogether; very few people foot the bill. If we divide the total by the population, the average is comparatively low. In the Eastern States, where there are not exemptions to the same extent, the average shows to better advantage. Really it comes back to this: what is the real

amount we have to pay? That is obtained by comparing the rate of tax. When that is done, taxation in this State is found to be very much higher, double, treble, quadruple that levied in the State of Victoria.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: The per capita revenues and expenditure figures show that clearly.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: We are almost bound to pass this Bill, but I would like to impress upon the Government that they should borrow and spend as little money as possible at this high rate. If I could get any support on the Loan Bill, I would be prepared to move to reduce the amount and so limit the expenditure of the Government so long as this interest remains as high as six per cent. Money at that price cannot be profitably employed.

On motion by Hon. V. Hamersley, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.38 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 5th December, 1923.

	PAGE
Questions: Arbitration Court presidency ...	1836
Australian loans	1836
Jolliffe floods	1836
Agricultural College, site	1836
Stock Disease, Belmont and Fremantle	1836
Road making, Federal grant	1836
North Perth, Municipality secession	1836
Kendenup Royal Commission	1839
Australian Wheat Board	1839
Bills: Flinders Bay-Margaret River Deviation, returned	1837
Permanent Reserves, returned	1837
Public Institutions and Friendly Societies Lands Improvement, returned	1837
Stamp Act Amendment, returned	1839
Factories and Shops Act Amendment, returned	1839
Vermitt Act Amendment, 2s.	1839
Women's Legal Status, Com.	1843
Brookton-Dale River Railway, 2s.	1843
Lake Grace-Newdegate Railway, 2s.	1845
Geraldton Harbour Works Railway, 2s., Com., 3s.	1850
Friendly Societies Act Amendment, 3s.	1851
Change of Name Regulation, 2s., Com., 3s.	1852
Motion: Apprenticeship system	1852

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

BILLS (5)—RETURNED.

- 1, Flinders Bay-Margaret River Railway Deviation (No. 1.)
 - 2, Permanent Reserves.
 - 3, Public Institutions and Friendly Societies Lands Improvement Act Amendment.
- Without amendment.

- 4, Stamp Act Amendment.
- 5, Factories and Shops Act Amendment.
With an Amendment.

QUESTION—ARBITRATION COURT, PRESIDENCY.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Premier: Is it a fact that Mr. Justice Burnside has accepted the position of President of the Arbitration Court for the remainder of the present term only, and has not agreed to continue in the position after the termination of the Christmas vacation?

The PREMIER replied: No. It was agreed that the acceptance of the position is not to interfere with his long service leave should he apply for it.

QUESTION—AUSTRALIAN LOANS.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Premier: Has he read an article in the "Leader" newspaper of 30th November relative to Australian borrowing, and if so does he agree in the main with the views expressed therein?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes.

QUESTION—JOLIMONT FLOODS.

Mr. MULLANY (for Mr. Richardson) asked the Premier: 1, In view of the decision of the Supreme Court re flooded areas at Jolimont, is it the intention of the Government to pay compensation to those residents of Jolimont whose premises have since been flooded out, and whose claims have now been lodged? 2, If so, when is it proposed to make such payment?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, The claims to which the judgment of the Supreme Court extended have been adjusted, but recent claims on the rising of the water level generally in the metropolitan area during last winter's rains cannot be admitted.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE, SITE.

Hon. F. T. BROWN asked the Premier: Will he give the House an assurance that Parliament will be afforded an opportunity to discuss the question of a site for an agricultural college before a decision is arrived at?

The PREMIER replied: I regret that I cannot give the assurance asked.

QUESTIONS (2)—STOCK DISEASE.

Fremantle.

Mr. MONEY asked the Premier: 1, in view of the possibility of Fremantle being proclaimed an infected port and the serious position to Western Australia thereby, will the Government proceed with the necessary

facilities of the other ports without further delay to enable the shipping of the State to be continued? 2, What is being done in this direction at Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton?

The PREMIER replied: 1, I do not think that Fremantle will be declared an infected port—all ports may be closed against export of certain kinds of stock. 2, The ports of Albany, Bunbury, and Geraldton are capable of handling the trade offering.

Belmont.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Did he receive a notification from my office on the 26th ultimo to the effect that there were several deaths amongst cattle at Belmont, eight within the week preceding, from some mysterious disease? 2, What steps were taken to investigate? 3, Is there any truth in the report appearing in the "West Australian" of yesterday's date? 4, If so, will he treat the situation in every respect like that at Fremantle?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, In the stress of work that must necessarily occur in the busy office of the hon. member, his instructions to his staff could not have been obeyed, as it is certain his message did not reach me. 2, Immediately a report reached the Stock Department it was investigated. 3, Yes. 4, Yes.

QUESTION—ROAD MAKING, FEDERAL GRANT.

Capt. CARTER asked the Minister for Works: Is it a fact that, in anticipation of the Federal grant for roads, the Public Works Department is expending moneys on the construction of roads, or on the other hand, advancing money to the local authorities for expenditure on roads; if so, where is it being expended and to what amount and whether any money expended on road construction in the State is intended to be recouped from the Federal grant; if so, where has the money been expended and to what amount?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: No.

QUESTION—NORTH PERTH, SECESSION.

Capt. CARTER asked the Minister for Works: What is the present position in regard to the petition recently presented on behalf of the North Perth Progress Association for secession from the Greater Perth Municipality?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: A reply has been received from His Worship the Mayor of Perth, and when examined will be communicated to the petitioners.

QUESTION—KENDENUP ROYAL COMMISSION.

Mr. HUGHES asked the Premier: 1, Is it the intention of the Government to provide legal assistance to the settlers of Kendenup so that their cases may be adequately placed before the Royal Commissioner and their interests properly safeguarded? 2, Is he aware that certain influences are at work to prevent the Commissioner from obtaining the truth? 3, If so, what do the Government intend to do? 4, Will the Government place the services of a detective at the disposal of Mr. Le Mesurier to assist him in obtaining information necessary on behalf of the settlers? 5, As the counsel for Mr. De Garis is getting a copy of shorthand notes, will he make a copy also available to Mr. Le Mesurier free of cost?

The PREMIER replied: 1, This is not considered necessary. The Commission will visit Kendenup, and it should be possible for the settlers, either individually or through their organisation, the Settlers' Association, to put their case efficiently before the Commission. 2, No. 3, Answered by No. 2. 4, No. Moreover, Mr. Le Mesurier is not acting for the settlers, but for one settler only. 5, If possible, but a copy can always be seen.

QUESTION—AUSTRALIAN WHEAT BOARD.

Mr. LATHAM (without notice) asked the Minister for Agriculture: Have the accounts of the Australian Wheat Board, as affecting this State, been finalised, and if so, when may the final payments be expected.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: The accounts of the Australian Wheat Board have been finalised for some considerable time, but can only be completely finalised on receipt of the final certificates from the Australian Wheat Board. There will be a meeting of the board on the 11th inst., when it is expected that all matters will be completed.

BILL—VERMIN ACT AMENDMENT

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [4.42]: This Bill proposes to amend Section 2 of the Act of 1918 by repealing it, and substituting these words: "This Act shall apply throughout the State." This Act is very unworkable in the North and North-West districts, and there are some very exacting sections in it. Although I am quite satisfied these would not be applied harshly by the present Minister, they constitute rather a serious menace to pastoralists in the North, and if another Government came into office they might be interpreted in a drastic manner.

Mr. Marshall: You are optimistic.

Mr. TEESDALE: There are many vermin boards in the North, but unfortunately there is very little combination between them. We would very much like to see a Bill introduced to ensure greater unanimity of operation in this respect. The North-West members, and those representing pastoral districts, have gone carefully into the matter, and are of opinion that some Bill should be drafted dealing exclusively with the North and the North-West. The two districts mentioned in the 1918 Act are totally dissimilar and we are afraid that the Bill cannot be successfully administered in the northern areas.

The Minister for Agriculture: What about the south-eastern areas?

Mr. TEESDALE: The dingo pest is a serious menace to the whole State, perhaps as serious as the rinderpest is amongst cattle. The mortality has been tremendous. It would astonish hon. members if they knew the number of sheep killed on some of the stations in the North. In one instance, 300 flock rams were put into a paddock in the Roebourne district. Those rams cost £7 a head to land on the station. Two months later 60 rams only were taken from the paddock. This is a serious position and everyone recognises it. It is suggested that a special Bill to deal with the North and North-West be prepared to cover dingoes, foxes and eagle-hawks, which form the principal vermin causing trouble in those areas.

Mr. Marshall: What about the kangaroos and euros?

Mr. TEESDALE: It is realised that considerable difficulty will be experienced if any attempt is made to bring in other animals, because some are protected under the Game Act. It would be necessary to repeal part of the Game Act and that would cause delay. We cannot afford any delay regarding the dingo pest. It is a strange thing, but during certain periods of the year the dingoes become more troublesome and at present they represent a serious difficulty. We want to deal with the position as quickly as possible. Members representing the pastoral areas are prepared to help in that direction. They are not antagonistic to the Minister or to the Bill except insofar as it applies to the North and North-West. We desire to call his attention to the fact that a number of the clauses, if applied to these areas, will be unworkable. It will be impossible to apply them. Regarding the proposed measure which I hope the Minister will see fit to introduce for us, we would suggest imposing a rate with a maximum of one penny on the unimproved value of the pastoralists' holdings. For the present season we suggest a rate of a half-penny should be struck, as that would provide sufficient money for the necessary work this year. Next season the rate could be increased or decreased so as to deal effectively with the position.

The Minister for Agriculture: The local vermin board could do that with the machinery they have.

Mr. TEESDALE: We have not found that the local vermin boards work satisfactorily and we desire the Government to give us more adequate co-ordination. The possible area to be dealt with represents about 283,000,000 acres. By the imposition of a halfpenny rate it is considered that £12,000 would be received, and that would provide sufficient funds for the present season. The Government propose to give us pound for pound by way of subsidy, and we ask them to continue that degree of help. Another provision we suggest should be included in the Bill we would like to see introduced relates to that subsidy, which would enable us to provide a flat rate of £1 per scalp.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is the proposal now.

Mr. TEESDALE: That is so. Some of the clauses in the present Bill are in accord with what we suggest, but others do not come within that category. If the amount we suggest should be raised this season proves to be insufficient, we can immediately increase the rate.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Tell us which clauses will not apply and we can look into them.

Mr. TEESDALE: Speaking on behalf of the North-West members generally, we cannot entertain the Bill at all. The whole of it is impossible so far as our part of the State is concerned.

The Minister for Agriculture: In effect, the pastoralists do not want to have anything to do with the destruction of rabbits.

Mr. TEESDALE: We will deal with that difficulty when it presents itself. At the present time rabbits do not constitute a menace in those parts. The settlers were grateful to the Government of the day when they spent money in the erection of the rabbit-proof fences. A great deal of the fencing serves no good purpose now and could be taken up and used elsewhere.

The Minister for Agriculture: It would not pay to remove the fencing.

Mr. TEESDALE: Perhaps the wire would give some return. At any rate the fence should not be maintained, for a lot of expense is being incurred in that direction that is scarcely justified. I accept my share of responsibility in securing the expenditure on the rabbit-proof fencing, but the fact remains that much of it serves no good purpose now. I assure the Minister for Agriculture that pastoralist members are prepared to do everything possible to aid him should he bring down an effective measure to deal with the present position. We are prepared to help him just as he is prepared to help us. We ask that he shall adjourn the further consideration of the Bill to enable us to meet again and endeavour to arrive at something which will be effective and which will apply to the North-West. We must be separated from the South-West, to which part of the State many of the sections of the 1918 Act are quite applicable. No doubt the Act is satisfactory regarding small holdings. For instance, one clause compels the fencing in of water, and

when I inform hon. members that we have in places 12 or 14 miles of bore drains, they will realise how impossible it would be to fence off such an area.

The Minister for Agriculture: We have not fenced in all the water supplies in the South-West.

Mr. TEESDALE: Unfortunately the machinery to enforce that is in the Bill and it might be harmful, should any attempt be made to enforce it at a future date. I ask that the Minister should give consideration to our request for more time to deal with this matter. Members representing the pastoral areas met to-day and if given further time we may bring forward some satisfactory solution of the difficulty and not interfere with the Bill as it affects the South-West. It may surprise hon. members to know that some pastoralists have paid as much as £5 per head for dingoes caught on their holdings.

Mr. Money: They have done so in the South-West, too.

Mr. TEESDALE: The member for Mt. Magnet (Hon. F. M. Troy) will bear me out when I say that he has paid as much as £7 10s. per head for dogs caught on his property. There they killed 20 or 30 lambs in a night and practically decimated his small flocks. I speak for the small holders when I ask for this additional protection. We want a Bill to deal with the northern portions only, and will assist the Minister to provide what is best to help that district. I hope the Minister will see his way clear to grant the adjournment so that we may have further discussion regarding the Bill.

Mr. DURACK (Kimberley) [4.55]: Like other members who have spoken to the Bill, I regret that it has to be dealt with at such a late stage in the session. To deal effectively with such a subject in the dying hours of Parliament is not possible.

The Minister for Agriculture: You have had practically a fortnight to consider the one Bill.

Mr. DURACK: If given time, we might bring forward a measure which would satisfy all sections of the House. I recently had an opportunity of visiting, with other Parliamentarians, the Leonora, Lawlers, Wiluna and Meekatharra areas.

Mr. Marshall: There are no pests there.

The Premier: Only one.

Mr. Teesdale: And he is away temporarily.

Mr. DURACK: The Leader of the Opposition will agree that the question of paramount importance placed before the Premier on that trip related to the dingo pest. So far as I can interpret the wishes of the road boards who were dealing with the problem, they desire some uniform arrangement. I think the Leonora board favoured the fencing in of a million acres and dealing with the pest within that area. With this one exception all the other boards favoured the bonus principle.

Mr. Heron: That proposal was from a combined conference of the Menzies, Laverton, Leonora and Lawlers boards.

Mr. DURACK: It was recognised that if the pest were dealt with on that basis, a flat rate of £1 per head should be paid. The road boards felt that the dingoes constituted a serious menace at the present time and that it should be dealt with on a uniform basis for the whole area concerned, apart from the South-West, which is clearly defined at present by a line running north of Geraldton to the eastward and down to Esperance. We ask the Minister if it is not possible to bring forward a Bill dealing only with the dingoes, foxes and hawks. We do not discount the ravages of the rabbit pest, which we recognise as a menace in this and other parts of the State. We contend that the dingo is the principal menace, retarding the development of our pastoral areas. I was informed by a pastoralist holding an area around Leonora that if Parliament passed a Bill dealing with the dingo pest, he would go straight ahead with his fencing, which, under ordinary circumstances, would cost from £30 to £40 per mile. He told me that he could not run sheep because he would require wire netting, and if he ran up sheep-proof fences it would run into £80 per mile. Seeing that the area concerned represents four-fifths of the whole State, and that the leaseholders themselves are prepared to agree to a levy, with a maximum of one penny in the pound on the unimproved value, which would provide £23,000 if necessary, it is only fair that the Government should meet us if it is possible. I understand that the Minister claims that we cannot secure such a Bill unless we include the vermin. We want a Bill dealing with dingoes first and then we can concern ourselves with the rabbit pest, should it become a menace in our part of the State. We are helping the South-West by destroying the dogs within our areas. A number of the representatives of the areas affected met this afternoon and agreed to the proposal that was outlined by the member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale). We are not asking the Government too much when we suggest they should meet us in that direction.

The Minister for Agriculture: They can still do what is suggested under the present Act.

Mr. DURACK: The proposals contained in the Bill are not acceptable to us. We say definitely that we are not satisfied that the machinery exists to enable the Government to do what we require. We prefer to lose this Bill altogether than to see it go through as it is. If we put up the proposal, which I interpret to be the wish of the leaseholders generally and the members representing the pastoral areas, there is nothing unreasonable in asking the Government to bring in a measure on those lines. Our desire is to do away with the high cost of administration. We say to the Government, "Collect the fees in the ordinary way."

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You want the State to do it; State trading again.

Mr. DURACK: Does the hon. member call collecting rents State trading? We are asking the Government to collect the levy just as they are doing at the present time with respect to rentals and there will be no administration cost. If we had a general regulation which clearly set out that £1 per head would be paid, there would then be an incentive to go out and destroy the dingoes. Then, on getting rid of the dingoes, we know what the effect would be on the pastoral industry. I ask the Government to deal with the pest, which we regard as a menace. Then, having dealt with that, we can turn our attention to rabbits and euros.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [5.5]: There are two reasons why the Bill has been submitted. The first is that we want to help the people who are settled on the land in the North-West, and we desire to protect their stock so that they may carry on their calling. The second reason is that it is necessary to protect the interests of the State. The destruction of wealth means a loss to everyone. Apart from that fact, these are State lands, and there is no difference between the north and the south. We cannot have one law for the South-West and another law for those who are on the pastoral areas. The administration of the law by any Government is always sympathetic. Two pests have been referred to, the dingo and the rabbit. I do not know what the hon. member meant when he said that we should let the rabbit go and confine our attention to the dingo.

Mr. Teesdale: The rabbits are not yet cutting down our sheep.

The PREMIER: It is because we have to protect the interests of the State that we must deal with both dingoes and rabbits. We say that it is as important to keep the rabbits from the pastoral areas as it is to keep them away from the farming lands. We are anxious to help both the squatter and the farmer, and I hope members realise that. Do hon. members argue that we should allow rabbits to multiply on the Murchison or on any of the pastoral lands adjoining the farming areas? The House would resist any such suggestion. I do not know that all the pastoralists were represented at the meeting which decided to make a raid on the Bill. We desire to assist the pastoralists, and that is the idea of this Bill. The duty of the vermin boards is to see that the landowner does what is expected of him under the law, that is, to destroy all vermin. The pastoralists would be wise to co-operate with the Government and deal with the pest as it is now.

Mr. Teesdale: We want to do that.

The PREMIER: When we were at Leonora a deputation from pastoralists requested that they should be assisted to buy wire netting. Then again at Meekatharra we were asked to help in the destruction of the dingo. To both questions we returned the only answer possible, namely, that we could not find the

wire netting free of interest for any length of time. With regard to the dingoes, we said, "Whether you wire net or not, you must destroy this pest." True, wire netting will keep the dingoes out of the paddocks.

The Minister for Agriculture: But it will not altogether stop the dingo from getting in.

The PREMIER: Or breeding when he does get in. Therefore destruction must go on all the time. It is unreasonable to say that we will allow the rabbits to multiply on pastoral holdings. We should certainly not be asked to agree to that.

Mr. Teesdale: Fence in the waterholes.

The PREMIER: I do not think that would be a very important matter. We know that the rabbits eat the bark of the trees when there is no feed on the ground, and that after they have gone to the water they die in thousands. Moreover, it is impossible to fence in all the waterholes in the North-West. The duty of the Government and of the House is to the country, that is, to the people who are settled on the land. The pests are serious, not only to those on the land, but to the whole State, and that is why public funds are devoted towards the extermination of vermin. We are quite willing to assist the pastoralists in every way possible. The hon. member declared that the proposition in the North was different from that of the South. Of course it is altogether different, because in the one case the acreage is comparatively small and in the other it is very large. I do not know that the menace is greater to the pastoralists than to the farmers. Of course, the farmer can deal with it better on his smaller holding. Anyhow, we should not be asked to allow rabbits to increase in any way.

Mr. Teesdale: They are not increasing in the North.

The PREMIER: I admit the members representing the North ought to be listened to, but we want them to realise that we are not going to jeopardise the position by meeting wishes with which we do not agree. Our desire is to destroy all things that are a menace to the man upon the land.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [5.14]: A great deal of dissatisfaction exists in the South-West on account of rates having to be paid to the vermin boards. I understood, after an interview I had with the Minister, that amending legislation would be introduced that would have the effect of adjusting the position. I have always favoured bringing the whole State under vermin legislation. This Bill seeks to do that, but not in the best way.

Mr. Underwood: So that you can levy on people in the North to eradicate vermin in the South?

Mr. PICKERING: No, I favour a central board, with every road board operating under it.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why not local government?

Mr. PICKERING: It is urgently necessary to deal with the dingo pest.

Mr. Underwood: Why should we pay for you?

Mr. PICKERING: It is necessary to eradicate the pest. There was a conference between the Primary Producers' Association and the Pastoralists' Association in order to arrive at an equitable solution of the problem.

Mr. Underwood: The Primary Producers' Association is dead.

Mr. PICKERING: The Primary Producers' Association is stronger than ever. That will be evidenced during the forthcoming elections.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Bill has nothing to do with the Primary Producers' Association.

Mr. PICKERING: I thought there was unanimity between the two bodies. I regret the Bill does not provide for a central board to control the levying of the rate and the expenditure of the money. The argument that because some parts of the State are free from vermin they should be exempt from contributing to the destruction of pests in other parts, does not weigh with me. The outback settler has quite enough difficulties without being burdened with the whole of the cost of keeping in check the vermin that affects the State, and amending legislation should provide for a central board and for the expending of the money where it would be of most benefit to the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: Do not you think the local road boards could do better than could a central board in Perth?

Mr. PICKERING: This Bill does not go far enough. Anyone that has had anything to do with stock knows the vital necessity for legislation to effectively deal with the dingo pest. I doubt whether this measure would have any good effect. In any case, it does not go far enough and, therefore, I cannot support the second reading.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue) [5.18]: I am pleased the Minister has agreed to postpone the Bill for further consideration. I have been asked to support the levying of a uniform tax for the destruction of dingoes. In some parts of the State up to £1 per head is being paid for the destruction of dingoes, but in other parts only 5s. is being paid. The biggest menace we have in the sheep country is the dingo. In the big areas the dogs breed rapidly, and the men that go out farthest have to bear the brunt of the battle. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) has told us that the pastoralists are prepared to tax themselves to the extent of one penny in the pound of unimproved values, and to impose a half-penny of it this year, a levy that would bring in £11,000 a year. That would be of great assistance in fighting the pest. Right through the Murchison and in the North-West there is no trouble with rabbits. I have seen rabbits in the Murchison district for the last 25 years, but no tax is imposed for their destruction. In good seasons I have noticed that

they increase in numbers slightly, but about Christmas time it is difficult to find a rabbit in the district. I have no fear of a rabbit invasion. Rabbits may be a pest in the agricultural districts, but in the Murchison pastoral country they are not regarded as a pest.

The Minister for Agriculture: The Bill will give power to act as the necessity arises.

Mr. CHESSON: For 25 years we have heard talk of a rabbit invasion, but so far the rabbits have done no harm in the Murchison. On the other hand, a large number of sheep have been destroyed by dingoes. Sheep runs are being extended further out into what was once cattle country, and the station owners have a big battle to cope with the pest. This is due to the fact that war is not being waged against the pest as it should be in the outback parts of the State.

The Minister for Agriculture: In the early days similar trouble was experienced on the Murchison.

Mr. CHESSON: Yes, and those who went out farthest had to bear the worst of the fight. If the whole of the pastoralists were taxed uniformly, a fair sum of money would be available for the work of destruction. The whole of the people in the outback parts would be waging war against the vermin and in time the dingo would be almost exterminated. I know of parts of the Murchison where dingoes years ago were to be found in thousands; now only a few are there, apart from those that come from the big cattle areas. The postponing of the Bill will afford opportunities for further inquiry into the representations made by North-West members. In what they have said, members from the Murchison practically concur. The dingoes must be destroyed. Foxes are making headway through many areas, and emus are also responsible for a good deal of loss. These three are the great pests that destroy lambs. I again urge that a uniform tax should be levied for the destruction of dingoes.

On motion by Mr. Money, debate adjourned.

BILL—WOMEN'S LEGAL STATUS.

In Committee.

Resumed from the 7th November. Mr. Angelo in the Chair; Mrs. Cowan in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—Removal of disqualification on grounds of sex:

Hon W. C. Angwin had moved to strike out of line 1 the words "or marriage."

Amendment put and passed.

Mrs. COWAN: I move an amendment—

That in line 7 the words "civil" and "or vocation" be struck out.

I do not wish to convey the impression or make it possible that there shall be anything detrimental to the interests of women under this measure. The Solicitor General con-

tends that the amendment is unnecessary, but I have decided that it would be better to make sure by deleting the words mentioned.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—BROOKTON-DALE RIVER RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [5.32] in moving the second reading said: This is a Bill to authorise the construction of a railway from Brookton to Dale River. The survey of a railway from Brookton to Armadale, of which this line forms a part, was made some years ago by officers of the Public Works Department, Messrs. Duffy and Wilson. They located the line on which a ruling grade of one in eighty was obtained. The members representing the districts concerned, Messrs. Brown and Hickmott, recently made representations to the effect that it had been found the Brookton end of the line was located a few miles too far north to give the best service to the settlers. If hon. members will refer to the plan, they will see that in order to get out to Brookton it was necessary to run some two or three miles parallel to the existing Great Southern railway, and then branch off. On the strength of the representations made to the Government, another surveyor, Mr. Oliver, was sent out to see if a better location could be secured. His efforts have resulted in the line as set forth in the schedule to the Bill. It was found that for a distance of 26½ miles it was possible to secure a grade of one in sixty. This grade may be improved as the permanent survey is made. A surveyor is now engaged in making the permanent survey.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why should not we wait until the permanent survey is finished, seeing that this line cannot be built for some time?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is considered desirable, by the Government at any rate, to proceed with the Bill now.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The elections are coming on.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know that that influences the Government at all.

Hon. P. Collier: Oh, no!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: My business, at all events, is to get on with work when I am instructed.

Mr. Hughes: The general election is getting North Perth a water supply.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Bill provides for deviation to the extent of five miles on the north side and of two miles on the south side. Between those limitations it

is considered, by those who know the country, to be possible to get a line which will do the work that is needed. I am given to understand that quite a number of farmers are settled in the area which the line will serve, and that at present they have a long distance to cart. It goes without saying, therefore, that those settlers will be very much assisted by the construction of the line. The rails to be used on the line, when it is built, are 60lb. rails, and it is estimated that the cost of the line will be £106,000. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: From the manner in which you moved this Bill, there is nothing in it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

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

Ayes	19
Noes	24
Majority against				5

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Lambert
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Lutey
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Marshall
Mr. Collier	Mr. McCallum
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Davies	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Heron	Mr. Walker
Mr. Hughes	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Johnston	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Mann
Mr. Broun	Sir James Mitchell
Mr. Carter	Mr. Money
Mrs. Cowan	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Denton	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Durack	Mr. Sampson
Mr. George	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Gibson	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Harrison	Mr. J. Thomson
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Latham	Mr. Mullaney
Mr. C. C. Maley	(Teller.)
Mr. H. K. Maley	

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. HICKMOTT (Pingelly) [5.41]: It has been said that patience is a virtue. The people of the district which this line will serve are virtuous.

Hon. P. Collier: They will have to exercise a little more patience and show a little more virtue.

Mr. HICKMOTT: The line has been promised for about 20 years—for 15 years, to my knowledge. I think it has been promised by all the Governments of this State since the first Wilson Government. The Labour Government, having seen the quality of the land and the difficulty of the

people, promised the line. At Brookton Mr. Scaddan, when Premier, gave a definite promise.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government have not shown us the plans of the line yet.

Mr. HICKMOTT: I have no objection to the debate being adjourned.

Mr. Hughes: You showed that by your vote a minute ago.

Mr. HICKMOTT: Since Mr. Scaddan's promise was made, numerous members of Parliament have been through the district. The residents obtained a promise from the present Premier that a Bill to authorise the construction of the line would be introduced during this session. My reason for opposing the adjournment of the debate was that we are approaching the end of the session. I understand there is a desire to get the business completed next week.

Mr. Corboy: But that is no reason for bringing down a Bill without proper information or plans.

Mr. HICKMOTT: We all know that this line has been promised by three Governments. Its construction has been recommended by the Railway Advisory Board. The members of that board, after going through the district, expressed surprise at the number of the holdings there, at the improvements which had been made, and at the quality of the land for mixed farming purposes.

Mr. Underwood: The plans of the line have been here so long that they are worn out.

Mr. HICKMOTT: I am indeed pleased that the Premier has kept his promise to bring down this Bill. We now have something definite to go on regarding the construction of this much-needed railway. Quite a large proportion of the land in the district has been settled for 50 or 60 years. During all that time many of the settlers have been battling on without any facilities whatever. At present many of them are carting their produce as much as 30 miles. Everyone recognises that with proper transport facilities the district is capable of producing much more than it is producing now. I congratulate the present Government on the attitude they have taken towards settlers who have suffered for so many years from want of facilities for getting their produce to market. The Leader of the Opposition knows the district, and knows what the settlers there have had to suffer. I am quite sure that the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) also has a good knowledge of much of the country that will be benefited by the passing of this Bill. I am surprised, therefore, that those two gentlemen oppose the introduction of the measure.

Hon. P. Collier: What rubbish! Surprised!

Mr. Munsie: There is no opposition to the introduction of the measure. The trouble is the refusal to adjourn the debate.

Mr. HICKMOTT: Most members know something of the district and of the high quality of its soil. This railway is one of the most

necessary works we have had before us in a number of years. I do not altogether agree with the member for Beverley (Hon. F. T. Broun) as to the route. He is disposed to take it too far north.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But he is not the Minister, so he cannot do that.

Mr. HICKMOTT: On the south side of the proposed route more produce is grown than on the north side. The deviation of five miles on the north side would bring the line practically to the original survey. On the 11th November we had a meeting in the district, and those present signed this agreement showing that they were quite satisfied with the route recommended by Mr. Surveyor Oliver. Therefore, when in Committee I will move that the limit of deviation be reduced to $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles north and $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles south. If the line were constructed on the original survey it would run almost parallel with the Great Southern railway and within 14 or 15 miles of that line. The proposed railway should go where it will serve the greatest number of people and lift the greatest quantity of produce. If it were taken north, a number of people, including Mr. Ridgway, Mr. O'Brien and others, would still cart to Brookton. That is one reason why I say the line should be taken on the route recommended by the surveyors. The grade is not quite as good as that on the original survey, but Mr. Oliver says he will be able to get through on a one in 60 grade, which is quite a satisfactory grade for country such as that. I trust there will be no opposition to the Bill. I have no objection to the adjournment of the second reading so that hon. members may see the plans and think the proposition over.

On motion by Mr. Johnston, debate adjourned.

BILL—LAKE GRACE-NEWDEGATE RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [5.53] in moving the second reading said: Members have the Bill and they have the plan. The length of the line is 35 miles, and the estimated cost £140,000, if the construction be up to the standard of existing lines; but if the construction be less substantial the cost will be about £70,000. The line has been reported on by the advisory board. It will serve about 150,000 acres of land. There are settlers along the route, and at Newdegate is a large soldier settlement. It is desirable that, as far as possible, those men should be served by the railway, as they certainly cannot cart their produce from 30 to 35 miles. The construction of the railway will greatly encourage settlement. The deviation given in the schedule is five miles on either side. It is not expected that it will be necessary to deviate to the fullest extent, but it is advisable that the provision should be there so that

every advantage can be taken of the country and its lay-out. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. STUBBS (Wagin) [5.55]: The Bill is to serve a number of men, none of whom are in my electorate. However, I hope the House, when it has heard my statement, will hesitate before voting against the Bill. Twelve years ago the Lake Grace district was a forest. A number of men came out from the Old Country and went into the district, 60 miles from the nearest railway town, Dumbleyung, in order to carve out homes. They had not much capital, nor did they get much money from the Government. They relied upon their luck, their enterprise and their hard work. They got a fair amount of credit from the storekeepers. Those men had to cart over great distances everything they ate, and in many instances had to cart water from 10 to 15 miles. There were fewer than 30 settlers in that group. Shortly after they were established, railway communication was sent beyond Dumbleyung to Kukerin. This still left an unbridged gap of 30 miles between Kukerin and Lake Grace.) In 1916 the Labour Government, seeing that those settlers had a good tract of country, that they were industrious and that their land was first class, asked Parliament to authorise the construction of a railway to serve them. The line was built in 1916. In 1918 a tract of land outside the settled area of Lake Grace was surveyed and on my representation, Sir James Mitchell, then Minister for Lands, agreed to reserve the new tract for returned soldiers. Nearly 40 returned soldiers are now comfortably settled in that district. It is fairly good country, and most of the settlers are doing well. Some of them have the disadvantage of having to cart their produce from 14 to 16 miles. This tract of country lies north-east from Lake Grace. The settlers would not be right on the railway if it went straight from Lake Grace to Newdegate. Hon. members will see the position clearly on the map, and will see also that the line should start from Lake Grace. It is 30 miles from Lake Grace to Newdegate. After the soldiers had been repatriated on this area of country a number of the pioneers of Lake Grace made a trip east of the soldier settlement. On their return to Lake Grace they informed me there was quite a fine belt of country out there, equal if not superior to the country at Lake Grace, where they have produced so much wheat and where every man has made good. I then asked the Government to have this area of country surveyed. The Premier assured me he thought instructions had already been given for its classification. While the surveys were in progress I periodically visited the Lands Department and the Premier's Office. On several occasions the Premier said, "I do not think there is nearly as much land in the new belt of country as you have represented." I replied that my informants were men who had pioneered Lake Grace and had done well. I

remembered also that the Government had decided on the representation of the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) to throw this land open in big blocks.

Mr. Johnston: I made no representations on the subject.

Mr. STUBBS: The hon. member assured me that the Government had decided to throw this land open in some form of grazing leases.

Mr. Johnston: I am not in the confidence of the Government, and I made no such statement.

Mr. STUBBS: He informed me he had introduced a deputation to the Premier on that particular day, and that the Government had decided to throw open this land in big blocks.

Mr. Johnston: That is the first I have heard of it.

Mr. STUBBS: I thought it was an extraordinary thing, because the farmers who had given me the information about the large area of land at Lake Grace were experienced men, and knew what they were talking about. Eventually the Government decided to cut up the land into small blocks. About two years ago there was a considerable amount of unemployment in the city, and the Government evolved a scheme of clearing ahead of settlement. About 150 men were sent out from the city, and were shown particular areas of country that required clearing. The price for the work was fixed by a committee of men with local knowledge, and Government officials. As each block was cleared the Government advertised it for sale, and stated that preference would be given to returned soldiers. Nearly 300 people are at present living at Newdegate, 2,000 acres are under cultivation, and 15,000 will be ready for the plough during next March. The Premier definitely and distinctly promised these settlers that when something like 15,000 or 20,000 acres of land was ready for cultivation he would do his best to have built a line of railway to serve them. I understand this Bill will be opposed on the ground that the line should go from Kondinin. I ask any fair-minded member to examine the map on the wall. If he is satisfied that the statement I have made is incorrect, then I can find no quarrel with him if he differs from me. It was not until some four months ago that I received a letter from the Electoral Office to the effect that none of the settlers in the particular area was in my electorate, and that unless the Redistribution of Seats Bill became law they would be in the Yilgarn or Williams-Narrogin electorates. A glance at the map will show that there were no boundaries fixed for this country east of Lake Grace, so far as I could see at the time it was being surveyed. I have, therefore, no axe to grind in respect to which route the line takes, other than the fact that nearly 40 returned soldiers are located along the track the line will take, and are situated as far out as some 15 miles from Lake Grace.

Hon. P. Collier: He that excuses, accuses.

Mr. STUBBS: I am not accusing anyone, but I have been informed by several members on this side of the House that they are opposed to the line on the ground that it should start from Kondinin. I am certainly not accusing members opposite of opposing the line. I have no word to say against the construction of a line from Kondinin to serve the magnificent belt of country east and south-east of that centre. I ask members, however, to recollect that the wheat of the Newdegate people will have to be carted in a northerly direction for 65 miles and brought into Narrogin.

Mr. Johnston: There will be a line across to Corrigin. That is recommended by the Advisory Board.

Mr. STUBBS: The hon. member would have the settlers wait until that line is built. The railway under discussion is warranted in every way. I give full credit to the Labour Government for deciding to send a line of railway across the sand plain from Kukerin to Lake Grace, a distance of 30 miles, to serve 30 or more families. To show that their judgment was sound I will quote an estimate given to me by a reputable citizen of Lake Grace, Mr. Carruthers, of first-class land settled and occupied at Lake Grace now comprises 128,000 acres, that 67,500 acres is at present cleared, and that the area under crop this year will be 28,000 acres. I will endeavour to convince the House that the land this line will serve is equal if not superior to the Lake Grace land, and that the Government were right in their judgment in extending the railway to serve 30 families or more. Bags of wheat to the number of 100,000, 20,000 bags of oats, and 1,000 tons of chaff, it is estimated will be sent away from Lake Grace this season. That is the conservative estimate of a reliable man. I have here a tabulated statement prepared by the Railway Department showing the traffic from Lake Grace during last year. Outward goods were carried running into 18,637 tons, and producing a revenue of £13,960; inward goods were carried running into 10,145 tons, and producing a revenue of £13,206; for the carriage of livestock the freight amounted to £1,746 outward, and £696 inward; the passenger traffic first and second class produced a revenue of £1,781; the grand total being £33,000. That money was not all earned between Lake Grace and Wagin, because probably a lot of stock had to be carried a great many miles beyond Wagin. The line is paying handsomely, and I think I am justified in supporting the extension for another 30 miles. I do not wish to block the settlement of first class country in the electorates either of Williams-Narrogin, Pingelly or Katanning. My sole desire is to carry out the promise I made to the returned soldiers living along the route of the proposed line. These people are greatly handicapped at the present moment through having to spend a couple of months

in carting their wheat over such a long distance. They also knock their horses up. These settlers could be better employed in the interests of the State if they increased their area under crop than in spending all this time carting their wheat. When wheat has to be carted for a greater distance than 12 or 13 miles it becomes an unpayable proposition to grow it. I believe the route mentioned in this Bill is the right one. I do not wish members to think I have marked a square on the map indicating Newdegate to suggest that it is a square piece of country. It is a long narrow strip of forest country extending for many miles in a north-westerly direction on the route to Kondinin and east towards Ravensthorpe. The distance from Kondinin to Newdegate is considerably over 60 miles. If the Newdegate people have to wait until a line of railway is constructed from Kondinin in a southerly direction from Newdegate, many years must pass before they can make good.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. STUBBS: Two years ago the Government instructed the Railway Advisory Board to inspect this country, and report as to which route would best serve this particular area. The board reported on two routes, and the report, I believe, has been laid on the Table of the House. Whether the board reported in favour of one route more than of the other, I am not in a position to say, but I ask the House to believe me when I say that the opening up of this magnificent tract of country will revolutionise the wheat production of the State by making a large area available. I have a recollection of the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) advocating a few months ago the construction of a line from Esperance to Norseman. At about that time the Minister for Agriculture visited this particular portion of the State. Men who have traversed the country east of Newdegate and through the Ravensthorpe-Lake Damnsa country returned with one theme of discussion. They claimed that we did not know what it meant to open up this vast stretch of wheat land. I am certain that, in the course of a few years, a railway running considerably further east than Newdegate and linking up with the Norseman-Esperance railway will be an accomplished fact. With the building of that line I am positive that an area of wheat land will be brought into production that will double the output of wheat harvested in Western Australia at present. The realisation of that ideal is within measurable distance. There has been an agitation recently for the district of Newdegate to be connected up by rail with Albany. Meetings have been held at the southern port for the purpose of urging the Government to construct a line across country as far as Newdegate, thus opening up a large area of land which is not in use at present. The people at Albany are naturally jealous of their rights

and privileges respecting the country adjacent to their port, and they seek to secure the handling of all produce grown in those areas. I am in favour of every port receiving its just proportion of the produce from the adjacent localities. I claim that Newdegate will be linked up with a port nearer than Bunbury or Albany, which are the two nearest ports at present, because I believe the line will be continued eastward towards Norseman as I have suggested. The first point in favour of the construction of the line from Lake Grace to Newdegate, is that the country to be served contains 130,000 acres of excellent wheat land. It is cut up into 130 blocks and within the next few months 130 families will be settled in that area. In addition, a line from Lake Grace to Newdegate will pass through a stretch of mallee country, which men, competent to express an opinion, say will grow a fair crop of wheat and will afterwards carry a fair number of stock. I do not say that the mallee country will stand several crops of wheat, but the land at Newdegate is similar to the country at Lake Grace, which has been cropped from five to seven years in succession, and has returned an average of 15 bushels of wheat to the acre. The House need have no fear in passing the Bill because the line will pay from the jump. The second point to which I would draw the attention of hon. members is that most of the settlers at Newdegate are returned soldiers and are a fine type. They have done wonders during the last few months in clearing their holdings and making homes for themselves and their families. The fact that 15,000 acres of land will be ready for the plough by next March is evidence that the right class of man is settled in that country. The Premier made a distinct promise to them that by the time they had that 15,000 acres of land ready for cultivation and proved their bona fides, he would do his best to get a railway line constructed to the district without delay. That was the incentive that induced the men to go into this huge belt of country. I support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. HICKMOTT (Pingelly) [7.37]: I regret that the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) considers I am opposed to the railway to Newdegate. It is not my intention to oppose any railway that will benefit the people generally. Taking into consideration the report of the Railway Advisory Board and the fact that three districts will be served by the line recommended by that board, it was my intention to support the board's recommendations. As for returned soldiers, they are settled in all three districts referred to by the board. At Kalgarin, about 26 miles east of Kondinin, there are 5,000 acres under crop this year, and it is estimated that a return of 25,000 bags of wheat will be secured. The land there has been described as being as good, if not better, than the land in the Kondinin district. Any member who knows anything about that district must agree that as a wheat-growing area it is the equal of, if not better than, the

best in any other part of the State. The estimated return from this area is 150,000 bags of wheat. Including the Benjaberring district, the average for the whole area will be from 16 to 17 bushels per acre. These men are in the same position as those referred to by the member for Wagin. They have gone on with their development in anticipation of railway facilities being extended to their district. In their report the Railway Advisory Board pointed out that a line starting from Kondinin will serve the people at Lake Jilakin and also those in the Kalgarin area, and if extended to Newdegate, will also serve the settlers there. I understood the member for Wagin to say that if the line was constructed it would have to come back to Kondinin. Hon. members will see, however, that if the three lines were constructed to serve the areas referred to, considerable constructional waste would be incurred by running lines for a distance of 12 miles along the main line, where the people are already served. Taking two of the lines into consideration the distance coming within the ambit of my objection would practically represent half the length of a line from Kondinin to Newdegate. I should say that it would represent at least 25 miles of railway. On the other hand, if the line were constructed right through only one portion of it would be duplicated by the extension from the main line. The whole of the country from Kondinin to Newdegate passes, according to the Advisory Board's report, through forest country, which will have to be served by a railway in due course. There are many returned soldiers settled throughout those areas. The area under crop in the Newdegate district this year is 1,200 acres, which is a considerably smaller area than in the Kalgarin district. Thus the latter settlers have an equal, if not greater claim, to railway facilities than have the settlers at Newdegate. I have no wish, however, to oppose a Bill which will serve deserving settlers. If the House desires to construct a line from Lake Grace instead of the one recommended by the Advisory Board, it is for hon. members to determine. When other lines have been discussed, however, the fact that the Advisory Board recommended certain courses of action, was regarded as worthy of note by hon. members. That is the point that caused me to suggest that this aspect should be taken into consideration. As hon. members will see, the area to be served, apart from the 130,000 acres mentioned by the member for Wagin, is 150,000 acres, comprising good wheat country. The area commends itself. If the House does not agree to construct the line as recommended by the Advisory Board there is every reason to believe that in the near future a line will have to be constructed through country practically settled at the present time. I do not wish to delay the House by making a long speech. It is patent to everyone who knows the country, the development that has taken place and the position of the men on the land there, that railway facilities will have to be provided, and it is for the House to decide which route to adopt. I believe the

most economical way to serve the whole of the country is to construct a line in accordance with the recommendation of the Railway Advisory Board. This will serve the two settlements as well as the whole of the country that will come within the scope of the line. I certainly think that some consideration should be given to the report of the Advisory Board, the number of people and the area of land likely to be served. If we are going to construct spur lines all over the place to serve the different areas that are being settled, we will find it an expensive way of doing business. We have men who are supposed to know their work in connection with railway construction and we send them out to inspect and report on various routes. Then when we receive the reports we should take some notice of them.

Mr. JOINSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [7.48]: I am very glad the Government have decided to give railway communication to the Newdegate area. It is perfectly true, as stated by the Minister for Works, that we have a very fine settlement there. There are many returned soldiers in that district, as well as northwards of it and right through to Kalgarin. It is unquestionable that these men have done excellent work in the development of their holdings. They are therefore entitled to railway communication at an early date. The only point the House has to consider carefully is which is the best way to serve the three groups of settlers east of the Yilliminning-Kondinin and the Lake Grace lines. In the North Newdegate area we have a large number of returned soldiers, as well as at Kalgarin and at Kondinin. Regarding the last-named, I am in the same position as the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs), in that the men there are not constituents of mine, although there are some in the North Newdegate area that are within my electorate. They held a meeting recently, discussed the matter thoroughly, and sent me an account of what took place. I consider it my duty to read this to the House. Although I received the communication only a few days ago, it is dated the 3rd November—

We, the North Newdegate settlers, are informed that the Premier intends to pass a railway from Lake Grace to Newdegate this next session. It was decided at a meeting of the above settlers held here November 1st to write you to do your utmost to persuade Sir James to run the line from Kulin or Kondinin south through some of the best wheat land in this district and serve us and the soldier settlers north of Lake Grace on the way to Newdegate townsite. A line in this direction will also open up a large tract of country north of this settlement. (Mr. Fox, the Government surveyor, will know of this country.) Also Mr. W. Lee, of Noman's Lake, who has been through here by road and will be able to give you reliable information, etc., should you happen to meet him in Narrogin. I am writing him also asking him to

make an appointment with you on our behalf as a personal interview is much better than a letter. Hoping you will give us your assistance in this matter, etc. (Sgd.) O. F. Hadden, Secretary, North Newdegate settlers.

There is also a big returned soldier settlement at Kalgarin, and in September last, at the invitation of those men, I went out to a returned soldiers' sports meeting in that district. Those settlers have over 15,000 acres of the best land in Western Australia under crop, and the Railway Advisory Board has recommended that a line should go from Kondinin East to the southern portion of the Kalgarin area, where these soldiers are situated, and that it should run from there to East Jilakin, where there is considerable soldier settlement through different North Newdegate locations right through then to Newdegate. The Government would have been better advised if the Bill had covered that route. Last session that was the intention of the Government. On the 18th January last I asked the Premier this question—

Is it the intention of the Government during the present session to introduce a Bill for the construction of a railway from Kondinin to Newdegate through the East Jilakin areas in accordance with the recommendations of the Railway Advisory Board dated 13th November, 1922? If not, why not?

The Premier replied that it was the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill next session.

The Premier: I corrected that in the Press.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I believe the Premier did make a correction in the Press, but there was no correction in this House. The statement was made here, and when it was made it was the intention of the Premier to introduce a Bill as he stated. The Kalgarin settlers should have a line, and it should go on to Jilakin and Newdegate as recommended by the Advisory Board in the report we have before us. If the Government will not build that line, I urge them to bring in a Bill to give the Kalgarin settlers another line from Kondinin at once. I do not in any way wish to set one lot of returned soldiers against another, but I say the Government are doing the proper thing in affording railway communication to the Newdegate settlers. At the same time those at Kalgarin and East Jilakin are entitled to railway communication and it should be given, particularly in view of the fact, as I have stated, that there are 15,000 acres of land under crop at Kalgarin. In this connection the Westralian Farmers Ltd. have arranged to provide motor transport to convey the wheat to Kondinin.

Mr. J. H. Smith: How many returned soldiers are there?

Mr. JOHNSTON: At the picnic meeting that I attended, there were about 60, and I do not think that covered the full number.

Mr. J. H. Smith: There are 70 returned soldiers in the area to which I am advocating

that a railway should be built, but the Government will not do anything.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The report of the Advisory Board is dated the 13th November, 1922, a little over a year old. It is addressed to the Premier, and reads—

Re proposed railway communication to Newdegate. In accordance with your instructions to report on the question of railway communication to Newdegate, the Railway Advisory Board proceeded to Lake Grace on the 12th ult., and subsequently inspected the country between Lake Grace and Newdegate and around Newdegate. As the board had also previous instructions to inspect the country to the east and south-east of Kondinin, it took the opportunity of traversing the country between Newdegate, Kulin, and Kondinin, having previously inspected the country between Kondinin and Kalgarin. The board has the honour to report as follows and to attach a plan showing the country covered by the report:—

1. If the question of serving the Newdegate centre is alone to be considered—That is very important—

the line "A-B" is recommended—its length being about 35 miles. This connection could be made more direct and about three miles shorter than by the route shown on the plan, but the direct route would not serve certain blocks to the north of Lake Grace nor the surveyed blocks to the north-west of Newdegate as shown on the plan. The grades on both routes would be easy.

The line A-B referred to is that from Lake Grace to Newdegate, and I take it that it is on that clause of the report the Government have acted. In other words, the Government have decided to consider only Newdegate, leaving the soldier settlers at Kalgarin and East Jilakin to receive attention at a later date. The report goes on—

2. As, however, the question of serving the whole of the country to the east of a line drawn from Kondinin is to be considered, an alternative proposal is made.

3. The areas not served by any railway are as follows:—(a) That south-east of Lake Jilakin, marked "X" and coloured brown. (b) The surveyed blocks marked "Y" and coloured purple. (c) The area in the vicinity of Kalgarin Rock coloured green. Particulars of these are given in the "reference" to the plan attached. These are areas east of Jilakin, east of Walyurin, north of Newdegate and east of Kondinin, and I regret to say that although a large number of returned soldiers are settled throughout these areas, the Bill will not give them very much relief.

The Premier: There are a few soldiers at Bencubbin.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I would like to see the Premier give the men to the north and east of Bencubbin further railway facilities. Unfortunately you, Mr. Speaker, will not permit me to discuss the plight that those men

who are waiting for railway communication find themselves in. The report goes on—

4. The area "X" is all settled and the land is good. The area "Y" is of good quality and will certainly be settled if transport facilities are provided.

In this particular part of the State good land in the surveyed locations runs north, westerly and south-easterly, so that the route of the proposed railway from Kondinin goes practically through the surveyed locations on which soldier settlement money is being expended.

The Premier: You are not quite right there.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I have it on the authority of the Chief Inspector of the Agricultural Bank at Narrogin, who knows the country very well.

The Premier: I have it here, too.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I have not been privileged to see the map in the possession of the Premier. However, what I have stated is on the authority of the Chief Inspector of the Bank. The line from Kondinin to Newdegate will serve not only existing soldier settlement, but will open up a large area of good land. The report goes on—

The area "Z" about Kalgarin is settled and the Agricultural Bank has about 30 clients in occupation.

That was 13 months ago, and I know the number has since increased.

Clearing is proceeding rapidly and a fair area will be under crop next season.

Now we come to the important question—

To serve those areas as well as Newdegate, a line "D.C.B." about 65 miles in length is recommended, starting from Kondinin and shown in yellow on the plan. Kondinin is indicated as the starting point as, (a) The Railway Department has made this a depot station; (b) Eventually a line must connect Kondinin and Corrigin; (c) A line from Kondinin must eventually be built to serve the country at Kalgarin Hill and to the eastward.

The Government could not build a line from Kondinin to Newdegate unless they were prepared to make a cross connection from Kondinin to Corrigin, as recommended in the report, and as previously recommended in a separate report by the Railway Advisory Board.

The Premier: It is hardly recommended.

Mr. JOHNSTON: But there is a previous report recommending a line from Kondinin to Corrigin, though it states it must be deferred until after settlements that have no communication at all have been served. I am in entire accord with the remarks that the Government could not build a line from Kondinin to Newdegate and for all time haul all the stuff back to Narrogin and again to Perth. That freightage would be altogether too great. I realise the difficult problem confronting the Government, because they could not carry out the report of the advisory board unless they were prepared to make that connection from Kondinin to Corrigin within a

reasonable time, a connection that must be made when the finances of the State improve, just as the line from Corrigin to Brookton must be continued to Armadale, giving that short connection with Fremantle that a majority of members are anxious to see provided. The Railway Advisory Board from whose report I quote, consisted of the Surveyor General (Mr. H. S. King), Chairman; Mr. R. J. Anketell (Engineer of the Public Works Department); Mr. W. Lord (then Chief Traffic Manager), and Mr. Geo. Sutton (Director of Agriculture). They pointed out that their main recommendation was a line from Kondinin to Newdegate, and I regret the Government have not seen fit to adopt it. Paragraph 6 of their report says—

If the Newdegate areas, those at "X" and "Y," coloured brown and purple and the Kalgarin area, are considered separately, three lengths of unpayable line, say 12½ miles each in length, will have to be constructed, whereas the proposal for the line "D.C.B." involves one length only of unpayable line.

The Premier: You have forgotten the place called Kulin?

Mr. JOHNSTON: I am here to advocate the adoption of the recommendation of the advisory board. Ever since I have been in the House I have supported the professional officers of the Government. That is why I am urging the construction of the line from Kondinin to Newdegate, though it is not in my electorate. I am glad the Premier is considering Kulin also, but we shall be on safe ground if we follow the recommendations of our professional advisers, particularly the men I have quoted, in whom the people have a great measure of confidence. They urge that if the three areas are considered in one project, we would save building three lengths of unpayable line, say 12½ miles each in length. The proposal now before the House to build the line from Lake Grace to Newdegate means that if the area is to be properly served, three railways will have to be built. A line should be built from Kondinin to Kalgarin. That is urgent. Then a line would probably be built from Dudinin, Jitarning or Kulin eastward to the second area, and another from Lake Grace to Newdegate for the more southern area. Relying upon the information in the report, which is confirmed by the Chief Inspector of the Agricultural Bank for the district, the Government would better serve the interests of the State by giving effect to the report of the advisory board and building a line from Kondinin to Newdegate, which would serve those three great wheat-producing and sheen-carrying settlements. If the line be built from Kondinin through Jilakin to Newdegate, we shall serve all three areas, and have only one length of 12½ miles serving country already served. If it is decided to build three lines, one spur to each of the areas, of which the Bill before the House comprises the first, we shall for ever have three sections of 12½ miles of railway each running

through country already served. In addition there is the delay, as we do not know when the other two lines will be built or when the other two lines will be built or when the Kalgarin settlers will receive their railway.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You do not know when any of them will be built.

Hon. P. Collier: We have ahead of us 10 years of railway building already authorised.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The member for North-East Fremantle showed great activity in building railways in the past.

Hon. P. Collier: And will in future.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The report continues—

A line easterly from "C" will eventually have to be constructed, but for the present a line to the point "C" will serve the Kalgarin area in its developmental stages. Assuming the sphere of influence to be $12\frac{1}{2}$ miles on each side of the line, the line "D.C.B." will serve about 14,255 acres per mile of line, and about 3,550 acres per mile of first class country classified and unclassified.

As the settlement of the East Kalgarin area expands, a further line will be required in that locality—

The line "A.B." (from Lake Grace to Newdegate) will serve about 15,000 acres per mile of line and about 3,770 acres per mile of first class land classified and unclassified.

The other clauses of the report do not refer to the question of route, so I do not propose to quote them.

Mr. Corboy: Read the last one.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I do not wish to use all the information; I shall leave that for the hon. member.

Mr. Corboy: I do not mind your quoting the last paragraph.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The House should attach great weight to the recommendation of the advisory board and the request of the soldiers in the north Newdegate area, whose letter I have read. Those gentlemen are

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The present Government to build the railway from Kondinin to Newdegate. I am standing by the route recommended by the advisory board, namely from Kondinin. I have pointed out that if this line be built, it will be difficult for the Government—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The present Government will not have the difficulty.

Hon. P. Collier: The line will not be built for 10 years, and you do not expect to be there for another 10 years.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I urge the Government even at this late stage to withdraw the Bill, and bring in another measure for a line from Kondinin to Newdegate.

The Premier: Thank you for that advice. It is very good of you.

Mr. JOHNSTON: If the Government will not do that, I urge them to introduce the other two Bills this session, one for a line from Kondinin to Kalgarin to serve the soldier settlement at Kalgarin, and one for a line to serve the East Jilakin and Walyurin settlers.

Although the East Jilakin locality is not referred to as prominently as are Kalgarin and Newdegate, there are just as many settlers there. They have a big wheat production, and the country is well watered, but in the absence of railway facilities, a large number of sheep are being run.

The Premier: Ten miles from a railway? Mr. JOHNSTON: But what about the East Jilakin area?

The Premier: It is not very far out.

Mr. JOHNSTON: The advisory board say it is so far from railway facilities that ultimately a second line will have to be built.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The advisory board do not have to find the money.

Mr. JOHNSTON: Those settlers are running a large number of sheep and are doing well on land that ought to be and would be under close cultivation if railway facilities were provided. I have done my best to make the position clear. I regret that the Bill before us is not that comprised in the main recommendation of the advisory board, namely for a railway from Kondinin to Newdegate.

Capt. CARTER (Leederville) [8.13]: I have listened to the speeches by the members for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) and Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) with considerable interest, and I hope it will not be considered temerity on my part, being a mere metropolitan member, if I express an opinion on a subject that affects, primarily at least, country districts far removed from the metropolis. I happen to know fairly intimately the history of the development of the wonderful area east of Wagin. I knew the district 12 years ago when, as the member for Wagin said, the first band of pioneers went to the Lake Grace district. I was familiar with the circumstances under which those men were placed, and the difficulties they had to contend with. I was in the district in company with the member for Fremantle (Mr. Gibson) quite recently, and he has perhaps seen a little more of the agricultural areas than I have during the last year or two. There was illustrated to us very clearly during that journey the value of the land, and the tremendous efforts which have been put into it to bring it to its present stage of development. Whilst in the district I was privileged to meet one or two returned soldier friends, who are now carving out homes for themselves in the Newdegate area. There are over 90 returned soldiers in that neighbourhood, struggling for an existence. Some of them have to cart their goods upwards of 30 miles. They are in possession, I understand, of excellent country. Country of similar character extends in a south-easterly direction over a great mileage, even as far as Ravensthorpe. It is estimated that there will be fully 15,000 acres under crop in the Newdegate area next year. A friend of mine there told me that he had 600 acres ready for cropping in the coming season. That man, I mention by the way, has not yet gone to the Agricultural Bank

for a penny. The tone of the men in the Newdegate area is splendid, and they are of a type of which we have every reason to be proud. They are the very men whom we, as trustees of the people of the State, should help to the utmost of our power in establishing homes for themselves. I dare say that if we turned up "Hansard" containing the debates on the Lake Grace railway, we should find a divergence of opinion as to route. I have never yet known a railway Bill to be introduced into this Chamber without its bringing forth a storm, more or less wild, of opinion as to the route that should be followed by the proposed line. In this instance I think members will get the best illustration possible—assuming that they do not know the country—by looking at the larger of the two maps behind your chair, Mr. Speaker. Then they will discover the result that will follow from adopting the suggestion of the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston), the result being that the line, in reaching Newdegate from the Great Southern railway, will describe almost a half circle and will add at least 70 miles, probably a good deal more, to the distance over which it will be necessary to cart produce from the Newdegate farms.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That consideration carried no weight in connection with the last railway Bill.

Capt. CARTER: We should at least strive to serve the men in whose interests this Bill has been introduced with a line that will afford them the most payable proposition for the disposal of their produce. Taking into consideration the existing railway system, the most natural port for the district is Bunbury. Taking a line from Newdegate through Wagin and so on to Bunbury, one finds that it is almost a straight line. But if the proposal of the member for Williams-Narrogin is adopted, the line will describe an arc in getting to the Great Southern railway. I know that the hon. member contradicts that, and says, "We will build another line from Kondinin across to Corrigin."

Mr. Johnston: That is essential.

Capt. CARTER: It means that we shall have to induce the House to pass another railway Bill; and then, I believe, the hon. member will discover that yet another railway Bill is necessary in order to get to the coast. That is the trifling matter of linking up Brookton with Armadale. I do not think hon. members are impressed with the argument as a business proposition, seeing that the suggestion is that in order to help the Kalgarin settlers we should handicap those whom we originally set out to help by the introduction of this Bill. I also have personal friends on the land at Kalgarin. I know that the country there is excellent. The settlers have great difficulties in regard to water supply and transport, and I am in sympathy with the member for Williams-Narrogin when he says they should have railway communication. But I fail to see that we shall be acting correctly as trustees of the

public funds if we build a line that will be unsatisfactory, at least for the time being, at least until the hon. member's two or three other lines have been built, to all the parties concerned. Now as regards the Railway Advisory Board's report. The member for Williams-Narrogin passed over paragraph 1 of the report.

Mr. Johnston: I did not pass over one word of it.

Capt. CARTER: The hon. member read paragraph 1, but did not comment on it. The report indicates that it is the desire of the Government to open up the Newdegate country.

Mr. Johnston: I did comment on the first paragraph. You were not here at the time.

Capt. CARTER: I listened to every word read by the hon. member, and I am quite certain that he did not give paragraph 1 the same attention as he gave to paragraphs 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We know him.

Capt. CARTER: I am beginning to know him.

Mr. Johnston: I dealt fairly and squarely with the whole matter.

Capt. CARTER: The hon. member was eminently fair, but I think he hardly gave to paragraph 1 the same prominence as to the remaining paragraphs. I have a faint recollection, though I was not in this place when the Bill for the existing line was passed, of a debate in which it was argued that the line of extension from Kukerin to Lake Grace should be in a north-easterly direction, instead of directly to Lake Grace. I suppose the time will come when the member for Williams-Narrogin will have his desire to see the country opened up by a network of railways, when there will be railways parallel with one another and at right angles with one another all over this great State. But just now we must build the shortest mileage to get the greatest results. I know the country in question probably as well as the member for Williams-Narrogin knows it. During the course of years I drove many hundreds of miles over it. I know that by supporting this Bill we shall open up a tract of country that will be as productive as the Lake Grace area. In Lake Grace 12 years ago a man allowed me to share his humpy. He lived on the staple diet of crushed wheat. Every pound of chaff that he fed to his one or two horses he had to cart from Kukerin, a distance of 30 odd miles. To-day that man is going to reap the harvest of 4,000 acres of the best wheat I think I have ever seen. To-day that man is independent, because of his efforts and because of what Nature has put into the soil of the district. Experts tell me that the area stretching south-east as far as Ravenssthorpe is equally rich. If that is so, it behoves us to support the Bill. I know the feeling of the settlers. I have discussed this matter with the Kalgarin people and the Newdegate people. Both sets of settlers are equally deserving. But the position is that

we shall not be giving a fair deal to all the settlers by grouping both of them in a deviation such as that suggested by the member for Williams-Narrogin. I feel that I shall be doing a public duty in supporting a line to Kalgarin and one to Newdegate. But, as we have placed before us now a line proposed specifically for the benefit of one set of settlers, it is our duty to deal with the question as such, and not attempt to do something that will not most materially benefit the majority of the settlers.

Mr. CORBOY (Yilgarn) [8.27]: As the representative of the interests of 90 per cent. of the people concerned in this battle of routes, it is due to me to explain the position I intend to take on this Bill. In the first place, I regret very much the introduction by various speakers so far as the returned soldier question into this matter. For my part, I care not whether a settler is a returned soldier or not. Settlers out in the back country requiring railway facilities are deserving of them irrespective of whether they are or are not returned soldiers. It is extremely distasteful to me to listen to the talk about providing returned soldiers with facilities, and to hear the term "returned soldiers" used to bolster up arguments in a battle of routes. Such an attitude I regard as a reprehensible one for members to take, especially when I call to mind some of the things that came to my knowledge as a member of the Royal Commission on Soldier Settlement. My membership of that Commission made me acquainted with the action taken by some members of Parliament in connection with the purchase of estates that were afterwards loaded on the returned soldiers, estates that proved absolutely valueless to the returned soldiers. In the circumstances, references to returned soldiers on such a question as this fill me with disgust.

The Premier: What about the railway?

Mr. CORBOY: I have gone as fully as I can into the routes proposed by the Railway Advisory Board. The Kalgarin settlers are at any rate to some extent more fortunately situated than the Newdegate settlers in respect of railway communication. Undoubtedly the Newdegate settlers are in urgent need of a railway. A great many people have gone to the Newdegate district, and it is desirable that we should as soon as possible place them on a proper footing in regard to transport facilities. I believe the settlers of Kalgarin and beyond are entitled to railway facilities. If a Bill were before the House to provide those facilities, I would unhesitatingly vote for it; but because such a Bill is not here, I am not going to say that the Newdegate people are not to have a railway. I can only hope the Government will introduce a measure to provide the Kalgarin people with a railway.

Mr. Latham: It ought to be introduced this session, too.

Hon. P. Collier: Of course it ought! Bring down all the Bills you have!

Mr. CORBOY: Even if it were, it would not alter the position very much. We all know the legacy of authorised railways left to the last Labour Government, and it seems obvious that the present Government are determined to leave a similar legacy to the next Labour Government. The advisory board in their report drew attention to the fact that the line they recommended, from Kondinin to Newdegate, did not meet the whole of the requirements of the Kalgarin area, that eventually from "Point C" on the line a line would have to be built further eastward. To me it seems just as advisable to build this railway from Lake Grace to Newdegate, and another from Kondinin eastward, as to build on the route from Kondinin to Newdegate. With the route advocated by the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) there has to be considered the dual question of haulage and freight. The plan shows that the ultimate line from Newdegate to Bunbury will be as direct as possible, whereas if the line to Kondinin were constructed we should have a vastly greater length of haulage and, consequently, very much higher freights on everything hauled between Newdegate and the coast. In other words the people would have to pay tribute to the folly of the Parliament that authorised the line to Kondinin, for they would be paying haulage up to Kondinin, back to Narrogin, and thence through to Bunbury. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) was of course visualising an unbroken line from Newdegate to Kondinin, Kondinin to Corrigin, Corrigin to Brookton and eventually Brookton to Armadale and so through to Fremantle. But we shall have to wait many years before such a route is completed. Moreover, it brings up the old question of decentralisation, for we would then be concentrating everything on Fremantle, instead of sending the produce to its natural port, Bunbury.

Mr. Latham: No, to Esperance.

The Premier: To Hopetoun.

Mr. CORBOY: It will need the skill of a C. Y. O'Connor to construct a decent harbour at Hopetoun. I do not see much chance of getting a harbour there. But this question of extra haulage must be considered. The greater number of people in Newdegate will be better served by the short direct route to Bunbury than by a line via Kondinin. Another point: eventually the Lake Grace to Newdegate line will be extended further east. I have been to Ravensthorpe by every possible overland route, even from Southern Cross, and I am satisfied that eventually a vast area of country east of Newdegate will be opened up. There is a belt of country about 40 miles north of Ravensthorpe, to which Government inspectors and surveyors have recently drawn attention and which, sooner or later, will warrant an extension of the railway from Newdegate further east. One member has said that eventually it will link up with the Esperance line. I have not been further eastward than Ravensthorpe, but those who have been have

assured me that the belt of good country continues through to Grass Patch on the Esperance line. If that be so, I am convinced the line will go eastward, not only to the Ravenshorpe area, but right through to Esperance. That being so, the line it is now proposed to build is the proper one. There are many people settled to the south-east of Lake Jilakin and at Kalgarin, who are equally deserving with the Newdegate people of railway facilities. But because the Government at present are not going to give them those facilities, I am not foolish enough to refuse what the Government are offering. I hope the House will agree to this Bill for the railway from Lake Grace to Newdegate. It will provide facilities for many people who are endeavouring to develop a vast stretch of really good land. The line will not be built in the immediate future. Possibly it will be some considerable time before it is laid down, but I am not going to delay the beginning of the construction by any action that would throw back the whole question for another 12 months.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [8.35]: One continually hears complaints of the bad layout of our railway system and the consequent loss to the State. Probably because of that, Parliament a few years ago appointed an advisory board to make recommendations in respect of every new line. To-day we have that board's report on the proposed Lake Grace-Newdegate railway. Unfortunately we have no plan accompanying the report. The member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs) has furnished a plan, taken presumably from a railway time table. It is not large enough to clearly indicate the positions of the different points in consideration. When Parliament is asked to vote £140,000 for a railway, it is highly important that members should be fully seized of the objects of the line. The advisory board's report is strongly in favour of the line from Kondinin to Newdegate. It is important that the House should decide, not for the immediate serving of one particular district, but for future requirements. I have not the least objection to a railway that will serve deserving settlers, but the argument applied to the people of Newdegate is capable of being applied with equal force to the people of Kalgarin and of East Jilakin, for those people equally with the people of Newdegate have made efforts to develop their country. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) pointed out that the people of Kalgarin have a very large area under crop, and that the wheat yield resulted in 17 bushels to the acre. All that wheat has to be carted by road to the nearest point on the railways. The Westralian Farmers Ltd. have agreed to cart it by the motor transport at a cost of 1s. per bag. That, I imagine, will be a considerable handicap on the growers. The great point in the advisory board's report is the loss incurred in operating three separate systems to connect three different points. Apart from that, we shall be running

three dead ends. If we can by a railway serve three districts equally, it is the obvious duty of the House to pass the necessary legislation. Last week a deputation waited on the Premier to ask for the Kalgarin extension, but I have not seen any report of the result. It is important we should give railway facilities to those centres that are so remotely situated at Kalgarin and East Jilakin. The point is to get the easiest access to the port. That was clearly shown by the member for Leederville (Capt. Carter) when he said that the Newdegate extension gave almost direct communication with Bunbury. One must naturally consider that aspect of the case. If the Government decide upon acting in contradiction to the report of the Advisory Board they should at least give some indication of their attitude towards the people of the places to which I have just referred. If, as alleged by the member for Wagin (Mr. Stubbs), the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) and the member for Leederville, these settlers have an equal claim upon the Government for railway communication, it is obvious that a definite assurance should be given to them at an early date so that they may know where they stand. I have not the knowledge of the district that is claimed by the member for Leederville, who said the obvious course was to provide direct communication to these centres by one line. Members must consider the report of the Advisory Board. I do not oppose the second reading of the Bill, but wish to emphasise the vital urgency of giving consideration to those other settlers in less favoured localities. We have been told by every member who has spoken that the different areas are at least equal in agricultural value, that development has taken place in much the same way in each centre, and that the majority of the settlers are returned soldiers. As the member for Yilgarn said there is no desire to set up one body of returned soldiers against another, but if one settlement of returned soldiers deserves railway facilities, equal consideration should be given to another set. It seems to me from the attitude of the Premier that whilst he favours an extension of the line from Lake Grace to Newdegate to serve one section of returned soldiers, he holds out no hope for the other two centres. That is to be deplored, and it is one reason why I advocate the construction of the line as recommended by the Advisory Board. These three sets of people have an equal claim for railway communication, and no doubt the land extends more or less towards Ravenshorpe. Had the line been started from Kondinin and ultimately connected up as suggested by the Advisory Board, there would have been a continuous line going through a large area of valuable country, and the wastage of so many miles of railway would have been overcome. I trust the Premier in his reply will give some definite assurance that these people at Kalgarin and East Jilakin will be given railway communication in the same way that the more

favoured districts of Lake Grace and Newdegate are getting it.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [8.49]: Many members visited Newdegate some time ago to see for themselves the area east of Lake Grace. On that occasion a promise was made that, if certain developments took place, transport facilities would be afforded to the settlers. A railway was mentioned from Lake Grace to Newdegate. It was a promise. I understand that the development required has now been effected, and that 15,000 acres are ready for cropping. The settlers have now done their part, and the promise made should be fulfilled. There are other reasons why the line should be constructed. It appears from the plan that this is the straightest and most direct route to the natural port. We have suffered in the past from railways that have been constructed like a dog's hind leg. If there is at last an opportunity of having a railway constructed direct and over a good grade, we must not lose it. Western Australia has suffered more from the frightful grades of our railways, and their circuitous routes, in many cases running over a distance of 50 miles when 25 miles would have done, than from anything else. We cannot afford to build an extra mile of railway to connect A with B. For the reason that this is the most economical route and the best grade we can have, I shall support the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. A. THOMSON (Katanning) [9.52]: The Premier should have given us some information.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister for Works gave members the fullest information. He spoke for at least three minutes.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The information supplied is not full by any means. I regret the Minister has not given some information to the House. I am in an unfortunate position. I cannot agree with the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Corboy) when he says if he cannot get the lot he is prepared to accept whatever the Government will hand out. We should not approach any subject in such a manner. The Premier 18 months ago was waited upon by a deputation at Gnowangerup. He was asked that a parallel railway should be constructed to Albany. The settlers gave the mileage, and if their distances are correct, this must be the most economical proposition for joining up with the port nearest to them. I am not opposed to any particular port, but my district has affirmed the principle, and I endorse it, that we should have parallel lines. I will read an article that appeared in the "Albany Advertiser." This paper said:—

A Bill authorising the construction of a railway from Lake Grace to Newdegate was read for the first time in the Legislative Assembly on Wednesday. It is so made clear that the Government has made a choice of the two proposals put forth by the Railway Advisory Board for opening up that section of the State. And it is by

no means certain a wise discretion has been exercised. The route selected can only be justified on the ground of expediency.

That is what the member for Yilgarn is prepared to accept. The article continues:—

There is nothing else to recommend it. The Railway Advisory Board, in its report on the district, gave the opportunity, which the Government has so readily taken advantage of to humour the people of Wagin and Bunbury. It said: "If the question of serving the Newdegate centre is alone to be considered, the line A.B. (out west from Lake Grace) is recommended. That recommendation was modified in the ensuing paragraph, which read: "As, however, the question of serving the whole of the country to the east of a line drawn from Kondinin is to be continued, an alternative proposal is made," viz.—the construction of a railway, 65 miles in length, out East from Kondinin, beyond Kalgarrin Hill. If language counts for anything, that used by the Board indicates a decided preference for the alternative suggested. The Board dismisses the one scheme by a few bare statements of fact but elaborates the other in a palpable effort to win approval for it. It enlarges on the fact that not only Newdegate but other centres equally as good will benefit by the longer line and supplies besides other practical reasons for its adoption. "Kondinin," it declares, "is indicated as the starting point as: (a) The railway department has made this a depot station; (b) eventually a line must connect Kondinin and Corrigin; and (c) a line from Kondinin must eventually be built to serve the country at Kalgarrin Hill and to the Eastward."

The Minister for Works: Whose opinion is that?

Mr. A. THOMSON: It is the opinion of the people of Albany.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is the editor's opinion.

Mr. A. THOMSON: It is also the opinion of 100 per cent. of the people of Albany, and of those situated along the route over which it is proposed to extend this line.

The Minister for Works: How does this affect the Albany people?

Mr. A. THOMSON: I will tell the Minister later. The "Albany Advertiser" is published in Albany, and gives the Premier a good deal of support.

The Premier: It is a good paper.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Perhaps the Premier will take notice of what it says. It continues—

Both proposals are "recommended" by the Railway Advisory Board, but little is left to the imagination as to how great a preference is entertained for the Kondinin connection. Yet the Government has ignored this preference and taken to Parliament only the project which is damned by faint praise. That may be good politics but it is bad for the country. The spurs out east of the Great Southern Railway are

already too long. That from Wagin to Lake Grace is 75 miles in length and the Bill now submitted to Parliament aims to extend it a further 35 miles. The railway system of a country should obviously be designed to give the agricultural areas access to the ports nearest to them. The connection of Newdegate with Lake Grace, which is separated from Wagin by 75 miles of line, emphatically does not serve that end, for Wagin, by rail, is 116 miles from the coast at Bunbury, 205 miles from the coast at Fremantle, and 148 miles from the coast of Albany. A vast deviation is entailed in any case. And what applies in this case is equally applicable in others. That is why it is high time a limit should be placed on the length of spur lines. And if it had been wise the Government would give Parliament an opportunity of doing so. The Railway Advisory Board would have acted well within its rights in setting forth that aspect of future construction. Instead, it made two recommendations, with virtues of one simply emphasised. The real point of the board's alternative is not, however, stressed. The Kondinin line, so strongly favoured, is the beginning of the loop line which it has always been recognised must some day be built out east to parallel the Great Southern railway. Now the spur lines have grown to such length as to discount their economic value, this prospect demands immediate attention. The board advises 65 miles of construction east from Kondinin, because that section must ultimately be built and because eventually a line must connect Kondinin and Corrigin. If those "musts" were given effect to now there would be no need of the Lake Grace-Newdegate extension and the northern portion of the inevitable loop would become a reality. Less than 200 miles would then remain to complete the loop and connect Newdegate and the vast extent of rich country surrounding it with Albany, undoubtedly the port nearest to it all.

In view of the proposal and the report put up by the Railway Advisory Board, I am impelled to remind hon. members that for years past it has been customary to take cognisance of the fact that the board have made a recommendation. I have used this argument in my own electorate when there has been a battle of routes. I have always said, "Thank God we have an advisory board free from political control or direction." I regret I cannot say as much regarding this particular line. The Railway Commissioner, in his report from year to year, has continually made reference to the large mileage of unpayable railways he has been compelled to take over. The Bill should be referred to a select committee. We should not continue to perpetuate the mistake that has been made in the past of running out these spur lines. If hon. members were to take the trouble to examine the map I have in my possession, the original of which was attached to the board's report, they would be

convinced that the recommendation made by practical men, who constitute the advisory board, was in the best interests of the State. I have no desire for one moment to deprive the Newdegate settlers of railway communication. If they are to make a success of farming in those areas, and to grow wheat profitably, they must be brought within 12½ miles of a railway. The report states that if the line were taken out from Kondinin it would serve a large number of settlers. The Government should accept the recommendation made by the board, who went as far as they could to clearly indicate to Parliament what we should do. The board travelled over the country between Newdegate, Kulin and Kondinin, having previously inspected the country between Kondinin and Kalbarin. While it is true that a line for 35 miles provides the shortest direct route, the board clearly pointed out that if their recommendation were adopted a considerable saving would be effected by preventing the construction of three unprofitable lines with three separate dead-ends. The Government would be wise if they gave the House an opportunity to decide which of the two routes should be adopted. If that opportunity were afforded members they would see that, despite the fact that the board's proposal would mean 65 miles of railway, the State would get better value for the money expended. I understand no engineering difficulties arise in connection with the proposed line, which means, at the rate of £4,000 a mile, an expenditure of £140,000 to open up this area. If we adopted the suggestion by the Railway Advisory Board we would be well advised in spending another £100,000 to serve a larger area of country. We would also be well advised if we laid down a policy that would be in the best interests of the State. I do not advocate any part in particular, but I advocate the construction of a line that will lead to the greatest development, give the State the most value for the money spent, and give the best service to the settlers concerned. The House can hardly decide a question like this at such a late stage of the session.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It will not make any difference, seeing that the line will not be constructed for some years.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Past experience has shown that once Parliament has agreed to the construction of a railway, future Parliaments are diffident about interfering with the projects.

Mr. Hughes: This is an instance where they would be justified in doing so.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I strongly urge that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

Hon. T. Walker: To whom would they report, seeing that this Parliament will be dead?

Hon. P. Collier: The committee could report to our corpses.

Mr. A. THOMSON: There is no reason why the committee should not report within a week, seeing that the matter is urgent. I

want to get away from this policy of spur line construction. If the recommendation of the board were adopted, it would be in the interests of the settlers and of the State as well.

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [9.10]: Members who are not in possession of first hand knowledge of the district through which it is proposed to construct the railway, find themselves in a somewhat difficult situation, more particularly when faced with the inevitable battle of the routes. Our difficulties are not lessened by the manner in which the Bill was presented to the House. The Minister for Works, in the course of a speech of three minutes' duration, threw the Bill before us, tossed a bundle of maps and plans on the Table, and asked us to endorse the Government's proposal at the one sitting.

The Minister for Works: I thought the consideration of the matter would have been postponed.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I protest against the lackadaisical, careless, haphazard, don't-care-a-hang manner in which railway Bills have been presented to Parliament this session. I would remind the Minister for Works of the practice adopted in these matters some years ago. When Labour was in power, and it was our intention to bring a railway Bill before Parliament, we invariably had plans and maps hung in the Chamber for weeks before the Bills were introduced, so that members would have ample time to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with rival routes.

Mr. Pickering: Hear, hear!

Hon. P. COLLIER: In addition, we had typewritten matter prepared and distributed among hon. members, giving the fullest information regarding the project. Those details included the length, grades, estimated cost, nature of the country traversed, number of settlers estimated to be served, area under crop, area that would be brought under cultivation by the construction of the line, and so forth.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We also gave particulars of the Crown lands in the area.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. Often weeks elapsed before the Bill was introduced and members then found themselves in a position to discuss the matter intelligently. How can hon. members deal intelligently with the present Bill? For my part, and I presume many other members are in the same position, I know nothing about this project beyond the fact that it has been spoken of for some time past. We have had no authentic official information. What is the use of placing maps and plans on the Table to-night when members are asked to deal with the question straight away? More particularly is this so, when we remember that the Minister occupied exactly three minutes in moving the second reading of the Bill.

The Minister for Works: That must be a record!

Hon. P. COLLIER: It would be all very well if it referred to a railway about which there was no doubt.

Mr. A. Thomson: A three-minutes speech seeking the expenditure of £140,000!

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is so. Hon. members should have the fullest information possible to enable them to arrive at the conclusion as to the best route to be adopted. As it is, we have no time whatever in which to study the question. Bills authorising the construction of a railway should not be brought in for consideration in the dying hours of a session. There was plenty of time to have introduced the measure earlier in the session. When the Minister was introducing the Bill this evening he said that he was given to understand that a number of settlers in the district desired the line and that a permanent survey had not yet been made, although the matter had been under consideration for the past 15 or 20 years! That is evidence of the casual way in which these matters are handled. I protest against such methods. If the maps were displayed in the Chamber, hon. members would be able to follow the speeches on the Bill more intelligently. When one has to refer to rival routes the plan rolled up on the Table where one has to go from "A" to "B" and from "B" to "C," is of not much value. In this way it is practically impossible for members to intelligently follow the discussion. The Minister has not been fair to the House in the manner in which he has presented the Bill. I am not offering an opinion as to where the line should start, but I do say that I am prepared always to give the utmost consideration to the recommendation of the Railway Advisory Board, because that board is composed of men appointed for their special fitness to examine routes and report for the benefit of the Government and Parliament. The findings of that board therefore, should not be lightly set aside, even though a promise made by a Minister may run counter to the report. I do not think the House is justified in authorising the construction of any more railways at this juncture. Here we are a dying Parliament, in the last hours of our existence, expecting to close down this week, and we are committing the country to the construction of railways and the expenditure of large sums of money. That should not be done. It is really undermining the principles of responsible government. Let the new Parliament, after the voice of the people has been heard in a few months' time, determine what railways should be constructed and what routes should be followed. More particularly should that be so when we know that some of these proposed railways—there are three before us now—cannot possibly be constructed for many years to come. I do not know why we are always authorising the construction of railways years ahead of the period when they can possibly be constructed. We know that a railway, authorised I think 10 years ago, has not yet been commenced.

The Premier: Eight years ago.

Hon. P. COLLIER: A year or two is not much when we are talking in decades. I recall the fact, too, that in the Parliament that expired in 1911 many railway Bills were passed, and the House was committed to railway construction amounting to something like 500 or 600 miles.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: A thousand miles.

Hon. P. COLLIER: For the first three or four years the Labour Government were in office they were engaged in constructing railways to which they had been committed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: And then we were asked what we did with the money.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The principle is wrong. At the present time six railways that have been authorised have not yet been constructed. Most of them, however, are in course of construction. They represent a mileage of 180, and the authority for construction dates back some years. We have Bills before us now for the authorisation of the construction of another 160 miles of line. I estimate that that 160 miles will cost in round figures to build, £1,000,000. I base that on the average cost of construction per mile of recent years.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Oh, yes, and I have averaged it on the estimate given by the Minister for the construction of the Yarramony-Newcarnie line. There is no need for us to authorise the construction of any further railways. Over 12 months ago we authorised the construction of lines that have not yet been commenced. Therefore where is the urgency in the dying hours of this Parliament for the authorisation of the construction of still further lines. The matter of railway construction can stand over until the new Parliament meets. We know well that not a sod can be turned in connection with any one of these lines for the next 12 months, and certainly nothing can be done with regard to them before the new Parliament assembles in June or July or next year, a new House that will have the mandate of the people. I am not disposed to agree to the passing of any more Railway Bills, particularly when we remember that we are the most overbuilt country in the world in the matter of railways. There is no country in the world that has such a great railway mileage per head of the population as has Western Australia. We are still piling up that mileage session after session and years ahead of any possibility of construction. The matter therefore might well stand over for a while. I do not like saying it, but it looks to me very much like political window dressing to be passing Bills of this description just now. Is it necessary we should involve in this? Will anything happen if these railways, or this particular railway, should stand over until after the elections? Not a single settler in any part of the State will be inconvenienced to the slightest degree if we do not pass any further railway Bills this session.

Mr. Stubbs: The Premier made a distinct promise 12 months ago that he would pass the Bill during this session.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Those settlers will not gain anything, they will merely be in possession of the knowledge that the Bill has been passed. The passing of the Bill is no indication that the railway will be constructed immediately.

Mr. Piesse: It is something definite.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The people who are to be served by the Dwarda-Narrogin railway had something definite promised eight years ago, but that promise was not of much use to them. There is no need to get ahead of ourselves in this way. I suppose the Premier has no doubt about being able to fulfil the promise after the elections.

The Premier: No doubt at all.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course the promise will hold good, but if misfortune should befall the Premier, we who are now on this side will undertake to give full consideration to the promises that he made when he was in office. I am opposed to this railway, and I protest against the casual manner in which the information regarding it was presented to members.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [9.25]: I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition that we want to make political capital out of this matter. I do not think the electors are grateful for the things that have been done for them; they have a lively sense of favours to come but little regard for what has been done. I have a hazy idea that when a Government settle people on the land, they are responsible to those people. I also have a hazy idea that in 1911, having settled people between Wongan Hills and Mullewa, the Government felt it was their duty to ask the House to authorise the construction of a railway to serve those people. So that line was authorised and built. It is the duty of Parliament, after the Government settle people on the land, to give those people facilities for the removal of their produce to market. Of course it would be better if we could construct lines ahead of settlement, but our finances have never permitted us to do that. The responsibility in connection with the construction of railway lines that have been promised rests with this Parliament and not with the incoming Parliament.

Mr. Munsie: The responsibility is with the incoming Parliament to find the money with which to build the railways.

The PREMIER: It is always the responsibility of Parliament to find the money to carry out public works, and if the Government of 1911 did leave a considerable mileage of railways to be constructed, they did no more than their duty because those lines had been authorised by Parliament. If the Government of which the Leader of the Opposition was a member authorised a considerable mileage of railways for the incoming Government to build—

Mr. Hughes: Would you have supported them?

The PREMIER: I never opposed the building of a railway line in the State.

Mr. Muusie: With the exception of Esperance.

The PREMIER: Yes, with the exception of Esperance. By a strange irony of fate, it was left to me to carry out the development of the Esperance district after the line was built, and I hope I acted fairly by the people there. Parliament would be wanting in its duty if it did not authorise the construction of this line. It is true the advisory board recommended alternate routes. They recommended a line of 65 miles from Kondinin to Newdegate, the other route being from Lake Grace. They say if the line is to serve Newdegate only, it should go east. One hon. member said that we did not want spur lines. The pity is that we ever did other than run spur lines through this area. We first built a loop that we thought would serve all the land east of the Great Southern that would grow crops. Then we found we had not gone far enough and constructed another loop. Again we found that we had not gone far enough, and to-day a line is required still further east. The line that will run through the Newdegate country will probably have to go east to Lake Damnoosa, and then to Ravensthorpe. But a spur line can be run east to the extremity of settlement and when that is built loops, if required, can be constructed.

Mr. A. Thomson: Then instead of running the produce into the natural port of Albany, it will be taken to Bunbury?

The PREMIER: I should like to take it to the natural port of Albany if the land between Albany and Newdegate justified a railway. The land is being classified and I hope it will justify the construction of a line. I do not know why the hon. member has suddenly become so concerned about connecting Newdegate with Albany. This is a line of 30 miles, and it will be necessary, even though the Newdegate-Albany line be justified. The other route from Kondinin to Newdegate is 65 miles, and if that line were built it would not serve very much country. The Kalgarin area would certainly not be served, or only a very small portion of it. To the east of Kondinin there is a considerable area of good land, and the line will have to be run into that country if it is to be served, not 12½ miles bearing away south after leaving Kondinin, but 65 miles from Kondinin or some other point on the Kondinin line. I do not know that the junction would be at Kondinin. The land to the east would have to be served, and after using 35 miles of line for the Lake Grace-Newdegate line, there would be left 30 miles which could be run into the country east of Kondinin. That is the proper way to open up this country. There is an area of land, not very big, that will not be served by the Lake Grace line, but will be brought within the range of a railway when the line to the Kalgarin area is laid. I know the country

east of Jilakin. It is wonderfully good and it is just outside the 12½-mile radius now. By building a line to the east from a point somewhere near Kondinin, that land will be served. We cannot do better than run the spur lines parallel with each other into this far eastern territory. It would be quite wrong to run a line from Kondinin to Newdegate because, by so doing, we should not be opening up nearly so much country as we can open up by using the 65 miles of material to construct two spur lines. Then, too, the country eastward of Lake Grace and eastward of Kondinin is very much better than the country between those two places. The Leader of the Opposition was right when he said we ought to know what particular land we intend this line to serve. There are 130,000 acres of land taken up at Newdegate. A great deal of it has been cleared and the land is good. There are also 105,000 acres of second class land that will make good sheep country and will grow some crops.

Mr. Hickmott: Will 35 miles of railway serve all that?

The PREMIER: Yes. Then there are 288,000 acres of third class land that will be used for stock purposes. It is unfortunate that this line, like so many other railways in this State, will cross a considerable area of third class land between Lake Grace and Newdegate, but it will serve a great deal of land near to Newdegate as well as the land to which I have referred. If the land to the eastward is still to be served, a spur line is the way to do it. I hope the House will not hesitate to pass this Bill. The information has not been before members long, but everything about the area is known. In the early days very little was known of this district. There was a good deal of doubt about the quality of the land and its suitability for wheat growing. Since then the land has been tested and there is now no doubt whatever about its wheat-growing capabilities. The House could not desire any further information. It is our duty to see the people are guaranteed railway facilities. With the Leader of the Opposition, I agree that we cannot ask Parliament to authorise any further railways this session. The land eastward of Kondinin will have to be considered next session. I realise that lines cannot be built in a day or two, so I do not suppose there will be any actual delay occasioned by waiting till next session. It is regrettable that we cannot build railways more cheaply. Once we could build railways at comparatively small cost, but now material is much dearer.

Mr. A. Thomson: Do you think this line will cost £4,000 a mile?

The PREMIER: No; I think a very light line, something like the wood lines at Kalgoorlie, will serve these areas very well.

Mr. Stubbs: Fifteen hundred pounds a mile constructed the railway from Kukerin to Lake Grace.

Mr. Underwood: And after spending that £1,500 the Government had to spend another £1,500 just to fill it up.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: No, they did not.

The PREMIER: We should be perfectly honest. It is of no use talking of building a railway for £1,500 a mile.

Mr. Stubbs: Not now.

The PREMIER: In the days to which the hon. member refers, rails cost about £500 per mile and sleepers cost about half the present price. To-day rails cost about £1,000 a mile. We pay in customs duties £160 per mile on our rails.

Mr. Underwood: The next Government had to spend £1,500 a mile to make a railway of the Goomalling-Dowerin line.

The Minister for Works: At one time we got rails at £4 10s. per ton.

The PREMIER: It will always be necessary to spend money on strengthening lines, The Leader of the Opposition referred to the abnormal mileage of railway in proportion to population. Admittedly we have a very great mileage, but 1,000 miles is used to serve the goldfields. A good deal of the main line used to serve timber country that cannot be used for agricultural purposes. I hope the House will agree that the construction of this railway is justified. Having settled the people in the district, we have a responsibility to them.

On motion by Hon. W. C. Angwin, debate adjourned.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

BILL—GERALDTON HARBOUR WORKS RAILWAY.

Second Reading.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [9.43] in moving the second reading said: The railway I am asking the House to assent to is only a short length of a little over a mile. It is required for the construction of the Geraldton harbour works. It is necessary to continue the present line terminating at the Geraldton station along the shore to enable plant and material to be conveyed to the spot where it is to be used for the harbour construction work. When the extension of the Geraldton harbour was under consideration, it was thought that this railway would be regarded as an extension of a siding, but it has been decided by the Crown Law Department that as it is an extension of a line and will be a permanent location, Parliament should be asked to assent to the construction. The railway will enable the traffic to be run from the existing railway yard to the site of the new harbour works. The estimated cost of the line and sidings is £10,000 and it is provided for in the harbour vote. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara) [9.45]: I support the Bill, notwithstanding that we are a dying Parliament, and notwithstanding the declaration of the Leader of the Opposition

that we should leave all these railway Bills to the voice of the people or to another Parliament. I recognise now, as I have recognised for many years, the importance of building a harbour at Geraldton. Whether it be in the dying hours of a Parliament or in the earliest hours of a Parliament after its birth, members should endeavour to authorise works that are for the advantage of the State.

Mr. Lutey: There is a difference between this railway and the previous one.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Yes, but the principle as regards the dying hours of Parliament is the same. If I am in the new Parliament, I will support this railway again. I may not be in the new Parliament, but, allowing for that, I support the present Bill as I am in the present Parliament.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [9.48]: I have the greatest pleasure in supporting this Bill for the construction of even a short railway in connection with the Geraldton harbour. The State owes a first duty towards the construction of what I term outer harbours or district harbours, and more especially at the present juncture. We have constructed and are constructing thousands of miles of railway, but up to date we have for this vast territory of ours only one first-class harbour. Let anything happen whereby that harbour would be closed and disused, and what would become of the commerce of Western Australia?

Mr. Underwood: We have lots of harbours in the North-West.

Mr. MONEY: Undoubtedly we have many localities suitable for harbour purposes, but it remains for us to appreciate the fact that for the vast territory of Western Australia we have only one first-class harbour.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: We are not discussing harbours.

Mr. MONEY: I am giving my reasons, Sir, for believing that it is necessary to establish harbour facilities outside one centre. No country can become great without a decentralisation of harbours. This Bill represents a step towards that decentralisation which I consider absolutely necessary to Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [9.51]: The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) tried to be funny. For him, as for myself, it is impossible to introduce any humour into a debate. He pointed out that he thought it was the duty of Parliament, in spite of what the Leader of the Opposition had said, to pass railway Bills which hon. members considered to be for the advantage of the State. But he forgot that the vote for this work was passed several years ago. This is not a new work at all.

Mr. Underwood: What is the Bill for, then?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In the general way of working, this line has been used as a light line in connection with the Geraldton harbour. As the Minister clearly stated, the

Crown Law Department have advised that as the line will probably become part of the Government railway system, Parliamentary sanction is necessary. If, as in the case of most construction works, a light line had merely been put down, the Bill would not have been introduced at all. The member for Pilbara has failed to realise the difference between providing means for the carrying out of works already authorised, and providing the means for carrying out new works involving hundreds of thousands of pounds. But no member knows that better than the member for Pilbara. No member has growled more than that hon. member regarding the responsibilities put on Governments, who had no say in respect of certain works except to find the money for them. This is a work for which Parliament has already provided. The work has been on the Estimates for three years, and it was started nearly two years ago. That is an entirely different matter from imposing on another Parliament, and in all probability another Government, the responsibility of finding millions of money for works when no one, not even the Government, knows to-day where the money is to be obtained. That is a wrong attitude to take. Certainly it is not an attitude that a dying Parliament should take.

Mr. Piesse: You left a fair legacy. The Wyndham Meat Works, for instance.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That legacy was carried at the commencement of a Parliament, a Parliament in which we had a majority during 12 months of its existence. Unfortunately, through circumstances over which we had no control, we lost one of our members. Thereupon the hon. member interjecting, through corruption, turned us out, and so we had not the opportunity of carrying out the works which we had introduced. That is an entirely different matter. The object of the present Bill is merely to enable the Government to carry out a work for which Parliament has already provided.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [9.56]: I support the second reading. In contradistinction to the previous Bill, this measure is merely a natural corollary to the authorisation for the construction of the Geraldton harbour works. In no way can the proposal under this Bill be compared with the expenditure of a large sum of money, as suggested by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood). The Minister for Works has explained that the Government could put in this railway, but that as it will become part and parcel of the permanent construction of the Geraldton harbour works, Parliamentary authority is needed for it. I am not unmindful of what the Government have done, or of the personal interest taken by the Minister for Works in the matter of providing the great midlands with suitable harbour facilities. But in this connection the House should not forget the valuable work done by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock).

That work, coupled with his unswerving advocacy of the provision of water supplies in Geraldton, must always stand to his credit.

The Minister for Works: Hear, hear!

Mr. LAMBERT: That view is, I am sure, endorsed by all members who know the unselfish work Mr. Willcock has done. It would be a pity if Parliament took the words spoken in this debate by the Leader of the Opposition as indicating in any way that his objections could apply to a small work of this description. It is necessary to refer to that aspect, because it has been mentioned by the member for Pilbara.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [9.59]: I also support the second reading of the Bill. I do not believe in flogging anything to death. Every member who has spoken has supported the measure, though I was prepared for some opposition. With regard to the work to which the Bill refers, the money has been authorised by Parliament under a Loan Bill. Therefore, this measure represents an entirely different proposition from previous measures which have come before the House to-day. The money for this line has already been found, and all that is necessary is to give legislative effect to the construction. In the case of the other proposals brought forward to-day, it is necessary to find funds at some future date. As the line under consideration will become part of the railway system, it is necessary to have legislative authority for the working of the line. To obtain that authority now is just as good as to obtain it in two or three years' time. The Government could have used the line as a tramway for the construction of the harbour works, and eventually brought in a Bill like the present. There would have been no harm in that. However, as the Crown Law Department have advised that a Bill for the construction of the line will be required at some time, and as the expenditure has been already authorised by Parliament, there is no reason why the present Bill should not pass through the House straight away.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

BILL—FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT AMENDMENT.

Third Reading.

Read a third time and returned to the Council with amendments.

BILL—CHANGE OF NAME REGULATION.

Second Reading.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [10.5] in moving the second reading said: This is a short Bill, and its provisions are very clearly stated. It has been found that quite a number of persons by changing their names evade their legal liabilities, particularly those persons who desert their wives and families. In the State Children Department the greatest difficulty lies in finding absconding fathers on account of whom the State is called upon to pay thousands of pounds annually in the maintenance of children. If only because of the cost to the State, steps should be taken to prevent such persons changing their names, except by registration. The maintenance officer has said he is satisfied that many absconding fathers evade service of summons by changing their names. When I was in control of the State Children Department I found that the police had great difficulty in tracing many absconding fathers, because they repeatedly changed their names, leaving the State to carry their responsibilities. The Taxation Department also is affected, because many persons evade their taxation by changing their names. I regard that as secondary in importance to the other reason for the Bill. Still, it means higher taxation for those who do pay. To-day persons can change their names by deed poll, costing in all about £10. Under the Bill one's name can be changed at a cost of £1. There will be no need to go through the legal process; a person wishing to change his name can go to the Attorney General or Minister for Justice and have the new name registered. Except under the Police Act, there is in existence no law against the use of a wrong name, but under the Bill a penalty is provided for the use of an assumed name without registration. That penalty is a fine of £25, or imprisonment for three months. The officers of the State Children Department are firmly of opinion that the imprisonment penalty is very necessary if the difficulties of the past are to be removed.

Mr. Underwood: Does the Bill apply to Christian names as well as to surnames?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes, to any name. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [10.12]: I notice that in Clause 2 reference is made to the Registrar of Transfers. To-day we have no such officer, although of course we have a registrar of Titles and Deeds. Apparently this has been taken from an old Ordinance passed in 1856, when we had a Registrar of Transfers.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

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

Read a third time and passed.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

MOTION—APPRENTICESHIP SYSTEM.

To inquire by Royal Commission.

Debate resumed from the 3rd October on the following motion by Mr. Davies:—

That in the opinion of this House a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire generally into the apprenticeship question.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [10.16]: I do not oppose the motion. Something in this regard is wanted. Many of our young people are seeking employment and cannot get it. Under our education system many boys do not leave school until they are 16, but they find it difficult to obtain employment. There is no accommodation for them in offices, and they have no opportunity to learn a trade. We want properly trained artisans. In almost every trade there is a shortage of skilled workmen. I do not know why there are so few apprentices, and why so few of our young people learn trades. The youth of the country should be encouraged to the apprenticeship system so that they may learn a trade. There is a growing demand in this State for tradesmen. In some of our trades the artisans engaged in them are all growing old.

Mr. McCallum: To what trade do you refer?

The PREMIER: To the bricklaying trade. It is not right we should bring artisans into the country when our education system is such that by the time a boy leaves school at the age of 15 or 16 he is fitted to become a first class tradesman. If boys could get the opportunity they would avail themselves of it, but they do not get it. We want to know what can be done to give them the opportunity. Day after day boys are leaving school. Some of them go on the land, some into offices and shops, but many of them would prefer to become tradesmen. That would be better for them. They get better paid as tradesmen than in the other avocations I have mentioned. I should be glad to see a Royal Commission appointed to go into the matter. We have all given a great deal of thought to it, and are concerned about the young men of the country. If we can help them by this means it will be a good thing to do so. Day by day we find splendid young fellows seeking jobs. When they are young they get fairly good pay in offices and shops, but these jobs mean nothing to them in the future. If we can help by this means we should do so. Something ought to be done to enable a greater number of our

young men to learn trades. It would be more beneficial to the State than if they went into offices or did other work of that kind. I hope the House will agree to the motion.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [10.20]: It may be as well if we review the circumstances that gave rise to the moving of this motion. In a speech he made to the House the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) accused trades unions of adopting an attitude debarring young men from becoming apprentices and learning trades.

Mr. A. Thomson: Why continue with that if we get the Commission?

Mr. McCALLUM: I wish to show the motive of the hon. member.

Mr. Mann: The ultimate end is good.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is all right.

Mr. Munsie: Of course it is not a right thing to criticise his statements now. He did blame the trades unions.

Mr. McCALLUM: I will support this motion, if only to further expose the false arguments that have been put forward blaming trades unions for the existing conditions.

Hon. P. Collier: They are generally blamed, and wrongfully so.

Mr. McCALLUM: The member for Guildford blamed the unions for having denied boys the right to learn trades. He specially appealed to the iron trades unions, and said the time had arrived when they could relax their rules or regulations, awards or agreements that limited the number of apprentices, in order that more boys might be employed in the trades. He particularly mentioned the Midland Junction workshops. When members on this side of the House interjected that this was not the fault of the unions, and that the employers were to blame—

Mr. A. Thomson: Not all of them.

Mr. McCALLUM: The hon. member's section of employers was the greatest offender.

Mr. Munsie: Even greater than the Midland Junction workshops.

Mr. McCALLUM: When it was shown by this side of the House that the position had not arisen through the stand taken by the unions, the member for Guildford asked a number of questions in order to disprove the truth of the interjections from this side. He asked the Minister for Railways how many apprentices the Commissioner was entitled to employ at the Midland Junction workshops, and how many he was employing, in order to prove that there was no ground for the view adopted by the Opposition. The answer by the Minister showed that there were vacancies for over 100 apprentices.

Mr. Munsie: For 113.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Commissioner was entitled to take on that number, but did not avail himself of the opportunity.

Mr. Munsie: And there were 86 applications from boys to become apprentices at that time.

Mr. McCALLUM: Not satisfied with that, the hon. member asked the Minister for Works what the situation was at the State Implement Works, and received the reply that there were vacancies for about 60 apprentices. He was also told by the Minister that if these apprentices had been taken on at the State Implement Works the tradesmen would have been thrown out of work. The hon. member, therefore, had his answer. He then tried to cover up the situation by asking for the appointment of a Royal Commission. I have no objection to the most minute examination into the situation, for I am confident the unions will receive the backing of every fair-minded Commissioner. The Premier has said that in the bricklaying trade most of the workmen are old, and that there are very few young men learning the trade.

The Premier: I am told that.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier is fairly right. Builders and contractors, however, will not take apprentices, and yet they say the trades unions are to blame. The Director of Technical Education convened a conference some years ago.

Mr. A. Thomson: Do you think a boy ought to be bound to a bricklayer for five years?

Mr. McCALLUM: That question should be left to those who are engaged in the industry and understand it.

Mr. Mann: Do not all these conditions suggest the necessity for a Royal Commission?

Mr. McCALLUM: I am not opposing it.

Hon. P. Collier: Is there any reason why the hon. member should not deal with the subject?

Mr. McCALLUM: I see no necessity for a Royal Commission. An inquiry takes place in the case of nearly every application that is made to the Arbitration Court for an award as to the position of the trade unions, of the employers, and of the apprentices. Each trade is investigated already by that court as the applications come forward. Every time the employers and unionists meet to fix up an agreement, this is generally the main bone of contention between them, that is, the number of apprentices to be employed. This sort of thing goes on almost weekly. I do not know whom we shall find capable of giving the subject a more complete, thorough and impartial investigation than the members of the Arbitration Court.

Hon. P. Collier: That is the point.

Mr. A. Thomson: What do you think is a fair proportion of apprentices?

Mr. McCALLUM: That is a matter for the industry concerned. What will suit one will not suit another. If an industry is growing the matter should be viewed from a standpoint different from that of an established industry. In my own branch of the printing trade there is only one apprentice to six journeymen. Very few of the apprentices, that have been turned out during the last 20 years, have been able to

get employment at their trade, even on this proportion, and have had to seek fresh fields in order to obtain a livelihood. In other trades that are growing, the court is now fixing a proportion of one to three or one to two. Everything depends on the evidence that is brought forward. In actual fact, there is a Commission inquiring into each particular trade as it comes before the court. There are those who argue there should be no limitation placed upon the number of apprentices.

The Premier: There must be a limitation.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes, if a boy is to be taught his trade. There must be a limitation in the interests of the apprentices, the trade, and the tradesmen. I have taught apprentices and have served my apprenticeship. In our trade we have a time docket to make up, and we have to account for every minute we work during the eight hours 45 minutes. We have to fill up a docket each day, and the time is checked in the office. If a man spends over-time on any job he gets a "please explain."

The Colonial Secretary: A "please explain" is unknown with good workmen.

Mr. McCALLUM: If that argument is correct the Minister cannot have had many good workmen in his business.

The Colonial Secretary: That is wrong.

Mr. McCALLUM: The interjection is wrong. An apprentice has to be alongside a journeyman in order that he may learn the trade. In my trade a journeyman is not allowed any time off in order to teach the apprentice. He has to carry the apprentice himself. When he has to work to a time docket it is natural that the apprentice should be shared between two or three journeymen. He is generally placed between two good men, so that they can supervise the work and give him tuition. If there was one apprentice to each journeyman, no apprentice would have a possible chance of becoming a competent tradesman.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is a debatable point.

Mr. McCALLUM: I am speaking of my own trade, to which I served an apprenticeship and in which I have taught apprentices. In the interests of apprentices, the limitation should take effect. Inquiries should be made for the purpose of learning from each trade what number of apprentices it can absorb. The years during which a lad is under indentures, from 16 to 21, are the most valuable years of his life. They are the years during which he has to fit himself for his future struggle for existence. If he is taught a trade that cannot absorb him, that does not give him scope for employment after his apprenticeship is finished, those years are wasted. Such a position is most unfair to the lad, as well as putting an unfair tax on the journeyman who teaches him. It leads the lad himself into blind-alley employment. In connection with an unskilled trade a lad gets higher wages during the years from 16 to 21 than he would get if serving an apprenticeship. In Western Australia secondary indus-

tries are so limited that they do not afford scope for apprenticeship. How many scores of apprentices have learnt their trade here and then have had to go to the Eastern States to obtain employment? Scores and scores of them.

The Colonial Secretary: Scores of tradesmen have come here from the East.

Mr. McCALLUM: And scores of apprentices have left this State for the Eastern States. Our young lads should be taught some business that will enable them to assist in bringing this country forward, instead of an employment that will involve their going away elsewhere to obtain work. The latter course is not economically sound. Outside the building trade, no Western Australian trade has yet been able to prove that it has not sufficient apprentices to meet the demand. From the aspect of the motion, the Arbitration Court is an annual Royal Commission, most of the awards being yearly arrangements. Thus the court inquires into the position each year. The case is stated from both sides. That has been going on for many years. I do not know how much further a Royal Commission will get towards a solution of the apprenticeship question than the Arbitration Court has been able to do.

Mr. Mann: Do you think the position is better now than in the past as regards employment for apprentices?

Mr. McCALLUM: No. I do not see much chance of secondary industries growing in Western Australia. I am sorry to have to say it. No one who understands the position will agree that every applicant for apprenticeship should be taken on. The safe limitation for each trade is ascertained now through the Arbitration Court. As regards the building trade, the Arbitration Court cannot compel the employers in that trade, or in any other trade, to take on any number of apprentices. The employers in the building trade have stuck out hard and fast that they will not take apprentices, because they cannot guarantee the apprentices continuity of employment. The employers say they take a contract to-day, and may have a run for a year or two.

Mr. A. Thomson: What about the improver system?

Mr. McCALLUM: I will not have that system on my mind. I have made too close a study of the situation ever to agree to the improver system. Many years ago the Arbitration Court, having examined the question, decided definitely and clearly against the improver system.

Mr. A. Thomson: That does not say the court was right, all the same.

Mr. McCALLUM: On that question, 95 per cent. of the employers in this country agree with the Arbitration Court, and do not want improvers. The improver system is designed to supply cheap labour. It is the ruination of young men. They have no hope in life as improvers. The improver system absolutely represents a blind alley. The Arbitration Court will not permit the im-

prover system, and the unions will never tolerate it. In my judgment, the system of supervision and control and examination of apprentices set up by our Arbitration Court under the existing law has nothing to compare with it in any part of Australia. I believe it to be the finest system in vogue.

Mr. Pickering: But it does not give results.

Mr. McCALLUM: Within our limited sphere we are turning out some of the finest tradesmen in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Pickering: But not the numbers.

Mr. McCALLUM: Can the hon. member name any trade here that is not turning out enough tradesmen for its requirements?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! There cannot be argument between hon. members.

Mr. McCALLUM: The building trade is the only one that can possibly be cited, and there the matter is entirely in the hands of the employers. The carpenters' union, with which I was associated, asked the Arbitration Court to make it mandatory upon the employers to take on a certain number of apprentices proportionate to the number of journeymen employed. The employers raised the point that the court had no jurisdiction to do so, and the court made no order. The employers will not employ apprentices, and that is the reason why so few apprentices are coming on. The unions will not tolerate a lot of cheap labour being introduced, and the tradesmen cannot carry the whole burden of teaching apprentices.

Mr. A. Thomson: They do not carry the burden.

Mr. McCALLUM: I can easily show that they do. Employers stand off and say they will not take the responsibility of employing apprentices, and then, because no tradesmen are coming forward, the employers abuse the trade unions. I attended a conference years ago when we offered the builders and contractors to permit the exchange of apprentices between contractors so that the contractor who had no work to do could transfer his apprentices to the contractor who had a job, and thus maintain continuity of training.

Mr. A. Thomson: You know that contractors do not work well together, but generally work against each other.

Mr. McCALLUM: The employers would not listen to that proposal. Their only idea was to transfer the responsibility to others. They contended that the Government or the technical school directly should accept the responsibility for training the apprentices. That was the only argument they put up. The complaint is made now that the shortage of tradesmen is due to the trades unions not allowing enough apprentices, yet the employers themselves are responsible for the position.

Mr. Mann: In the motor trades, men are simply taken on, and they start straight off at the job.

Mr. McCALLUM: But that is only assembling work.

Mr. Mann: They do turning as well.

Mr. McCALLUM: If they do that work, the engineers' award will cover them. Mere assembling is not classed as skilled work.

Mr. A. Thomson: But the employers have to pay enough for it.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Arbitration Court inquires into all sections of trade when the industrial position has to be reviewed from time to time. I do not know how far the Royal Commission could go. I do not know what good it could do except that it might expose the fallacious arguments used by the employers to place the blame upon the trades unions regarding the shortage of apprentices. Apart from that, I do not know that it could do any more than the existing Arbitration Court.

Hon. P. Collier: How will the Royal Commission be constituted? Will there be one man, or will representatives from both sides be appointed as well?

Mr. McCALLUM: The Premier has not given any indication as to what he proposes on that point. We do not know whether there is to be a single commissioner or whether the trades unions and the employers are to each appoint a representative to sit on the Commission, with an independent chairman. Apparently the only trades that require investigation are those connected with building operations.

Mr. Mann: Apart from the iron and steel trades, do you not think other industries should be inquired into, seeing that new industries are springing up?

Mr. McCALLUM: If they are, they should be inquired into. What opportunity can the Royal Commission have to inquire into these matters that is not available to the Arbitration Court. There is no activity in Western Australia that the court does not investigate before issuing an award. If the employers are not satisfied with the number of apprentices a trades union agrees to, the matter is taken to the court and the position investigated so that a decision may be given. In the building trades, however, the employers say they do not care what the unions do, they will not employ apprentices. I do not know that there is any power vested in the Arbitration Court to force the employers to take apprentices. It would be as well for the Premier to give us an indication as to the constitution of the Commission.

The Premier: I am willing to discuss that with the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. McCALLUM: If the inquiry is to be directed to the manufacturing trades, it will merely be a repetition of the work the Arbitration Court is doing. The unions are not anxious to turn out too many apprentices.

The Premier: It would be as well to avoid that.

Mr. McCALLUM: What would be the use of teaching a boy a trade in which he could not get employment?

The Premier: That would be no good.

Mr. McCALLUM: As to the training of apprentices, the Arbitration Court has ex-

aminers who see that the apprentices are properly taught, and collect all necessary information so that the court, when making a new award, knows what progress has been made. If the employment of apprentices is to be made compulsory, we will find objection raised by the employers, particularly by those who have spasmodic employment. Apart from Millars' Timber and Trading Co. and, perhaps a few others, I do not know that many employers in these trades have inside works where the apprentices can be employed at times when operations outside are slack. I have had many conferences with various sections of employers regarding the apprenticeship question. There are enough apprentices to meet the requirements of all trades apart from the building trade.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. S. Sampson—Swan) [10.48]: I do not wish to blame either the unions or the employers for the position regarding apprentices. I support the appointment of a Royal Commission to deal with the matter, because it is urgently needed. Great difficulty is experienced in Australia in placing boys in various trades. Frequently we see tradesmen from overseas appointed to do work an Australian-born should have had the opportunity of securing. Because of this, we find our youths forced to take work for which they have no natural aptitude. Many are forced to take up unskilled labour of a non-paying character. I agree with the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) that the improver has disappeared from the industrial sphere, and hon. members need not discuss that aspect any further. I know something about the printing industry, and for many years I acted as examiner for the employers under appointment by the Arbitration Court. With the union examiner, I examined a large number of apprentices. I have attended many printers' conferences in the Eastern States, and I know that the Western Australian trained lad is equal to the best of Australian boys. With our great development, there is urgent need for the training of our boys as blacksmiths, mechanics, harness and leather workers, electricians and in many other avocations. The number of our factories is increasing, and with that increase there is increasing also the difficulty of finding skilled hands. At present it is impossible to obtain linotype operators. This is one of the most attractive of occupations. The hours are light, 40 on night work and 42 on day work, with a minimum of £6 6s. or £6 16s., as the case may be. There is a shortage in that industry. Yet a lad who learned his trade in my office became proficient in 15 months.

Hon. P. Collier: As a linotype operator?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: From the beginning?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes.

Mr. McCallum: There are tricks in every trade.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the average period required?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The term for an apprentice is five years. I do not think so long a time is necessary. The journeyman is always better than the apprentice. He has a sense of responsibility. Of course, the moment a lad comes out of his time there is a big improvement in him. I congratulate the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) on having brought forward the motion. The unions and the employers might well get together and consider the position. The unions may deem it desirable to allow a greater number of apprentices, and it should be obligatory on the employers to engage as many apprentices as are permitted by the award. Many employers will not have apprentices, being of opinion that it is not profitable to employ them. I hope the Commission will be appointed and that it will result to the benefit of the Australian boy, particularly the boy of Western Australia.

Mr. A. THOMSON (Katanning) [10.55]: I have pleasure in supporting the motion. I may not be au fait with the position in the metropolitan area, but I know what is being done in the country districts, and I believe the majority of those learning trades in Western Australia are in the country districts. It is debatable whether the unions should not give some consideration to the improver system. Improvers, we are told, are not beneficial. Under the existing system in the building trade an injustice is being done, not only to the boys, but to their parents also. A boy should be paid according to what he is worth. A boy is apprenticed to learn, say, bricklaying. He starts at 10s. or 15s. per week, and his wages increase by 5s. or 10s. annually. If the boy is not worth £1 a week when he starts, he is not worth having.

Mr. Hughes: Is there anything to stop the employer paying him £1?

Mr. A. THOMSON: There is nothing to prevent him from paying £10 if he is foolish enough to do it. I am speaking in the interests of the boys, dealing with the position confronting the boys' parents. The boys should be kept out of the blind alleys of employment. Boys working for me have said, "You are paying me only 15s. a week. I can get 30s. a week bottle-washing." I have replied, "Yes, but in four or five years time you will still be earning 30s. a week bottle-washing. Why not stay here and learn your trade?" The proposed Commission should consider the shortening of the period for the learning of certain trades. The Colonial Secretary says a boy can become a proficient linotype operator in 15 months.

Mr. Hughes: But the Colonial Secretary would not pay him full wages at the end of 15 months.

Mr. A. THOMSON: If the Commission is appointed, the unions should permit in the building trade the system of one man one boy. If a boy be placed with three men, his training is nobody's business, and he becomes a mere handy boy to the man with whom he is working. But, given a boy to himself, the

tradesman will teach that boy and will not allow any other man to impose upon him. In the interests of the boys themselves it would be far better if we had one boy to each tradesman.

Mr. Hughes: We should soon have a lot of tradesmen out of work.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The hon. member voices the fear of the unions that we shall be getting too many workmen. To-day those who are suffering most are not the tradesmen. The man who has a trade can always pick up some sort of a job.

Mr. Hughes: I know two boys that served their time in the printing trade and have been out of work for 12 months.

Mr. A. THOMSON: More shame to them! There is other work offering.

The Colonial Secretary: There is plenty of printing work.

Mr. Hughes: Where?

The Colonial Secretary: I shall tell the hon. member privately.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The commission should seriously consider the question of allowing improvers, particularly in the building trade. I was not apprenticed, and scores of other efficient tradesmen were not bound to an apprenticeship for a specific term. What better example could we wish than that of the trainees? Quite a large number of men that started as trainees are to-day earning the full rate of wage, and are equal to many men that served a five years' apprenticeship.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They learnt under exceptional circumstances, and were good men.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I admit that, but it can be done. Boys nowadays are not permitted to leave school until they reach the age of 14, and quite a large number remain at school until they are 16. The average boy could learn the general run of bricklaying in three years. The foreman bricklayer in charge of my work started with me as a boy, and amongst my men earning journeymen's wages are some that started as boys with me and were not apprenticed. I believe in paying the boys what they earn and what they are entitled to. I am strongly opposed to the payment of premiums, which is a wicked imposition that should be prohibited by law. I trust the commission will result in good. The unions and the employers should come together and endeavour to provide facilities for our boys to learn trades, so that the youths of the State may be kept out of the blind alleys into which, unfortunately, so many of them are drifting.

Mr. HUGHES (East Perth) [11.5]: I move an amendment—

That the following words be added to the motion:—"and also into the question of articles in the professions."

Certain trades called professions have succeeded in surrounding themselves with a cast iron wall.

The Colonial Secretary: A cast iron wall!

Mr. HUGHES: If an inquiry is to be held—and I have no objection to it—it should cover the whole scope of employment for boys. Recently it was rumoured that the Colonial Secretary intended to introduce a Bill to amend the Dentists Act, since which I have been interviewed by at least 20 people representing the different interests in dentistry. I do not know whether the statements made to me are true, but one was that dentists in the Terrace are charging £150 premium to apprentice a boy. The scale of remuneration is exceedingly low; in the first year a boy receives 5s. per week, while in the fourth and fifth years he gets only 35s. A further complaint is that some dentists have as many as four apprentices. I am not sure whether they are called apprentices in their articles.

The Colonial Secretary: They are.

Mr. HUGHES: What chance has the son of the working man to get articulated to the profession of dentistry? Yet we all know the profession is starved; there are not enough dentists to meet requirements and people have to pay enormous fees to get their teeth attended to. Before a boy can become a chemist, he must be articulated to a chemist in an open shop, and I understand some of the firms are demanding as much as £200 premium to apprentice a boy.

Capt. Carter: Are they getting it?

Mr. HUGHES: I understand they are; a friend of mine told me he had to put up £200 to be apprenticed.

Capt. Carter: Did a friend of yours have £200?

Mr. HUGHES: He was one of the few that have money. A boy may learn at the technical school to be an analytical chemist, but he cannot set up as a pharmaceutical chemist unless he has served his articles.

Mr. Davies: Nor can you become a tradesman by learning at the Technical School.

Mr. HUGHES: I could go to a job to-morrow and tell the boss I was a carpenter, and if he liked to employ me the men would not raise any objection. Of course, if I were not competent, I would not be retained. If I bought books, and purchased timber, I could by practising at home reach a certain degree of efficiency.

The Premier: You would have to buy a lot of timber.

Mr. Lambert: He would only need to practise on the heads of some of your supporters.

Mr. HUGHES: I could never become as efficient in juggling timber as the Premier has become in juggling the finances of the State.

The Premier: What do you mean by juggling?

Mr. HUGHES: I mean stating figures in such a way as to make it appear to the public that the position is other than it really is.

The Minister for Agriculture: What has that to do with apprentices?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must speak to the point.

Mr. Davies: You should object to that, Mr. Premier.

The Premier: I do not object.

Mr. HUGHES: The Premier knows it is true. We notice what a change of front there is when we reach the sacred professions. The member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson) wants the improver system. When we come to the professions, those that are beyond the reach of the workers, there is a different atmosphere and things are viewed from a different aspect.

Mr. A. Thomson: I said I was opposed to premiums. What more do you want?

Mr. HUGHES: When a man reaches middle age and desires to become a pharmaceutical chemist, and attains the necessary qualifications, why should he be debarred from following his bent, simply because he cannot serve in articles for five years at a premium of £200, and live on an allowance of 5s. a week?

Mr. Lambert: He should be licensed to poison people like anyone else.

Mr. HUGHES: Now we come to the legal profession. It is almost impossible for the son of a workman to become a lawyer in Western Australia. After the lad matriculates at the University, which he cannot do until he reaches the age of 16, his father has to put down a premium of 150 guineas or 200 guineas for him to be articled to some solicitor.

Mr. Money: He could do it by long service.

Mr. HUGHES: For the first three years the boy's services are generally given free, but the father has to keep him all that time, as well as pay the premium.

Mr. Money: That would not make him a lawyer.

Mr. HUGHES: Even the passing of an examination does not make a lawyer. I should like to know what does make one. In the fourth year the boy would get 35s. a week, by which time he would have reached the age of 20. In the fifth year his income would be £2 a week.

Mr. Lambert: And he would be scrubbing out the office.

Mr. HUGHES: When all is said and done the father would have had to find about £1,000 to make his son a lawyer.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a good thing because he has to find a better occupation.

Mr. HUGHES: What chance has a workman's son under such conditions?

The Colonial Secretary: There is no shortage of lawyers.

Mr. HUGHES: There is a shortage.

The Colonial Secretary: Of good ones.

Mr. Lambert: That is shown by the fact that the Government have not an Attorney General.

Capt. Carter: I am told lawyers will take anyone now.

Mr. HUGHES: There is a shortage of houses, and it therefore follows there is a shortage of architects. I understand the premium system exists in that profession, and

that a young man has to serve in it for a long time on very low wages.

Hon. P. Collier: I am told the premiums have been as high as £500.

Mr. Money: And in many cases the money is well spent.

Mr. HUGHES: In some cases it is mis-spent.

Hon. P. Collier: Why shut out the sons of workmen?

Mr. HUGHES: Why should one particular trade or calling impose these restrictions?

Mr. Money: There is no law compelling the payment of £200 to anyone.

Hon. P. Collier: Whilst men in these professions can induce the parents of boys, who are in a position to do so, to pay these large premiums, they will not take the sons of other people for nothing.

Mr. Money: It is purely a matter of agreement.

Mr. HUGHES: Not many of them are prepared to waive the premiums. The law should not allow these people to levy a toll upon the rising generation before they can be admitted to the professions.

Mr. Davies: I think it is a payment for training.

Mr. HUGHES: If so, how is it that people must pass their examinations? The boys have to do clerical work in the office. Nearly all the titles work is done by the law clerks. In dentistry the minor work is all done by these young fellows. They have to do it in order to learn their profession, but they save the employer the necessity of putting on other men to do it.

Mr. Lambert: While he goes to the races.

Mr. HUGHES: The architects have provided that before a man can sit for an examination to enter that profession, he must take a certain university course. In order to pass through that course he has to take a language. One man I know had to pass in Spanish.

Hon. P. Collier: That is handy.

Mr. HUGHES: Not many people who are going to employ his services will want to know whether he can talk Spanish or not.

Mr. Pickering: Perhaps he intends to go to Spain.

Mr. HUGHES: It is a pity more architects do not go there.

Mr. Pickering: It is a pity some of those people who are articled to lawyers do not go. What examination did you have to pass?

Mr. HUGHES: I have never been able to get in under the lap, by Act of Parliament, but have had to pass examinations for everything. The member for Sussex, however, came in at the back door. He sneaked into his profession.

Mr. Pickering: That is a lie.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The hon. member must withdraw that remark.

Mr. Pickering: I withdraw it, but the statement is not a fact.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw unreservedly.

Mr. Pickering: I will do so.

Mr. HUGHES: Eleven out of about 60 architects registered have passed their examinations.

The Colonial Secretary: That is personal.

Mr. HUGHES: Take the case of a young fellow who has had to go to work at 14 in order to earn his living, and who has taken an interest in architecture and gone to a technical school for the purpose of qualifying as an architect. Why should we compel that young fellow to study Spanish? At present the position is that he has to drop his architectural studies for a period in order to study that language. The moment he passes his examination in Spanish he is going to forget all about it. There is not one chance in a hundred that he will ever use his knowledge of Spanish. Why should innumerable obstacles be placed in the road of the son of a working man who wants to enter a profession? If a man is qualified to do his job, if he has passed his theoretical and practical examinations, there should be no restriction on him as regards exercising the profession.

Mr. Money: Withdraw your statement against the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering).

Mr. A. Thomson: I think you should withdraw that statement.

Mr. HUGHES: I have no desire to do a wrong to any member. I understood that of the architects who got in under the Act, only eleven had qualified by examination, and that the member for Sussex was one of the remaining 49.

Mr. Pickering: That is not true.

Mr. HUGHES: If it is not so, I withdraw the statement unreservedly, understanding that the member for Sussex is one of the 11.

Mr. Pickering: By way of personal explanation I may say that I qualified as an architect in England before I ever came to this State.

Mr. HUGHES: I am very pleased to learn that the hon. member is one of the 11. As we are going to have an inquiry into the apprenticeship question, let us make it a comprehensive inquiry, one referring to all trades, and not only to those associated with what we usually call tradesmen. We ought to include in the inquiry the various professions. The question of premiums should be gone into; with a view to ascertaining whether there is any truth in such statements as that one dentist had four articulated pupils from each of whom he received a premium of £150. The enlarged scope of the inquiry would react to the benefit of the boys of this State.

On motion by the Minister for Agriculture debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 6th December, 1923.

	PAGE
Bills: Geraldton Harbour Works Railway, 1s.	1869
Loan, £3,763,000, 2s.	1869
Land Tax and Income Tax, 2s.	1871
Change of Names Regulation, returned	1887
Friendly Societies Act Amendment, returned	1887
Women's Legal Status, 1s.	1887
Lake Grace-Newdegate Railway, 1s.	1887
Appropriation, 2s.	1887
Public Service Appeal Board Act Amendment, 1s.	1894
Lunacy Act Amendment, Assembly's Message	1894
Factories and Shops Act Amendment, Assembly's Message	1894
Motion: Jandakot Road Board, to inquire by Select Committee	1870

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

BILL—GERALDTON HARBOUR WORKS RAILWAY.

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

BILL—LOAN (£3,763,000.)

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 4th December.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.37]: In the few remarks I intend to make on the Bill, I wish to say at the outset that I acquit the Minister of any attempt to deceive the House, to spring anything upon hon. members, or to rush a Bill through by anything that might be termed false pretences. If hon. members look at the Notice Paper, they will see that, since the Loan Bill was received from another place, it has found a place at the bottom of the Orders of the Day. At 10.45 p.m. on Tuesday the Minister rose and, with a very few words indeed, asked the House to pass the Bill straight away. He scarcely told us what amount the Bill was for, leaving the inference that it was the ordinary type of Bill to authorise the raising of money for works contained in the Loan Estimates. Mr. Kirwan formally seconded the motion for the second reading of the Bill, but entered a protest against the procedure adopted. At the conclusion of his speech I moved the adjournment of the debate. The Minister then accused me of having, by that means, defeated the object of the Government. I do not like to give my assent to any measure placed before the House until I have read it. I had not read the Loan Bill, because it was at the bottom of the Notice Paper and other measures, such as the Appropriation Bill, the General Loan and Inscribed Stock Act Continuance Bill, and the taxation Bill, to which I had given some consideration, preceded it. I left the Loan Bill to be studied later on. In the circumstances, I moved the adjournment of the debate, notwithstanding any object the