

**Legislative Assembly,**

Wednesday, 25th September, 1929.

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

### QUESTION—BUTTER PRESERVATIVES.

Mr. NORTH asked the Minister for Health: 1, Are preservatives still employed in the manufacture of Western Australian butter? 2, Is pasteurised butter the only successful alternative? 3, Does pasteurisation remove vitamin A?

The MINISTER FOR HEALTH replied: 1, Preservatives are used only in the manufacture of Western Australian butter to a very small extent by small makers. Butter factories all pasteurise. 2, Yes. 3, Most vitamins in butter are unaffected by pasteurisation temperature. Vitamin C is slightly affected, but this vitamin is otherwise generally available in fruits and fresh vegetables.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY SURVEY.

*Kalgoorlie-Perth, new route.*

Mr. GRIFFITHS asked the Premier: 1, Have the Federal Government done anything regarding the talked of survey of the area along the Yarramony Eastward proposed railway route in connection with Mr. Stileman's suggestion of a better route being found for the Kalgoorlie to Perth Transcontinental railway? 2, If so, will he tell, through this House, the settlers of the area concerned what has so far been done or is contemplated shall be done?

The PREMIER replied: If the hon. member requires any information regarding the Federal Government's intentions respecting the talked-of survey, I suggest he should communicate with the Prime Minister.

### BILL—DRIED FRUITS ACT CONTINUANCE.

Introduced by the Minister for Agriculture and read a first time.

### BILL—UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### BILL—COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT.

#### *Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 11th September.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [4.36]: The Bill before us will be welcomed generally, and should prove of great use to those interested in co-operative trading. Some years ago I had prepared a Bill the object of which was to preclude the improper use of the word "co-operative" by any trading concern. That was the only phase of co-operation with which the measure dealt. It was felt at the time that it could perhaps well be held over for a while, and it was therefore never introduced. I am grateful to the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) for bringing down this Bill. His knowledge of the subject is very wide and his association with co-operation has extended over a long period. The protection against the illegal use of the word "co-operative" in trading concerns is very desirable. Whilst the improper use of this word is not general, I contend and believe members will agree, that the word is used by firms, companies, or organisations, other than those that are established and carried on upon co-operative lines, with the intention to deceive. There are different institutions in Perth that could be quoted to show that the word is used in certain businesses without real justification. Perhaps I should not be too sweeping in the statement that the word is improperly used, for I dare say in odd cases it has been thought

lessly adopted, and consequently it could not perhaps be said that the use of it is immoral. It is obviously unfair that the public should be misled, as it is in those cases where the word is improperly used. I believe there was a case of a dairyman who termed his business a co-operative one. There was also the case of a flour miller and one or two other businesses. If one desired, a comparison could be drawn between the action of those who improperly use this word and those people who sell drinks under labels on which are illustrated different fruits; that is in those cases where the labels are affixed to containers which do not actually contain fruit juices but synthetic liquids. It might be urged that those people who label their business as co-operative, when the business is not truly co-operative, are doing something on similar lines, and that a synthetic description, at all events, is being applied to such businesses. An important phase of the Bill before us deals with the need of capital. It is hoped that its passage will overcome this difficulty. When Westralian Farmers, Ltd., was established, 7 per cent. interest was a good return; to-day it is almost impossible to secure money at this rate. In the Bill it is proposed, in connection with co-operative companies, to make the rate vary according to the value of money, and to base it on the interest paid by the Commonwealth Bank when the amount producing interest is on fixed deposit for a term of two years. It is suggested in the Bill that 5 per cent. over the Commonwealth fixed deposit payment should be the limit. Since that rate is to-day 5 per cent., it would mean that 10 per cent. would be available to shareholders in a co-operative company. That would be the maximum. Many co-operative companies would be unable to pay this. It is considered desirable that the proposition should be made more attractive than has been the case hitherto. To-day it is claimed that the general value of money is regarded as worth 9 or 10 per cent. Whether it is quite as high as that I am rather doubtful. A limitation is imposed by the memorandum of articles of association of most co-operative companies whereby shares are available only to primary producers. This means that the sales are very restricted. In the case of a farmer, or his dependants, when he has died, it is always difficult to

dispose of these shares. The Bill provides a remedy. Clause 4 states—

A co-operative company registered under the principal Act, as amended by this Act, may, if authorised by its articles of association, purchase out of its reserve funds any shares of a member of the company, but the shares so purchased in any year shall not exceed one-twentieth part of the paid-up capital of the company.

That would enable the co-operative company to purchase such shares. It is proposed to limit the repurchase of shares in any one year to a proportion not greater than 5 per cent. It is urged that not more than 10 per cent. of repurchased shares should be held by the parent company at any one time. If this provision is approved, it will make the taking up of co-operative shares less hazardous in the event of the realisation of assets than at present. This particular clause is of great value, and I endorse the remarks made in support of it. It is provided that all surplus profits, after setting aside necessary reserves, shall be distributed by way of bonuses, either in cash, or bonus shares, or debentures in proportion to the business done by the shareholders with the company, or to the profits earned by the company on such shareholders' business. It is also set out that on any distribution of the reserve funds or other assets by the co-operative company, or on the winding up, voluntarily or compulsorily, of a co-operative company, no shareholder shall receive in payment for his shares any amount exceeding the capital paid up in respect thereof, with dividends, if any, due except as provided in the clause to which I have just made reference. The object of this proposal, as I understand it, is that it will enable a circulating reserve to be established. This system is in existence in other countries where the co-operative movement is popular, but it is not proposed that it shall be exercised until the reserves reach a substantial percentage, probably not until the value of the share capital has been attained. It is interesting to note the method of distribution or reserve capital that is usually carried out. To distribute the whole of the profits from the current year's trading would be obviously unfair to the shareholders who have built up the reserve funds in the early history of the particular co-operative company, and made the earning of profits possible. Those shareholders temporarily al-

lowed their profits to remain unpaid, and as a result of that consideration, the financial soundness of the co-operative company duly advanced. In accordance with the spirit of co-operation, the method usually adopted is to take cognisance of the trading done in the early days of the company, and then, at a later stage, to return to the early traders all the profits made from their business. While the profits made in later business go into the reserves, it is understood, of course, that the actual distribution of those profits will at a later period also be made. Then, as time goes on, the distribution of profits is enacted again and again. Thus is the formation of a circulating reserve explained. I do not know that there is much need for further commendation of the Bill. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) dealt exhaustively with the measure and explained the incidence of co-operation, the magnificent results obtained, and other phases of interest. I think the Bill will find members in an agreeable mood and it will readily pass this House, while it should meet with a similar welcome in another place. I have pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Angelo in the Chair; Hon. W. D. Johnson in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Distribution of reserves, and of assets on winding up:

Mr. LATHAM: What is it proposed to do with profit in excess of that which is set out in the clause?

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON: At the start of a co-operative company, money is advanced by the shareholders. During the operations of the company any profits made over and above the share capital, become the property of the clients of the particular co-operative concern. In other words, all that accumulates as a result of the investment of the capital becomes the property of the shareholders. The clause definitely lays down the true co-operative principle that the balance shall go to those who built up the company and to whom it belongs.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 8 and 9—agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

### **BILL—CREMATION.**

#### *Second Reading.*

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [4.57] in moving the second reading said: This Bill is before the House for the second time. Last year the second reading debate had been commenced, but owing to the close of the session, the measure was guillotined. I do not think it necessary to go over the whole of the arguments I adduced on the last occasion. The introduction of the Bill has been requested by a great many persons. Since it was before us last, the Press have gone so far as to publish a leading article urging the necessity for the establishment of cremation in Western Australia. I have had requests from the Women's Service Guild for the re-introduction of the Bill. I think members generally are aware that there is need for Western Australia to come into line with the other States and to provide the necessary Parliamentary machinery that will enable a crematorium to be established here. When looking up another matter recently, I came across information that indicated that the practice of cremation is older than I had realised. In the course of excavations at Gezer, in Palestine, no fewer than seven cities, one built upon the other, were unearthed. When the seventh city down was reached—the inhabitants must have lived in the Neolithic period—unmistakable evidence was found that even in those early days cremation was resorted to. So it is a pretty ancient form of disposal and no new-fangled idea. I have some information from Adelaide which was furnished me by Messrs. D. J. Chipper's to the effect that cremation has been in force there for many years, and that the other States have crematoria in the cemeteries, where people can make use of them if required. I had thought it would be better for the local firms to build their own crematoria, but I understand that in the other States the trustees of the various cemeteries erect the buildings and charge a small fee for the use of them. In this State I believe the undertakers would be only too pleased to fall in with that arrangement and hire the building as required, should the Karrakatta Cemetery Board de-

cide to erect it. The Bill is identical with that of last session. It is mostly a machinery measure. It is provided that the Governor may issue licenses for crematoria to be built, and the registrar may issue permits for cremation. Then there are provisions under which the Attorney General can interfere with cremations in certain cases, and some very strict provisions whereby no corpse shall be dealt with until the proper certificates have been obtained. In view of all this, there can be no question of cremation being used to hide crime. Again, interested persons may not give certificates; because if it were allowed, there might be a suggestion of some nefarious attempt. If objection is taken by the husband of the deceased, or the widow, or the next of kin, cremation can be forbidden, except where the deceased himself has directed in writing that he prefers to be cremated. That will upset the objections, if any, of the next of kin. There is in the Bill provision for meeting certain offences against the Act with penalties up to £200. That is quite apart from the regulations, which of course provide only for light penalties. The Adelaide letter I received from Messrs. D. J. Chipper's shows that there the regulations are broken by the undertakers in nearly every case. Nevertheless the Act is working smoothly and cremation has been carried on there for over 20 years. I do not propose to weary the House with further details. The objects of the Bill are quite clear. The need is there, and there will be no expense imposed on anybody if the Bill becomes law. The Bill merely has the effect of tightening up this method of disposal of the dead, which by the common law of Great Britain can be employed to-day; for I understand that in common law cremation is legal. It is merely a matter of tightening up the provisions and introducing facilities for those who require this form of disposal.

Mr. Sampson: Do the churches support it?

Mr. NORTH: I do not know, but there is nothing compulsory in the Bill. It merely provides for those who ask for that form of disposal, so it cannot offend anybody or be met with much opposition. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by the Minister for Health, debate adjourned.

## BILL—ROAD DISTRICTS ACT AMENDMENT.

### *Recommittal.*

On motion by the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies, Bill recommitted for the further consideration of Clause 7b.

Mr. Angelo in the Chair, the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies in charge of the Bill.

Clause 7b—Amendment of Section 62:

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: I move—

That the following words be added to the clause:—“and by substituting for the proviso the following words, namely, ‘Provided that when such vacancy occurs within four months before the date fixed by this Act for the holding of a general election, the seat may, with the approval of the Minister, continue vacant until that election.’”

This amendment has been brought about by an oversight when the Bill was drafted. Section 62 provides that an extraordinary election to fill a vacancy shall be held within one month. The Bill has altered that to two months.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the provision that the elections shall be held simultaneously is eventually passed, the amendment will be necessary. But, notwithstanding the arguments of the Minister, I am hopeful that it may yet be decided that the elections shall not take place simultaneously.

The Minister for Water Supplies: You are not anticipating opposition in another place, are you?

Mr. SAMPSON: In answer to that, I say this place should give consideration to the wishes of the road boards throughout the State, and since we have failed to do that, I hope another place will do it.

The Minister for Water Supplies: That has nothing whatever to do with the amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: It is dealing with the same subject. I realise that if it is decided that the whole of the members of a road board shall go out at one time and the election be a general one this amendment will be necessary.

Amendment put and passed.

The MINISTER FOR WATER SUPPLIES: It is intended that the clause, as amended, shall stand as 7c, and also that Clause 8 will precede Clauses 7a, 7b and

7c, and that those clauses shall be numbered 8a, 8b and 8c respectively.

Bill again reported with a further amendment.

## **BILL—AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.**

*In Committee.*

Resumed from the 19th September: Mr. Angelo in the Chair; the Minister for Agriculture in charge of the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Progress was reported on Clause 2, Interpretation.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Powers of inspectors:

Mr. SLEEMAN: I do not think enough power is given to the inspectors. As I said on the second reading, the Bill appears to be more concerned with the wholesaler and the people purchasing in the markets. I cannot see how the inspector is going to safeguard a consumer purchasing from a retail shop. The inspector on seeing a customer leaving a retail shop should have power to inquire what he has in the parcel, and to compare the purchase made with the samples in the window. With apples displayed in the window and marked 6d., it has often happened that people have gone in to buy, but have been supplied, not from the window but from a case in the shop, and afterwards it has been found that the apples supplied were rotten. The inspector should be given power to inquire of a customer leaving a shop, and take him back to see whether the fruit supplied is equal to the samples in the window. The greatest need of the day is for the consumer purchasing at a retail shop to be protected. The wholesaler and the purchasers at the markets will have plenty of protection under the Bill. While I have no objection to those people being safeguarded, the consumer has more right to protection.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: To sell is defined as including to offer, expose, consign, send or deliver for or on sale. That would apply not only to the market, but to a shop.

Mr. Mann: Where is topping defined?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In Subclause 1 of Clause 3. The definition of topping is clear. An inspector would

have power to enter a shop and, if agricultural products were exposed for sale and topping had been indulged in, the offender could be prosecuted.

Mr. Teesdale: Would topping apply to the window show?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Yes.

Mr. Teesdale: I have never yet been able to buy anything out of a shop window.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If a purchaser were served with products which were not a fair sample of those exposed for sale, he could take action against the shopkeeper.

Mr. Mann: He has that power to-day.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I do not think he has.

Mr. Latham: I say he has—for misrepresentation.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It would be difficult to prove misrepresentation.

Mr. Teesdale: That is so.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The Bill deals with topping and there is provision for regulations to require grading. People dealing in eggs desire that grading should be introduced.

Mr. Davy: Who have asked for grading?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The producers.

Mr. Davy: All the producers?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: They have an association.

Mr. Davy: And because a majority of the executive asked for grading, you say they all desire it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: A large proportion of the people marketing eggs desire grading.

Mr. Davy: You want to tell a man how to run his own business.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: It might be argued that we are not ready for grading legislation.

Mr. Davy: Why put it in the Bill?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Grading can only be introduced by regulation when there is a demand for it.

Mr. Mann: Paragraph (d) of Clause 3 provides for grading.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Only as may be prescribed.

Mr. Davy: Paragraph (d) says that products must be graded as prescribed. There is an obligation on you to prescribe it.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Not at all. The Bill merely provides the machinery for introducing grading as may be prescribed. I presume there would be strong opposition to grading unless it was requested by the producers concerned.

**Mr. Mann:** I do not think they know what they are getting. They are asking for bread and are being offered a stone.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Some of them want much more than is provided in the Bill.

**THE CHAIRMAN:** The Minister is making a second reading speech. He must confine himself to the clause.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** The power for inspectors, desired by the member for Fremantle, is provided.

**Mr. LATHAM:** We have agreed to the appointment of a further army of inspectors. I presume it is the intention of the Department of Agriculture to police this measure.

**The Minister for Agriculture:** No.

**Mr. LATHAM:** "Inspector" is defined as an inspector "under this Act or under the Plant Diseases Act, 1914." Therefore I contend it is intended that this measure shall be policed by the Department of Agriculture.

**The Minister for Agriculture:** That is different from suggesting the appointment of an army of inspectors. There will not be any additional inspectors.

**Mr. LATHAM:** We shall see. Clause 4, Subclause 1 empowers an inspector at any reasonable time to enter and inspect any place and examine any products, and require the owner or the person in charge to open any package, or if no such owner or person is present, the inspector himself may open any package. That is a very arbitrary power to give an inspector, who should be required to notify the owner of his intention. Otherwise, an inspector could enter a man's premises and do as he liked.

**Mr. Teesdale:** He could open a case but not do as he liked.

**Mr. LATHAM:** He could mix up the fruit and do anything he liked. He should not be given such power unless the owner was notified of his intention.

**Mr. Teesdale:** Then the owner would be able to rectify things.

**Mr. LATHAM:** No, the inspector could accompany the owner to the shop. I move an amendment—

That after "person," in line 33 of Subclause (1), the words "after having been notified" be inserted.

**Mr. Davy:** Why not strike out "if no such owner or person is present"?

**Mr. LATHAM:** I thought of doing that, but this amendment seems preferable.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** Sometimes there is great difficulty in discovering the owner.

**Mr. Davy:** How is the inspector to enter if there is no person in charge?

**Mr. Latham:** Does not the Minister think notification to the owner is reasonable?

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** If the desire is to defeat the Bill, certainly. Notification means that everything will be put in order.

**Mr. Davy:** How can the inspector get in unless some person is in charge?

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** This would be a case occurring in the markets.

**Mr. Davy:** But surely there would be someone in charge.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** The power sought is necessary if the measure is to be effective. In many instances, when products that do not meet with the requirements of the Act are really exposed for sale, the cry is, "That stuff is not for sale." The grading regulations would be met with a similar denial. Therefore, unless the measure is to become a farce, the inspector must have this power. It is assumed that inspectors will always act with discretion. If the police exercised their full powers on every occasion, business could not be carried on at all; and the position is similar as to inspectors under the Bill. The difficulty arises when no one is in charge of the premises. The owner might be hundreds of miles away, on his farm; and notification to him would defeat the measure.

**Mr. Mann:** Under this Bill inspectors are given far more extensive powers than have ever been granted to the police.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** No. This Bill is mild compared with Eastern States legislation.

**Mr. DAVY:** The situation anticipated by the Minister could not arise. This clause deals with goods offered for sale. How can goods be offered for sale unless there is

someone in charge? People do not leave valuable goods lying about without somebody being in charge of them, even within a market. The clause empowers the inspector to break into a man's shop. That, surely, is not necessary. The inspector should exercise five or ten minutes' patience—go away and come back a little later: there would be plenty of work for him to do in a market. The words "or, if no such owner or person is present, may himself open any package" are quite unnecessary; and the power contained in them might be exercised tyrannically. Their excision would mean that the inspector must find somebody who is in charge. The Minister may suggest that the person in charge would hide himself from the inspector, but that would be a foolish and useless proceeding on the part of the person in charge.

Mr. LATHAM: I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Mr. DAVY: I move an amendment—

That the following words be struck out:—"or, if no such owner or person is present, may himself open any package."

There is no trap in the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I still regard the words as necessary. If an owner or person in charge can be discovered, he is notified. An army of inspectors will not be employed.

Mr. Davy: You start with one, and the number grows to a hundred.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The object of the Bill is to protect marketers on both sides. If the onus of finding an owner or a person in charge is to be thrown on the inspector, the officer will not go to that trouble. It is not his business. His business is to see that stuff is properly marketed. If hon. members want complicated legal proceedings, let them insist upon notification. No staff will be appointed to carry out such duties as notification. If the measure is to be easy to administer, the power contained in the words is required.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I support the amendment. It will be remembered that I opposed the second reading of the Bill because of the dangers attached to it. The Minister for Agriculture must be aware that the greater percentage of produce sold in markets is sold through agents. The Minister's remarks have centred on topping,

which is a back number in marketing. There is now no topping of either fruit or potatoes. A slit is put through the middle of the case or bag and the contents looked at. There is no topping.

Mr. Wilson: My word, there is.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I am talking about the marketing of potatoes.

Mr. Wilson: We have seen some samples here.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister should know that in the up to date marketing of products there is no topping. Therefore what is the use of the Minister talking so much about topping? The amendment should be carried and the Minister would be well advised to accept it.

Mr. LATHAM: We have to look at the interpretation of the word "place" which includes "farm, garden, orchard, road, railway station, wharf, pier, jetty, vessel, factory, warehouse or premises whatsoever." It even covers a railway station. If it had been provided that an inspector could enter any place where the product was offered for sale, it would have been different, but the Bill does not say that. It merely sets out that the inspector may go on to a railway station and without referring to the station master or the porter, open any case he may see.

Mr. Chesson: What is the inspector for?

Mr. LATHAM: The inspector could at least say, "I propose to open that case."

The Premier: It would not be for sale on the railway station.

Mr. LATHAM: It does not say that it is for sale. The clause says—

For the purposes of this Act an inspector may at any reasonable time enter and inspect any place, and examine any products in or on such place, and require the owner or person, for the time being in charge of such products, to open any package, or if no such owner is present, may himself open any package.

If it merely set out "where offered for sale," the inspector would be on safe ground. It is a most extraordinary power to give to an inspector and the clause is unreasonable. To protect Government officials and everyone else we should agree to the amendment and the Minister should accept it. If not, let us notify the grower what it is proposed to do.

Mr. SAMPSON: I hope the clause as drafted will be agreed to. I cannot understand this frantic desire to protect those

who are continually guilty of putting up products in an improper way.

Mr. Davy: There is no question of guilt here; the clause enables an inspector to go into a perfectly innocent man's house.

Mr. SAMPSON: A perfectly innocent men will have no cause to fear. If members were acquainted with the position in the Eastern States a little while ago they would say it was a pity that fruit sent from this State to Victoria was not inspected before it left. A friend of mine had an opportunity of seeing some Western Australian apples in Melbourne and he declared they were a positive disgrace to this State. That is what happens when inspection is not compulsory. In the matter of fruit for export oversea, however, that is packed well, and in London and on the Continent it has a good name, but because no inspection is necessary when fruit is exported to the Eastern States, it is packed badly. When 100 cases were repacked in Melbourne recently it was possible to get only 47 cases of fruit that were in accordance with the labelled description.

Mr. Lindsay: They must have come from the Swan.

Mr. SAMPSON: Wherever they came from, they were a disgrace to Western Australia.

Mr. Davy: What has that to do with the amendment we are discussing?

Mr. SAMPSON: It should have been the duty of the inspector to check the grading of those apples so as to save the name of the State.

Mr. Davy: We are not talking about the Bill; we are talking about one wretched little clause.

Mr. SAMPSON: We are trying to limit the power of the inspector and unless the owner is present, no inspection can be made. The person in charge may have left and may not return for a few days.

Mr. Latham: You are making out a poor case for your people.

Mr. SAMPSON: I have heard no case made out for a reduction of the very reasonable powers asked for by the Bill. I do not say that all the growers have asked for these powers, but the representative growers wanted something even more drastic than the Bill contains.

Mr. Lambert: Will they pay for it?

Mr. SAMPSON: As has been explained by the Minister, there is no visible cost involved.

Mr. Latham: You are unsophisticated this evening!

Mr. SAMPSON: The State will suffer if our products are allowed to go out without inspection and there is always a minority who will send away rubbish.

Mr. Lindsay: On a point of order; are we discussing Clause 4 or the sale of fruit?

The CHAIRMAN: We are dealing with an amendment moved by Mr. Davy, and I shall be glad if the member for Swan will confine his remarks to that.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know exactly where we are drifting in this State and if the Bill is a repetition of legislation of a similar nature in another State, the position will be deplorable. I agree with the amendment and I will do anything short of using firearms to stop the further appointment of inspectors to inspect inspectors in this country. In matters of this kind the remedy is with the man who buys the product. If the product is not satisfactory, the order need not be repeated. He does not deal with that man again.

Mr. Davy: And he gets his money back.

Mr. LAMBERT: We should not coddle these people merely because certain persons come along from Bunbury or from a conference of local bodies and other non-entities asking the Minister to do something. It appears to me that the moment a few representations are made to a Minister, he sets about giving his elaborate staff something to do to frame legislation either to restrict or regulate business.

Mr. Sleeman: Do not you think the consumers should be protected?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes. If I order 10 lbs. of meat and three or four loaves of bread to be delivered at Southern Cross, do I want an inspector there to see that the food is all right? If it is not all right I have to put up with it, but I do not order again from the same man. We shall soon be inspecting one another, and shall have legislation to support the practice. I have read through the Minister's second reading speech as I had not the honour to listen to it, and it struck me as most unconvincing. If there is a semblance of excuse for this Bill, I hope Ministers will, as far as possible, consult their common sense, and limit its scope to the



narrowest sphere, having regard to any practical effect it may have upon the producer and the consumer. I am afraid that as the outcome of it we shall have another army of inspectors.

Mr. DAVY: If these words are left in, an inspector will be able to enter a person's shop, farm or orchard, and in his absence open up cases of produce, go away without telling the owner of the visit, and subsequently prosecute him for not grading or doing some other mysterious thing.

Mr. Sampson: A good grower will not object to that.

Mr. DAVY: Every Australian I know of would object to it. I would object to anyone coming into my shop, opening my cases, and prosecuting me for some offence of which I had no knowledge. The essence of the decent administration of law is that a man must be able to check the statements that are made against him. A milk inspector cannot draw milk from a cart in the absence of the vendor. When he takes a sample he divides it into three parts and hands one to the man in charge of the milk, who can then get it analysed and check the statement that is made. These words will enable the thing to be done *sub rosa*. We do not find cases of fruit lying about with no one in charge of them for an indefinite period, or a man going away from his shop for hours without leaving someone in charge. All that I ask is that inspectors should have to require the owner or person in charge to open the case. If the Minister will agree to the deletion of the words, I propose to insert, "or if such owner or person in charge refuses, may himself open any package."

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If these words are deleted, the effect upon the clause will be twofold. It would mean that all an inspector could do would be first of all to find the owner or person in charge and then require him to open the package. That is not sufficient power. If he could not find the owner or person in charge, there would be no one to take the responsibility. That would be the end of the matter. The inspector himself must have the power to open the package. It is not his business to look round the country for the owner, and we have not an army of inspectors. We cannot deprive the officer of the power to open the package.

Mr. Davy: We will give you that if the owner or person in charge refuses to do it.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: He still has to find the owner or person in charge. The clause would be farcical without this power being given to the inspector. I cannot accept the amendment as it stands.

Mr. TEESDALE: The member for Coolgardie has a fanatical obsession about inspectors. Anyone would think they were the biggest scoundrels in the country. We need inspectors, and we have some very good ones. But for them the place would be infested with disease and the shop counters would be covered with filthy food. Is it to be imagined that an inspector would steal into a shop like a burglar? Someone is sure to be there representing the owner. It would be interesting to know whether any owner is present when fruit is being inspected on a wharf at Fremantle. He may be as far away as Bridgetown.

Mr. J. H. Smith: I rise to a point of order. The hon. member has referred to Bridgetown. Is he aware—

The CHAIRMAN: That is no point of order.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Inspectors are always on the wharf at Fremantle.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the member for Roebourne proceed?

Mr. TEESDALE: There is no mention of Bridgetown in the Bill, and I hope no time will ever be wasted in putting that name into any Bill. No doubt representatives of the fruit department are present when these cases are opened at Fremantle. Thousands of cases are opened at Fremantle without the owner being present.

Mr. J. H. Smith: That is untrue.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. TEESDALE: Then I will say a few cases are opened. Is there any point of order about that? The inspectors will not abuse their privileges. I do not see why we should anticipate that they will do anything irregular. Some of the biggest scoundrels on earth are in the fruit trade. They top up cases and top up their windows. I have seen beautiful fruit in a shop window, but when I have turned my back for a couple of minutes inside the shop I have been given some apples covered with specks,

or pears that are black inside. We want inspectors to look for mullock like that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The hon. member has just said that thousands of cases are topped.

Mr. Teesdale: I said they were opened.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There is no such thing as a topped case. The Minister for Agriculture could have told the hon. member that inspectors are present on the wharves all the time. The hon. member also talks about windows and rotten pears. He must be obsessed with the North-West to talk in that strain.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must address himself to the clause.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: There is no comparison between fruit that goes to the markets and that which is exhibited for sale in a shop window. If a person asks for 1s. worth of fruit it is not generally taken from the window, but from some other place inside the shop. The hon. member is talking through his neck. He must have black specks before his eyes to talk about window dressing as he has done. In nine cases out of ten the fruit is not bought from the window.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

*[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]*

Mr. LATHAM: I would not have spoken again had it not been that the member for Swan and others say that we are not anxious to protect the honest dealer in fruit. That is not the position. We wish to protect them, but we are not anxious to penalise all those who desire to be honest. I claim that ninety per cent. of the people who deal in agricultural products are honest.

The Premier: That is the cause of all restrictive legislation—to deal with the 10 per cent.!

Mr. LATHAM: But the member for Swan and others desire to frame the legislation in such a way that they will penalise the 90 per cent.

Mr. Sampson: No.

Mr. LATHAM: That was the attitude adopted by the hon. member, who referred to the question of exports. Of course we should protect our export trade.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is distinctly out of order in proceeding to reply to such statements.

Mr. LATHAM: Before we give any authority to inspectors to open cases, the owner or person in charge should be notified.

Mr. Sampson: They could be informed by way of registered letter.

Mr. LATHAM: That interjection is so stupid that it is hardly worth while replying to it. The probability is that in close proximity to the cases, there will be someone in charge. Goods of this description are not allowed to lie about unprotected. The interjection by the member for Swan was almost as stupid as the case he put up against the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member is out of order in making such statements.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister should realise the common sense that dictates the need for striking out the words suggested. I intend to divide the Committee on the amendment to find out who the friends of the growers really are. The Minister spoke about topping. Had a Bill of this description been introduced 10 or 12 years ago, there would have been some reason for it, but to-day there is no such thing as topping. The Minister must know from his own experts and because of the operations of his Marketing Act, that no fruit, potatoes, or bales of wool are topped. When inspected the cases or bags are opened on the side. In those circumstances, I see no reason for penalising any section of the growers. As I said on the second reading, the Minister will merely create another expensive department.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That has nothing to do with the amendment.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The buyers who attend the markets are the best judges.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	12
Noes	..	..	..	15

Majority against .. 3

#### AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Mafey
Mr. Davy	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Doney	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Latham	Mr. North

(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Munstie
Mr. Collier	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Willson
Mr. Lamond	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That after "package," at the end of Sub-clause 1, the words "after having notified such owner or person" be inserted.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	13
Noes	..	..	..	15

Majority against .. 2

## AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Latham
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Maley
Mr. Davy	Mr. Richardson
Mr. Doney	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. North
Mr. Lambert	

(Teller.)

## NOES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Munstie
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Collier	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Miss Holman	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Lamond	Mr. Willson
Mr. Millington	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—

That in line 4 of Subclause 2, the words "and detain" be struck out.

The Victorian Act, evidently the parent of the Bill, provides that any inspector may detain a package for the time necessary to complete his inspection and examination if he has reasonable grounds to believe there has been a contravention of the Act. But here it is proposed that the inspector may take possession of and detain such package until any proceedings that may be taken by him in respect thereof are disposed of. Surely that is an unnecessarily long time for him to detain a package! The whole thing is very badly drafted, and no consideration at all is given to the owners. All that is done is done to catch a dishonest man at any-cost. I hope the Minister will agree to the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If an inspector has reason to believe there has been a contravention of the Act, and proposes to take action against the owner, he must detain the package to prove his case before the court. In view of this, the amendment is ridiculous.

Mr. LATHAM: The section of the Victorian Act dealing with this provides for the detention of any package while the inspector completes his examination. It further provides that in such case the inspector shall give the owner notice of the detention. There we have reasonable protection for the owner of the goods, but under the Bill there is no protection at all for him.

Mr. Sampson: Why this wild anxiety to protect those who will not do the right thing?

Mr. LATHAM: That interjection is quite unwarranted, for I have no more desire to protect any dishonest person than the hon. member has to help an honest person. Today the position of a fruit or vegetable grower is anything but a lucrative one. If the Minister will agree to see that the section of the Victorian Act I have referred to is inserted for the protection of owners of produce I will support him.

Amendment put and negatived.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I cannot understand why some members offer so much opposition to the inspectors. Personally I do not think this goes far enough in support of the inspectors. I move an amendment—

That after "same," in line 12, there be inserted the words "and may inspect any package of any customer leaving the shop, and if same is not of the same quality as that displayed for sale at the same price, the seller shall be liable to the penalty prescribed in this Act."

When a customer, attracted by the fruit in the window, enters a shop to make a purchase, generally he is supplied, not from the window, but from another part of the shop, and very often the fruit supplied to him is by no means equal to the sample in the window. Some members have said that a man or woman taken down in that way deserves it. I do not agree with that. As for children, they are robbed hand over fist in many of these fruit shops, being served with wholly inferior fruit.

Mr. LAMBERT: I have a deplorable sympathy with the hon. member. I can see his idea of adding to this multiplicity of

inspectors whom, outwardly, the member for Roebourne despises so much.

Mr. Teesdale: I want that remark withdrawn. I do not despise inspectors.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member will withdraw.

Mr. LAMBERT: If it offensive to the hon. member—

The CHAIRMAN: There can be nothing conditional about the withdrawal.

Mr. LAMBERT: I will withdraw. Just imagine the spectacle of inspectors standing at every fruit stall and fruit shop in the metropolitan area inspecting a pound of apples.

The Premier: It would get over the unemployment trouble.

Mr. LAMBERT: I rather think it would. One member referred to my antipathy to inspectors. That is quite incorrect, for I think inspectors very necessary. But the idea of inspectors being appointed to stand at every fruit shop and inspect the goods is a little beyond reason. I do not think this amendment has been put up seriously by my over-serious friend, and so I hope members will not take it seriously. The Bill is bad enough in itself, and it will not be improved by the novice-like experiments of the member for Fremantle.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I can assure my friend I was never more serious in my life. If the hon. member were to use his eyes a little when moving about amongst people purchasing fruit, he would be more sympathetic to them. In all seriousness I say the amendment is warranted in the interests of the consumers.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The amendment is redundant. The Bill contains all the power necessary to attain the hon. member's object. An inspector could take action or alternatively the purchaser could do so.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Will the Minister state which provision would meet the situation? There is nothing to empower an inspector to stop a customer, examine his purchase, and see whether it coincides with the product exposed for sale in the shop window.

Amendment put and a division called for.

Mr. Lambert: I desire to draw attention to the fact that the members for Avon and Toodyay are within the precincts of the Chamber and should vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I must point out that they are not visible to the Chair and therefore cannot vote.

Mr. Lambert: But if I draw your attention to the fact—

The CHAIRMAN: I have not eyes to see behind me.

Mr. Lambert: Nor apparently ears to hear.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	..	..	..	..	10
Noes	..	..	..	..	15

Majority against	..	..	5
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#### AYES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Latham
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Doney	Mr. Sleeman
Miss Holman	Mr. Teesdale

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Barnard	Mr. Millington
Mr. Chesbon	Mr. Munro
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Collier	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Wilson
Mr. Lambert	Mr. North
Mr. Maloy	

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Mr. LATHAM: I move an amendment—  
That Subclause 23 be struck out.

The Minister should be reasonable and agree that if an article is taken, it should be at the expense of the Crown and not of the owner. It may be necessary to take quite a lot of produce that is valuable, although it may not be of first grade.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am prepared to meet the member for York half-way by providing that if the produce is found to be bad, the owner should stand the expense, but if it is proved to be good, the Crown should stand the expense. There are too many instances in which the Crown can do no wrong, though the error lies with them.

Mr. LAMBERT: The subclause is clumsy. It would be a hardship if an inspector should take a package of perishables and detain it until he could get a conviction, while the owner had no redress. At the same time it is difficult to suggest an amendment.

Mr. SAMPSON: I am amazed at the persistency of the opposition to a lot of

points material to the success of the measure and in strict accord with the Act from which the Bill has been drafted. The Victorian Act contains a similar provision. There would be no detention of produce unless it were found to have been packed or graded other than in accordance with the description on the case. But for the subclause, the requisite control would be impossible. If the product were not in accordance with the description, the department should not have to bear the loss.

Mr. Lambert: It would be far better to have Mussolini in this country than to adopt rubbishy legislation like this.

Mr. SAMPSON: That is a wild and sweeping statement, for which there is no justification. The subclause is essential and I hope the Minister will stick to the Bill.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The product might be held for a considerable time and the owner might be proved to be innocent. I shall never be one to victimise an innocent man. There is too much of it already. The Crown can err at times, and when they do they should pay for their mistakes.

Mr. Sampson: This provision has been in operation in Victoria since 1917.

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is no recommendation. If the owner of the produce is in the right, he should not be penalised.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: I cannot accept the amendment. If the product were not retained at the expense of the owner, he would have a claim against the department. Subclause 3 has to be read in conjunction with the two preceding subclauses which provide that the inspector must have reasonable grounds for believing that the owner of the produce has not complied with the Act. If a claim could be made against the department, I think the Treasurer would object to the Bill straight away.

The Premier: My word, I would.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: Is it suggested that the department should pay cold storage and all other expenses for perishables?

Mr. Latham: If the department are in the wrong, yes.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The department have to enforce the law and cannot be expected to accept responsibility or incur expense as suggested.

The Premier: It is the same in all other Acts where the Crown are represented.

Mr. Sleeman: That is no proof that the other Acts are right.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: The department have no axe to grind in endeavouring to enforce the law.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I fail to understand either the Minister's opposition to the amendment, or the obstinacy of the member for Swan, whose views are apparently views of keen animosity towards the primary producers. But for the attitude adopted by the front Opposition bench tonight, several of these provisions would have been deleted. By passing Subclause 3 we shall inflict a grave disability on this country's wealth-producers. The Minister slides over the subject by saying that the onus should be on the producer. On the railways there have been instances of detention costing many pounds.

The CHAIRMAN: On looking into the subclause, I find that its excision will mean that the expense involved will fall on the Crown, which means the people. It is a general principle of Parliamentary practice that no private member can increase the burden on the people. Therefore I must disallow the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know, Sir, that your ruling is in accordance with the Standing Orders.

The CHAIRMAN: It is my ruling.

#### *Dissent from Chairman's Ruling.*

Mr. Lambert: Then I move—

That the Committee dissents from the Chairman's ruling.

Do I understand you, Sir, to say that you will not allow the amendment moved on Subclause 3 of Clause 4?

The Chairman: I said that I could not allow the amendment to strike out Subclause 3 of Clause 4, as the striking out will mean that a burden will be imposed on the Crown, which is to say the people; and no private member may move in that direction.

The Premier: That amendment could only be moved by a Minister.

Mr. Lambert: Will you quote the relevant Standing Order, Sir?

The Chairman: It is not a Standing Order. It is part of the practice of the British House of Commons.

*The Speaker resumed the Chair.*

The Chairman stated the dissent.

Mr. Lambert: The Deputy Chairman of Committees ruled the amendment of the member for York out of order on the ground that it would affect the State's revenue.

Mr. Latham: That it would impose a burden upon the people.

Mr. Lambert: A private member, of course, is not allowed to move to that effect. I did not gather from the Deputy Chairman of Committees exactly what authority he has for his ruling. He states that it is in accordance with Parliamentary practice. I desire your ruling upon the point, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: It is a well-known and well-established rule that no private member may place a burden upon the Crown, which means a burden upon the people. If this subclause be omitted, the expense implicated in the subclause to be borne by the owner will fall upon the Crown, and therefore be a burden upon the people. That being so, no private member may move, nor can the Committee entertain, such an amendment. I must therefore uphold the Chairman's ruling.

*Committee resumed.*

Mr. SLEEMAN: As the previous amendment was disallowed, we may get fifty-fifty by moving that the penalty of £20 be halved.

The CHAIRMAN: This subclause contains no penalty whatever.

Mr. LATHAM: I sincerely hope the whole clause will be struck out. The Minister having said this provision has received the blessing of the fruitgrowers, I shall quote a letter on the subject received from the secretary of the Mt. Barker Fruitgrowers' Association—

It seems that some provision should be made to protect the owner, as the inspector might detain certain goods unnecessarily for an indefinite time, to the detriment of such goods; and then the owner might be charged with it when it was not his fault.

The fruitgrowers have seen reason to complain about Clause 4.

Mr. ANGELO: The clause is far-reaching, and might inflict grave hardship. Suppose a grower ships 2,000 cases of fruit, and an inspector has "reasonable grounds" to suspect that the fruit is not up to the mark. What would be reasonable grounds? Somebody might tell the inspector the fruit

was not up to standard, or the inspector might see one case not up to standard. Then he could remove the whole of the 2,000 cases and retain the shipment at the owner's risk. Eventually it might be found that the fruit was perfectly good; but under this clause the shipper would still have to bear the expense. That is manifestly unfair. The Minister should report progress and endeavour to submit something fairer.

The Minister for Agriculture: A Commonwealth inspector has all these powers, and yet nothing of that sort happens.

Mr. ANGELO: There might be a shipment to Singapore, involving heavy freights.

The Minister for Agriculture: We would not control that. The Commonwealth already controls it.

Mr. ANGELO: Then there might be a shipment to the North-West. Not only would the owner lose the whole of his fruit—since there would be no other vessel leaving for some time—but he would have to pay dead freight for his failure to supply the cargo. The provision should be modified.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	14
Noes	..	..	..	11
				—
Majority for	..	..	..	3
				—

**AYES.**

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Millington
Mr. Clydeedale	Mr. Munale
Mr. Collier	Mr. Rowe
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. Sleeman
Miss Holman	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Mr. Kennedy	Mr. Wilson

(Teller.)

**NOES.**

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Latham
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Cowan	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Doney	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. North
Mr. Lambert	

(Teller.)

Clause thus passed.

Clauses 5, 6—agreed to.

Clause 7—Evidence:

Mr. LAMBERT: This is another beautiful clause! Paragraph (a) sets out that in any proceedings in respect of offences under this legislation, no proof shall be required of the authority of the inspector to take the pro-

ceedings, nor of his appointment as an inspector. Someone could wander in and take proceedings, and yet no proof would be required of his authority! I do not know whether this is another sample of the parent Act that has been so conspicuous to-night. It is only fair to the Committee that the Minister should explain the reason for such a departure.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** All that the paragraph means is that the inspector who launches the proceedings will not have to produce documentary evidence to prove his appointment. The officer who takes proceedings will be a duly authorised inspector. If the Chief Inspector (Mr. Wickens) were in the witness box, he would state that he was the Chief Inspector, and that would be accepted without the necessity for the production of documentary evidence regarding his appointment.

**MR. J. H. SMITH:** The Minister has glossed the paragraph over too lightly. When the peak period arrives and agricultural produce is pouring into the markets, the Director of Agriculture or the Chief Inspector might tell "Tom Smith" to go down to the markets and examine the fruit.

**THE PREMIER:** No Smith would ever be sent down!

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** At any rate, the hon. member knows that that sort of thing is not done.

**MR. J. H. SMITH:** But under the Bill it could be done because no proof is necessary.

**THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH:** But the man must be an inspector.

**MR. J. H. SMITH:** A man might be appointed for a day in order to inspect fruit. At least he should have some badge to show that he was an inspector.

**MR. LAMBERT:** Paragraph (b) also requires attention. It sets out that "the person whose name is marked on the outside or inside of any package containing products, or on any label thereon, as the seller or the packer thereof, shall be deemed to be the seller or packer thereof until the contrary is proved." I would like to hear the Minister's explanation of the paragraph.

**THE MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE:** If an auctioneer stands up and proceeds to sell a case of agricultural products on which the name of the grower is plainly branded, that case will be sold on behalf of that person. If the alleged owner disputes it, he will have to prove that the products are not

his. If someone had taken his case and filled it with other produce, the owner would have to prove it. Under the existing law, it is compulsory to brand cases.

**MR. J. H. SMITH:** I move an amendment—

That paragraph (b) be struck out.

The Minister has had the position placed before him elsewhere. On one occasion a grower had reason to go to the markets and saw fruit passing over the rollers in cases branded with his name. He had sent no fruit to the market, and he claimed it. That fruit was withdrawn. In another instance fruit had been sold in a case and that case had been subsequently repacked with other fruit. The paragraph is a dangerous one. An unscrupulous person could go to the market and purchase fruit packed in cases branded with the name of a well-known producer. He could then buy an inferior line of fruit, repack the cases and take advantage of the name of the producer branded on them. The Minister knows of cases having been repacked with inferior fruit that has been distributed throughout the wheat areas. How would it be possible for the original owner of the cases to prove that the fruit was not his?

**MR. LAMBERT:** It would be impossible to prove it.

**MR. J. H. SMITH:** I could mention the names of growers to prove what has happened in the past. I feel so strongly that I shall divide the Committee on this paragraph.

**MR. LATHAM:** Not so long ago there was a change-over on this side of the House and in those days I remember some legislation being introduced in which the innocent person was held to be guilty until proved to the contrary. Great exception was taken by the then Opposition to such a provision. Now, when they are sitting on the Government side of the House, they ask us to accept what they criticised before. It would be extremely difficult to prove that one was not the owner of certain fruit if someone else had used one's branded cases.

**MR. LAMBERT:** And this paragraph seems to permit the use of second-hand cases, which is legally forbidden.

**MR. J. H. SMITH:** This will legalise that practice.

**MR. LATHAM:** The clause is as ill-conceived as the rest of the Bill. I do not know whether much consideration has been given

to the Bill at all. Instead of making fruit cheaper, the Bill will make it dearer.

The Minister for Agriculture: But this is the ordinary way of identifying cases.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! This cross-firing will have to cease.

Mr. LATHAM: I have not noticed reports of any action taken against a person who had made use of second-hand cases as suggested, but I can see that great difficulties will arise.

Mr. LAMBERT: I hope the Minister will agree to strike out the paragraph. He knows there is little, if any, justification for it, and that it will lend itself to great abuse. If cases bearing an owner's name are emptied and used again and are taken by the inspector, the man whose name is on the cases is the man who will be held guilty. I hope the Minister will be seized of the unfairness of this clause and will agree to its deletion.

Mr. SLEEMAN: This provision strikes at the fundamental principle of British justice. We had the same thing the other night in the University Bill, and last session we had it in another Bill. I will vote for the amendment.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: In all such instances one essential is to identify the case. There have been a million cases of apples this year, and I venture to say not one has been wrongly branded. There would be no difficulty in identifying the owner of any of those million cases. And if inferior fruit should have been substituted for the fruit originally packed, the onus is on the original owner to prove it. He would not have much difficulty in doing that. Then he would have his redress under another Act.

Mr. Angelo: But this refers to vegetables as well as to fruit.

The Premier: The same thing would apply.

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE: If you want to make the Bill futile, the carrying of this amendment would be one way of doing it. The inspector will take action only when necessary, and when he does take action he will use every precaution to see that the right person is proceeded against. There will be but few instances of proceedings under the Bill, for grading will be resorted to, as it is to-day in the handling of export fruit. The difficulty seen by some members is only an imaginary one. The existing system of iden-

tifying the cases holds good, not only in the markets of Western Australia, but also in the markets of the world. It is accepted as a general practice. The growers themselves agree that it is a fair means of identifying cases. One would think the inspectors were looking for trouble.

Mr. Latham: There is no doubt about that.

Mr. Lambert: They are all looking for trouble.

Mr. LATHAM: The Bill is not restricted to fruit and vegetables, but includes all agricultural, dairy and orchard products. So these containers may be bags for oats.

The Minister for Agriculture: No, you cannot top oats; they are all graded.

Mr. LATHAM: I am surprised at the Minister making such a remark, since he has been a farmer. The packages referred to will include oat bags and wheat sacks. We are going altogether too far with this legislation.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The same old tale is being told again to-night. There is always some Minister ready to say that if this or that is not included in the Bill, the Bill will be futile. If the authorities cannot get a conviction by fair means, then the accused should go free. It is not right to ask a man to prove his innocence. It is only the unscrupulous persons that we have to guard against in this measure.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Minister has missed the vital point. He does not appear to realise that perhaps a man may buy 20 cases of fruit bearing the name of a highly reputable grower. Those cases are taken into the shop and emptied, and re-packed with inferior fruit, after which they are hawked round the country.

The Premier: That is the same old tale you have told us three times to-night already.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: And if I tell it again, I may be able to get through that conservative crust of the Premier. I say that if those cases are re-packed with inferior fruit and sent around the suburbs of Perth, consumers who buy them will shake their heads and say, "I see so and so is packing inferior fruit." The story is repeated in the markets, and the next time that man's fruit comes along the dealers will have nothing to do with it. Why is the Minister so obstinate over this clause, since he has already secured all that he desires? If this pro-



vision be carried in this House, I feel confident that influence will be brought to bear and it will be deleted in another place.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	9
Noes	..	..	..	16

Majority against	..	..	7
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**AYES.**

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Lindsay
Mr. Barnard	Mr. Sleeman
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. J. H. Smith
Mr. Lambert	Mr. North
Mr. Latham	(Teller.)

**NOES.**

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Kennedy
Mr. Clydesdale	Mr. Lamond
Mr. Collier	Mr. Millington
Mr. Corboy	Mr. Munster
Mr. Coverley	Mr. Sampson
Mr. Cowan	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Cunningham	Mr. A. Wansbrough
Miss Holman	Mr. Wilson
	(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment and the report adopted.

**ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1929-30.***In Committee of Supply.*

Debate resumed from the previous day on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Panton in the Chair.

**MR. WILSON** (Collie) [9.2]: At the outset I wish to thank members for their kindness and forbearance during my absence through sickness on a visit to the Old Country. It is certainly a great pleasure for me to take my place in this Chamber again. I must compliment the Treasurer upon the excellent speech he made in delivering his Budget. It is gratifying to know that he is anticipating a surplus of £105,000 for the coming year, and I sincerely hope that his expectations will be realised. He also indicated the probability of a record wheat yield this season, of 42,000,000 bushels and we are all with him in hoping that the forecast will prove correct. In the course of

my travels during the last four or five weeks I have passed through a good deal of the country, and it was noticeable that the crops were looking well, although in some instances rain was needed. The down-pour a few days ago has been a godsend to those parts of the State that benefited. During my visit to the Old Country I took the opportunity to call on our old friend the Agent-General, Mr. Angwin. I say advisedly that I think Mr. Angwin is the right man in the right place. He certainly proved a very great help to me and I am satisfied that he extends the utmost assistance to all visitors from this State and to intending migrants. When his term expires, I hope that the Government whoever may be in office, will see fit to re-appoint Mr. Angwin for a further period. I am sure that his re-appointment would be popular with members on both sides of the House. During my stay in London Mr. Angwin directed my attention to two matters that are worthy of mention here. One of them has some relation to the Agricultural Products Bill which we have just been considering. Mr. Angwin sent out and bought a couple of pounds of what purported to be Western Australian apples. All I can say of them is that they were a standing disgrace to any community. In my opinion the apples were not the produce of Western Australia. They were very small and full of pit. In every respect they were a disgraceful sample. Mr. Angwin also showed me a newspaper cutting dealing with the price of butter in London and in Australia. Whereas Watson's Australian butter was selling here about the 6th of May at 2s. 2d. per lb., Australian butter was selling at Barber's in London at 1s. 10d. a lb. In other words, the people of the Old Country were able to buy Australian butter for 4d. a lb. less than our people had to pay for it in the country of manufacture. That should not be. Surely there is something wrong. I hope that members of the Country Party will take the matter in hand and see if something cannot be done to end such an iniquitous state of affairs.

**Mr. Lindsay:** The people in the Old Country do not get as much weight as people here get.

**Mr. WILSON:** Is it honest dealing to admit that they are not getting as much weight?

Mr. Lindsay: But they are getting the butter at a cheaper price.

Mr. WILSON: Butter is sold by the pound in London as well as in Australia, and I have yet to learn that there is any difference between 1 lb. weight in the Old Country and 1 lb. weight here. Touching group settlement, I am pleased that at last we are able to see daylight. We have had a long row to hoe, and it is mainly due to the energetic efforts of the present Minister for Lands that we can now see daylight. It is true that the scheme will leave us with a considerable balance on the wrong side of the ledger, but if the group areas can be made productive, we shall have something to be thankful for. Recently Mr. Justice Pike, who was appointed a Royal Commissioner to report on the settlement of soldiers, presented his report containing certain recommendations. I shall not deal with this matter at great length, but there are a few points to which I wish to direct attention. Many years ago this House appointed a Commission and a report similar to that of Mr. Justice Pike's was presented to Parliament. That was during the time of the Mitchell Government. Practically speaking, nothing came of the inquiry excepting that a few pounds were written off soldier settlement. At that time we had not only evidence but conclusive proof that many soldiers had been put on unsuitable land, and had been taken down disgracefully by the people who sold the land. Some of the land was such that it would not maintain the men. Some of the people who sold the land had areas up to 2,000 or 3,000 acres and could not make a living from them, and yet the area was cut up into ten lots and ten soldiers were asked to make a living out of the dole apportioned to them. Mr. Justice Pike, in dealing with repatriation losses, said—

The reasons given for the losses were—(1) want of capital; (2) want of home maintenance area; (3) unsuitability of settlers owing largely to war services and lack of training.

After some of the men had served five years in France it was nothing short of criminal to put them on to clear such heavily timbered land, and the fact that many of them were put on to poor land and land that was hard to clear made the disaster worse. Mr. Justice Pike also said that another reason for the losses was the drop in the value

of primary products, chiefly on irrigation areas. That could not apply to Western Australia because we have not too many irrigation areas here. Mr. Justice Pike expressed the opinion that the load of debt which soldier settlers had to meet to pay for their land, stock and implements and to improve their properties was so heavy as to make it impossible for them to carry on successfully. I can only hope that effect will be given to the recommendations and that something will be done to help the soldier settlers. Some of them have been battling on the land since 1919, and for all their ten years of labour, they are not much farther forward. They have been trying to make a living, but owing to the poor quality of the land and the small prices received for their products they have been unsuccessful. We have heard a good deal of criticism of the Main Roads Board. I hold no brief for the Main Roads Board, but I think they are doing excellent work. There is no gainsaying the fact that the dangerous roads with which we were familiar ten years ago are not to be compared with the roads now available to the travelling public. It is true that parts of certain roads are still bad, but that will be remedied in the near future. We must recognise that the Main Roads Board are doing good work. It is all very well for bush engineers to say what the road engineers ought to do, but instead of giving kicks to the Main Roads Board and heaping contumely on them, we should encourage them to even greater efforts. I have been told that it is proposed to construct a road from Bunbury to Narrogin via Collie. I hope the work will be undertaken because the district it will serve will be largely settled in the years to come. Let me suggest to the Minister for Works, however, that he should not construct such a road without building bridges to carry the public across the river. At Collie many years ago the construction of a bridge over the railway station was commenced but the centre of the bridge—the guts, as it was termed—was not constructed for three or four years. Consequently it was only possible to get on to one part of the bridge, at any time. The Collie River is a big stream in wintertime; in fact, four years ago I was isolated in my own district. There was a death at my house and it took a train all its time to get across the bridge because the bridge was getting covered with water and

that was the only outlet left. That might happen again during any winter. Before the Government construct the road through to Narrogin, they should build the bridges and ensure that the public will be able to travel without having to wait another three or four years. Collie is a very big district and yet the railway station is a standing disgrace. It is a wooden building, and has been up for a matter of 30 years. It is full of all kinds of insects. One can go through the country and see a nice brick building in some tinpot town and yet that is what we have at Collie. The Railway Department should see that a decent station is erected there. They started to improve the station last year by putting up a clock. I hope they will soon put up the adjunct to the clock in the shape of a new railway station. I do not often agree with the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith), but I do say there is something in the questions he asked about the underpayment for sleepers. I know the cutters are underpaid. That is not the fault of the Railway Department, but of unscrupulous dealers who buy these condemned sleepers for a song, and retail them to the department. It is all very fine for us to say it should not be done, but it is done. The hon. member is at fault when he talks about Wandoo sleepers. The price laid down for that type of sleeper is not contained in the Arbitration award, owing to a mistake either of the union or of the court itself. A Wandoo sleeper is 33 per cent. harder to cut than a jarrah sleeper, and yet one price is set down in the award for all sleepers. If the Government or the dealers want to get more than a bargain they make the men supply Wandoo sleepers. There is no better worker than the average Australian, but he cannot make a wage at Wandoo sleeper-cutting at the present price. The foreign sleeper-cutter works from daylight to dark. It was not intended that the Australian worker should work 16 hours a day in order to make a living; he should be able to make a living in eight hours. The hon. member was a little behind the times when he was speaking; the union has been moving in the matter for months to see if a better price could be obtained for Wandoo sleepers. The night before he asked his questions the matter was one of the themes dealt with by a conference in the city. Some years ago a power scheme was mooted for the South-West. The Govern-

ment of the day endeavoured to bring about the establishment of a semi-Government scheme, that is, between themselves and the municipalities of Collie and Bunbury. Unfortunately a hitch occurred between the municipalities and the scheme was not proceeded with. I regret that very much, because it would have been a great advantage to the South-West. A private company is now going to put up a power station at Collie. It says a good deal for the energy of that company, that they are prepared to spend £150,000 in this direction within the next six or eight months. They are going to establish a scheme at Collie to generate power to serve the whole of the South-West. In place of the semi-Government scheme that was first proposed, we can wish this new one success. I would not say anything about Collie coal but for the fact that when reading "Hansard" I found that a member of another place had been traducing the very fuel we need. Although I am from the Old Country I maintain that I am a better Australian than are some people who are born in the State. They are always crying stinking fish about their own produce instead of trying to encourage it all they can. On every occasion they damn Collie coal with faint praise and abuse it. This State is the only one in the Commonwealth that is not in the throes of an industrial trouble in respect of coal. Ours is not a first-class coal, but it is the best this State of ours has, and as is is the best we should rise to the occasion and see that it is used. The present Government have done their best, and I am thankful to them. The Mitchell Government also did their best. The position, however, is left open to men like the member in another place to traduce the very fuel of the country in which they are born. Mr. Miles—I did not intend to mention his name—saw fit to say that if the coalminers did a fair day's work they would be able to produce coal at a fair price. The Government were anxious to economise and show a surplus instead of a deficit. There is some logic in that statement. They could economise if they cut down our salaries, for instance.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order in referring to that matter.

Mr. WILSON: Being a generous Scotsman I would not mind if they did cut them down. The hon. member, in effect, said that

if the men did a fair day's work the Government would get a better deal. There is no case in the world where men engaged in the coalmining industry produce more tonnage per day than they do at Collie, although they work only seven hours a day. The production per man per day is 3 tons 16 cwt. In England and Scotland the average per man per day is 25 cwt. No country in the world does as well in the matter of coal production as we do.

Mr. Angelo: Is that the co-operative mine?

Mr. WILSON: That applies to all the mines. There is no co-operative mine. There are five collieries belonging to the Amalgamated Collieries and one belonging to the Griffin company. I am quoting figures supplied by the inspector of mines. They are easy enough to work out. He says that last year the total output per man employed below ground was 881 tons per year. If the men below ground produce 881 tons in a year, members will see that working for nine days a fortnight or  $4\frac{1}{2}$  days per week they have produced 3 tons 16 cwt. per day of seven hours. In no other part of the world is this done. The same member in another place says he does not believe in day wages, and that if the Collie miners would work on contract they would do much better. Mr. Williams in another place told him that the coal miners did work on contract, and Mr. Miles replied that we required some alteration in the system. He said he did not believe in day wages, and suggested that the men should work on contract. He was told that they did work on contract, and had been doing so for the past 20 years. He then says he wants an alteration made in the system. What does he mean and what does he want?

Mr. Angelo: He is not a collier.

Mr. WILSON: What alteration does he want? He should explain what he means. It is pleasing to learn that after all these years the "West Australian," to whom I give credit, has not tried to throw the responsibility of fires on ships or in our crops upon our Collie coal years ago. Anything that occurred in the way of a fire in the country or at sea was ascribed to the sparks emanating from Collie coal or to the fact that ships had bunkered with it when calling here. A week ago the report of a case appeared in the Press under the heading of "Sparks from Locomotives." There had been a fire on a farm and Mr. Reginald

Cooper, a solicitor of Perth, had sued the Midland Railway Co. and obtained a verdict for £437 11s. 6d., being damages for loss of crop. The case was heard before Mr. Justice Northmore and a jury of six. I would point out that this fire did not occur through Collie coal but as the result of the use of Newcastle coal. I want country members to observe that.

Mr. Latham: Country members have never objected to Collie coal being used.

Mr. WILSON: Nasty questions are sometimes asked in this House and in another place.

Mr. Lindsay: We should not be burned out with any coal.

Mr. WILSON: I quite agree, but the hon. member must not forget that all coal sparks, and that all fires do not emanate from Collie coal. In the years gone by, whenever a ship took fire it was ascribed to Collie coal. During the last 12 months we have had a surfeit of fires on ships. I am going to quote a few excerpts from the newspapers dealing with this matter. In September, 1928, the "West Australian" published the following—

British shipping journals emphasise the danger of fires occurring through spontaneous combustion on vessels carrying coal over long distances and through the tropics. Last month a fire occurred on the British steamer "King Cadwallan," which was fully loaded with British coal for the Adelaide Electric Supply Company, and the ship and her cargo were destroyed off the African coast.

Now we have the sister ship also on fire in Albany.

Mr. Lindsay: Perhaps it was the shape of the boat.

Mr. WILSON: This was also the result of English coal. The following paragraph appeared in Monday's paper—

Albany, September 22.—The flooding of the No. 1 hold of the Irish steamer "Knockferna," which put into Frenchman's Bay on Friday last, with a fire in its coal cargo, was effective in quelling the outbreak. The ship's pumps are now engaged in emptying the water from the hold, and to-morrow the vessel will be brought into Albany harbour in order that portion of the cargo may be discharged. No. 4 hold was reported this afternoon to be showing signs of heat, and it is probable that shore labour will be employed to assist in removing a quantity of coal in it, to allow of investigation.

The "Knockferna" left Hull on July 19 with a cargo of 8,000 tons of coal for Melbourne under charter to Andrew Weir & Co., of London. When she was 400 miles south

by south-west of Albany on Wednesday morning last a fire was noticed in part of the cargo, and she put into King George's Sound. After consultation with the Harbour Master (Captain Robertson), Captain Rowden decided on Friday last to enter Frenchman's Bay and flood the hold with the ship's pumps.

Thus we have two fires in a short time. Then there was another fire as the result of which the crew abandoned the ship at sea. The "West Australian" says on the 24th September last—

The crew of the burning steamer "Siltonhall," it is believed, were rescued just before 12 o'clock last night by the steamer "Anthea" about 2,500 miles from Fremantle in the Indian Ocean. The Deputy-Director of Navigation (Captain J. J. Airey), who has been in receipt of wireless messages from the "Anthea" could not say, early this morning, whether the crew had been rescued, but he said that the "Anthea" had notified by wireless late last night that the "Siltonhall" had been abandoned at latitude 89.05 east, longitude 40.58 south. He explained that information had been brief, and that he did not have the text of any of the messages received.

Forced by the intense heat of a fire in the cargo of coal the crew of the "Siltonhall" left the ship in lifeboats on Sunday. They intended to stand by the burning ship until relief came. They had been in wireless communication with the steamer "Anthea," which was in the vicinity. The "Anthea," picking up the S.O.S. message, headed immediately in the direction of the floating inferno and, according to reports, was expected to reach the abandoned ship some time yesterday.

All the crew of "Siltonhall" are standing by the ship in lifeboats. The ship is on fire. We are going to their assistance and will pick them up to-morrow afternoon.

The "Siltonhall" was bound for Adelaide with a cargo of coal from Immingham, England. She left Immingham, near Hull, on July 27, and having put into Durban early this month, left that port on September 5, and was due to reach Adelaide early in October.

Another case is reported in last Tuesday's paper as follows:—

Adelaide, September 23.—The cargo steamer "Tremeadow" berthed at Port Adelaide with 6,500 tons of English coal for the South Australian Gas Company yesterday. While at sea, on September 15, the captain noticed smoke issuing from No. 2 hatch, and five days later from No. 3 hatch. The hatches were battened down, and every step was taken to combat the trouble.

To-night's paper contains the following—

#### Fire in Coal Ship.

Adelaide, Wednesday.—The heated coal in numbers two and three hatches of the steamer "Tremeadow" at Port Adelaide showed a de-

cided rise in temperature last night. The fire float, "Fire Queen," was brought into service this morning, and a faint glow was detected in the hold, indicating the great heat in the centre of the cargo.

And then, to show the tragedy of it again, the "Tricolor" caught fire. I came back in that Norwegian ship, and at Capetown the coal began to heat. I now quote a newspaper extract, headed "Fire on Coal Ship—Spontaneous Combustion—Sydney, August, 16th," and reading—

Spontaneous combustion is blamed for a fire which occurred early this week in the cargo on the Norwegian motor ship "Tricolor," anchored in Sydney Harbour. The fire smouldered for three days before it was extinguished with the ship's appliances. It was stated to-night that, although the fire was deep-seated, it never assumed dangerous proportions. No damage was done to the ship, but, as a precaution, it was decided to get the coal out of the vessel as soon as possible. The cargo, which had been loaded in Scandinavian ports for Brisbane, was unloaded, and it will be sent on by another vessel. The coal on the "Tricolor" was loaded in Scotland for the Adelaide Electric Supply Company, and the ship will leave for Adelaide to-morrow to discharge it.

I have given proof of bunker fires on various steamers within the past 12 months. Let me point out that not one fire has occurred on any ship bunkered with Collie coal during that period. To-night's "Daily News" again shows the danger. It says—

#### Fires on Steamers.

#### Effect on Insurance.

#### Underwriters Alarmed.

(Published in the "Times.")

London, September 24.—Though seven fires in coal cargoes on the way to Australia do not represent the complete record of mishaps, says the shipping correspondent, they suffice to induce underwriters to ponder on the subject deeply.

The insurance market discussed the question to-day. It is conceded that these coal exports provide British miners with much work and also valuably assist British shipping by providing full outward cargoes instead of relying mainly on the homeward freights.

Thus commercial circles generally welcomed the new trade, but fires have caused much uneasiness in the London insurance market which insured both cargoes and ships. Underwriters of the former are not entitled to much sympathy because they took the risks with their eyes open. Some underwriters refused the risk altogether, and others made allowance for various descriptions of coal, the season of the year, and the condition of loading, but the underwriters who insured the ships for a term, for example, 12 months, were unable to foresee

that the vessels would be employed on long voyages carrying coal.

The Underwriters' Association will take up the matter, and one stipulation will be the utmost care in loading coal for Australia.

Now just a word about subsidised coal. When in Cape Town I took the opportunity to get some information on the subject, and I was lucky in securing official circulars showing that the South African Government subsidise coal produced by black labour in order that it may obtain a footing in Australia. Some people may say, "That can hardly be"; but here is an official document issued by the South African Government—

#### South Africa.

##### Bunker Rebate Revised Circular.

It is hereby notified that the South African Railways and Harbours grant a rebate of 8s. 8.16d. per ton of 2,240 lbs. on bunker coal shipped at Durban and Delagoa Bay, and 2s. 10.72d. per ton of 2,240 lbs. on bunker coal shipped at Capetown, Algoa Bay, and East London on vessels proceeding beyond the Continent of Africa, Madagascar, Mauritius and Reunion.

With effect from 26th April, 1926, the rebate is payable on the difference between the quantity of South African coal shipped as bunkers at South African ports or Delagoa Bay, and the quantity of coal, irrespective of whether South African or not, actually consumed on the voyage from the date of bunkering to date of arrival at the last port of discharge overseas, or (if in ballast) to first port of loading overseas, provided the difference is not less than 100 tons of 2,000 lbs.

In order to obtain a rebate, a certificate must be obtained from Lloyd's surveyor, compiled from Log Book entries, at destination port overseas, containing the following particulars:—

1. Name of steamship.
2. Voyage of steamship, showing ports of call from the first bunkering port to destination in the order of calling.
3. Total quantity of South African coal bunkered at South African ports, per ton of 2,240 lbs., and dates on which bunkering was commenced.
4. Last port of discharge overseas, or (if in ballast) first port of loading overseas, and date of arrival.
5. Quantity of coal, whether South African or not, consumed from the time bunkering is commenced at the first South African port at which South African coal is bunkered, including Delagoa Bay, and on the voyage from such port up to time of arrival at the last port of discharge overseas, or (if in ballast) to first port of loading overseas. Separate details must be given

of the quantity of coal consumed from port to port, and the coal consumed in ports on route.

Note.—Small quantities of emergency coal to enable vessels to reach the main bunkering port must not be included.

The following illustrations show examples qualifying for rebates, and will enable you to judge whether it is necessary to go to the expense of obtaining a survey report.

In Example (2) the Port of Beira has been included within the scope of the rebate when this port is the final port of discharge for cargo to South and East Africa. This concession does not extend to any other African port (except Union ports and Delagoa Bay), or to Mauritius, Madagascar and Reunion.

(1) Arrives Durban with 200 tons; bunkers at Durban 1,400 tons; leaves with 1,600 tons; consumes on voyage 1,000 tons; arrives at destination with 600 tons.

The vessel shipped 1,400 tons, consumed 1,000 tons, and is entitled to a rebate on the difference, 400 tons.

(2) Vessel arrived with 100 tons; bunkers at Durban 400 tons; leaves for Beira with 500 tons; returns from Beira with 200 tons; replenishes at Durban 1,000 tons; leaves with 1,200 tons; consumes on voyage 900 tons; arrives at destination with 300 tons.

The vessel shipped 400 and 1,000 (1,400) tons, and consumed 300 and 900 (1,200) tons, and is entitled to rebate on 200 tons.

In Examples (1) and (2), rate of rebate is 8s. 8.16d. per long ton.

(3) Vessel arrives with 100 tons; bunkers at Durban 1,500 tons; leaves with 1,600 tons; consumes to Capetown 1,200 tons; arrives at Capetown with 1,480 tons; replenishes at Capetown 140 tons; leaves with 1,620 tons; consumes on voyage 1,100 tons; arrives at destination with 520 tons.

The vessel shipped 1,500 and 140 (1,640) tons, and consumed 120 and 1,100 (1,220) tons, and is entitled to rebate on 420 tons, as follows:—On the difference between the quantity replenished at Capetown, and the quantity consumed, Durban to Capetown, viz., 20 tons at 2s. 10.72d., and on the balance of 400 tons at 8s. 8.16d.

Note.—No rebate will be paid on any quantity less than 100 short tons.

Special Note.—It is essential that the survey report should be made out in the manner indicated in this circular, and the survey report should be posted to Durban, Natal, South Africa direct, as rebates will not be granted unless application is made within four months from date of bunkering.

Mr. Angelo: What do ships pay for that coal?

Mr. WILSON: In South African ports about 30s. per ton. However, the coal is got at a long distance in the interior. It

is carried at a very low freight by the railways, which are chiefly manned by black labour. When one realises that the coal is got by black men working up to 12 and even 16 hours per day, one feels that it is too bad that the owners should get their coal subsidised as I have stated. The Collie miners work seven hours a day, and the Newcastle miners eight hours; and there is this subsidy of 8s. 8d. per ton on South African coal paid to put Australian coal miners out of work. I repeat that the document which I have quoted, and which shows the way the wind blows, is an official document. It proves that an attempt is being made to introduce into our continent cheap coal produced by black labour.

Mr. Lindsay: Does that official document say the black men work 12 to 16 hours per day?

Mr. WILSON: No; but I am informing the hon. member.

Mr. Lindsay: I asked the question because I have worked in South Africa myself.

Mr. WILSON: The white man does not get the coal; he merely oversees the niggers.

Mr. Lindsay: He works eight hours, and the niggers knock off when he knocks off.

Mr. WILSON: Has the hon. member worked in a South African coal mine?

Mr. Lindsay: No.

Mr. WILSON: I thought the hon. member had not. He knows nothing about it. This whole continent is at present in upheaval because of the actions of John Brown of Newcastle. John Brown's tactics against the Newcastle miners have been the means of producing chaos, especially in the East, and have had a dire effect on shipping and also on the coal mining industry. The reason why coal has been brought out here from the Old Country is that John Brown has the Newcastle mines stopped. If Western Australia had possessed no coal, what would have been the position in this State? We would have been involved in disaster, but for Collie coal. However, having Collie coal and a sympathetic Government, Western Australia has been able to keep going. Some people assert that Collie coal is subsidised; but the reports of the Railway Department show that while Newcastle coal cost 44s. 6d. per ton last year, the average cost of our Collie coal was 18s. 4½d. Even allowing that it takes 3 tons of Collie coal to equal

2 tons of Newcastle coal, the State then has a bonus benefit of 10s. to 12s. per ton from the use of our local coal. The Government know of this advantage, and go out of their way to help Collie by taking as much Collie coal as possible. The present coal contract terminates within the next month or two, and I hope the Government will see that the existing agreement is renewed. If they do that, then undoubtedly the Collie miners will see that the State receives a fair deal.

MR. NORTH (Claremont) [9.41]: The first page of the Estimates strikes me as the most interesting from the ordinary taxpayer's point of view, since it shows that in spite of the increased moneys derived from the new arrangement under the Financial Agreement this State depends almost entirely for its surplus of £100,000 upon the success of the Railway Department in obtaining £431,000 more revenue than ever previously. One wonders on what basis the Commissioner of Railways is able to offer the Treasurer such good figures. In looking through the records of previous years, I noticed that the railway revenue never seems to have increased by more than £200,000 at any one time, the figures being £2,688,000 for 1921, £2,800,000 for 1922, the same amount for 1923, £3,100,000 for 1924, £3,500,000 for 1925, £3,300,000 for 1926, this being a reduction; £3,500,000 for 1927, £3,800,000 for 1928, and £3,700,000 for 1929. The estimate for the current financial year is £4,215,000. From the point of view of the ordinary taxpayer, as opposed to that of a Minister who has all the figures available to him, the most one can do is to refer to what the Commissioner of Railways has to say upon the system from the success of which we hope to receive a surplus of £100,000 this year. The Commissioner in his report tells us that the reasons why last year there was a deficit were, firstly, £100,000 loss of earnings owing to the waterside strike, which we hope will not occur again, a reduction in passenger earnings of £55,000, which loss will probably be greater this year, since we must realise that motors take passenger earnings more and more each year, an increase of £24,000 in payments to staff, consequent on arbitration awards, which increase I think will continue, and additional expenditure on sleepers amounting to £13,000. A further reference to the

Commissioner's report shows that more sleepers will be used in relaying this year than ever before. Therefore, when the Commissioner of Railways hands in figures showing that the State will receive £430,000 more from the railways this year than ever before, one may regard the figure as very hopeful. Personally I should not have been surprised if we had been promised half the amount of that increase. That amount, experience shows, has been the largest increase in any year during the history of the State, and I think we shall be lucky indeed if we get within £100,000 of the Commissioner's figures.

The Premier: I assure the hon. member that they are the Commissioner's figures, and that I have not altered them to the extent of one penny.

MR. LINDSAY (Toodyay) [9.45]: Like other hon. members, I have endeavoured to digest the figures submitted in connection with the Estimates and, as on previous occasions, I have found some difficulty in arriving at my conclusions. As in the past I wish again to protest against the Committee being asked to deal with the Estimates before having the Auditor General's report before us. He is the servant of Parliament and is supposed to assist us in understanding the financial position. In the course of his Budget Speech, the Premier told us that he estimated there would be a surplus of £105,415. That is a very fine record compared with the deficit last year of £275,000. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) has informed the Committee regarding the principal reason for the increased revenue, but there are other causes that have operated in bringing about such an increase. I have heard the Premier referred to as "Lucky Collier." When we analyse the figures for the last two or three years, we can readily appreciate that he has been luckier than any other Premier of this State, and, unfortunately for Western Australia, luckier than any future Premier is likely to be. There is another important factor to be taken into consideration when examining the Budget and the surplus anticipated. That must be apparent when we come to analyse the production of the State. If we do so, we naturally expect, in view of the results achieved that the Government will budget for a surplus. In Western Australia production has increased more

than in any other State of Australia. As we have had a period of prosperity over some years, we should at least expect the State to make ends meet and that should be done out of our own revenue. Having regard to the estimated surplus, it is apparent that it will not be achieved from revenue itself, but as the result of gifts from the Commonwealth Government. The figures show that we have received £300,000 from the Federal Disabilities grant.

The Premier: The hon. member does not understand a word about the Federal grants because the State revenue has not benefited at all.

MR. LINDSAY: I am telling my own story.

The Premier: But you are misrepresenting the position.

MR. LINDSAY: I shall tell the story in my own way.

The Premier: No doubt you will.

MR. LINDSAY: The Premier says the revenue has not benefited from the Commonwealth grants, but the Estimates show that we received £300,000 from the Commonwealth Government. Is that not true?

The Premier: Do you know what has been done with that money?

MR. LINDSAY: I shall deal with that.

The Premier: You do not know. You are misrepresenting the position.

MR. LINDSAY: I know that the Premier reduced the income tax with some of the money, but that is only one item. Not all that amount was used in that direction.

The Premier: The hon. member should not make misstatements. I object to it.

MR. LINDSAY: Have not our funds benefited because of that grant?

The Premier: I did not say that we did not receive any benefit.

MR. LINDSAY: I say we have. The trouble is that the Disabilities grant will end very soon, and what will happen in the future? I understand that the grant expires next year.

The Premier: No, in two years time.

MR. LINDSAY: Then it will expire in 1932. That means that we shall not then have the advantage of this £300,000 a year.

The Premier: It is only £200,000.

MR. LINDSAY: I have to accept the figures that we have been given.

The Premier: You do not understand the figures. That is the trouble.



Mr. LINDSAY: They are here before me.

The Premier: It is dangerous to handle figures if you do not understand them.

Mr. LINDSAY: I think I have pretty well solved the figures that I have before me, and I will stand to the figures I shall quote.

The Premier: Very well.

Mr. LINDSAY: I admit the difficulty experienced in dealing with these figures. I thought I had something to place before the Committee, but I had to drop it. However, I will stand by those figures I intend to quote. The Leader of the Opposition dealt with some of them.

The Premier: But he did not make the allegations you made.

Mr. LINDSAY: I have not accepted all the figures presented by the Leader of the Opposition, because I could not reconcile some of them with those I have before me. There is the Financial Agreement that must be taken into consideration. I do not suppose the Premier will say that that is not correct. Under the Financial Agreement, we have received £350,000 that has been paid into a suspense account. I understand that portion of that money is to be allocated for paying off last year's deficit, while some is also to be placed in the reserve fund in connection with the Group Settlement Scheme. Is that not so?

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. LINDSAY: If we look at the Miscellaneous Services Vote for this year, we do not find that that is shown at all. It has not been taken into revenue, because it is not actual revenue but a saving of expenditure.

The Premier: That is so.

Mr. LINDSAY: So the State funds have not benefited so far.

The Premier: This year, that is the point.

Mr. LINDSAY: But we are talking about this year's Estimates, which are before us now. The Premier budgeted for a surplus of £105,000. I want to point out that that result will not be achieved by the financing of the State under the control of the Premier, but by means of assistance rendered by the Federal Government. First there is the gift of £350,000 which, as I have already indicated, is not shown as a receipt because it is not that, but as a deduction on expenditure. That is shown in the figures.

The Premier: Of course!

Mr. LINDSAY: Another item that is disclosed clearly is that relating to the Loan Fund. If we look at the position regarding the money made available under the provisions of the Migration Agreement, we find there is £4,489,812. The interest for 1928-29 was only £44,387. The estimated interest payment for 1929-30 is £48,000. We have paid one per cent. for portion of the money and for what was borrowed for five years 1 2/3rds per cent. That represents a saving of £184,000 that has been credited to revenue. The point is that if we had borrowed that money through ordinary channels, we would have paid 5 1/4 per cent. for it, and that would have appeared in the figures before us. On the other hand, because of the action taken by the British Government and the Federal Government in making available this cheap money to the State, we have profited to the extent of £184,000 this year. Having regard to the £350,000 and the £184,000 it will be apparent that the total represents a lot more than the Premier has budgeted for as his surplus. There are other factors to be considered as well. Take the loan money, for instance. The cheap money I have referred to from the Migration Agreement, has been utilised and the cost has been charged up against works at the ordinary rate of interest. There is no doubt that that is the position. Of the actual money that has been saved, a certain amount has gone to funds in connection with the Group Settlement scheme, but that money has been charged against group settlement, not at the rate at which the State pays for it, but at between six and seven per cent. The consequence is that the State has set aside some of that money as a reserve fund for group settlement purposes. In addition to that, we received for the year £388,000 under the terms of the Federal Aid Roads Scheme. Surely it will be agreed that that has been of some benefit to the revenue of the State.

The Premier: As a matter of fact, the Federal roads scheme represents to us expenditure, not revenue. It costs us additional revenue because of the 15s. that we have to raise.

Mr. LINDSAY: I am prepared to agree with that. The Premier mentioned that there was an increased amount in connection with our main roads, of £17,000, but

as against that we have £380,000 as a free gift from the Commonwealth Government.

The Premier: But that did not go into revenue.

Mr. LINDSAY: Of course not. But does that not represent an advantage to our revenue? Have we not been able to employ a lot of men? Has that not meant more money for our people? Have we not built up our revenue in an indirect way in consequence of that expenditure?

The Premier: No.

[Mr. Lambert took the Chair.]

Mr. LINDSAY: Certainly that is of advantage to our revenue. No one can deny that we get some advantage from that money. In my opinion, the State is in a fairly good position to-day, and by reason of the aid rendered to the State by the Federal Government, we have been able to secure advantages and the Premier is able to budget for a surplus. I claim that that result will not be achieved through any effort on the part of the Government, but as a result of the large sums of money we have received from the Commonwealth. Another point that strikes me as interesting when dealing with the Federal Aid Roads Scheme is that, during the past three years, we have spent approximately £1,100,000 on the roads of this State, and apparently the Government have an unexpended balance of Commonwealth money available totalling no less than £575,000. Although that money is available, the Government have not yet made use of it. We have to borrow money in order to provide our 15s. for every £1 made available by the Federal Government. The money available to us is cheap, and we should make use of it. We have been told that the Main Roads Board have not been in a position to spend the whole of the money available to them in the past. On top of that we are told that this year they will spend £1,250,000. That is a remarkably large amount to spend in one year. I am fully aware that of the money spent in connection with road construction, a large percentage goes in the payment of labour. It is the same in connection with all such large undertakings. If we embark upon the construction of a railway we have to buy rails and so on. If we desire to construct a water supply, a

large amount of money has to go out in the purchase of pipes, concrete and so on. When it comes to a question of roads, a large proportion of the money has to be spent in wages. We have had a very serious unemployment difficulty in the State, and I can visualise what will happen in the future. Before many months are passed, with the advantage of the expenditure of such a huge amount of money, the unemployment difficulty should be settled.

The Premier: That is a very miserable suggestion!

Mr. LINDSAY: I do not know that there is anything very miserable about my remarks.

The Premier: There was an inference in it.

Mr. LINDSAY: I drew attention to the fact that we shall spend £1,250,000 on road work this year, three times as much as we have spent in any other year. I suggested that that expenditure should have a tendency to solve our unemployment difficulty. Surely there is nothing miserable about that statement, which was a perfectly correct one!

The Premier: Yes, if the contractors do not employ foreigners to do the work.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Even so, the contractors will have to work under A.W.U. conditions.

Mr. Latham: At any rate, they could not employ them.

Mr. LINDSAY: I understand that under the agreement, any contractor who tenders for the work must comply with the conditions specified between the Main Roads Board and the A.W.U. In those circumstances, I do not think a contractor would be allowed to employ Southern Europeans.

Mr. J. H. Smith: He could if they were members of the union.

Mr. LINDSAY: If they did not belong to the union the men could not get a job at all. I do not think there will be many Southern Europeans employed, but why should the Premier suggest that the unemployment difficulty will be solved if the contractors do not employ too many Southern Europeans? If those men are in the country and are out of work, are they not unemployed? Surely they have a right to get a job.

The Premier: Before our own people?

Mr. LINDSAY: I did not say that.

The Premier: If there is not enough work for them, what then?

Mr. LINDSAY: When the Premier interjected regarding the employment of South-

ern Europeans by contractors, I referred to the agreement under which the work must be carried out, and if the Southern Europeans are unemployed and work is available, surely they could be employed! I should like to see them all employed. I hope this money, together with the work afforded by the harvest, will employ all the unemployed in the State. Last session we passed a Bill for the construction of the Kulja eastward railway. That railway has now been partly built. Recently I was surprised to find that the clearing and formation of the line had been stopped at the 50-mile. That means that 24 miles of the authorised line will not be built.

The Premier: That has not been definitely decided, has it?

Mr. LINDSAY: Perhaps not, but the trouble is that the work has been stopped, if only indefinitely. Originally the line was to go within four or five miles of the rabbit-proof fence, and I am inclined to think that is too far. I say it should stop 12½ miles west of the fence. I have been up there recently, when I was told that the clearing gangs and the formation gangs had been stopped. Then a letter I received from the Minister showed that 50 miles of line will be laid by January. It appears to me the line is to stop at 50 miles instead of 74 miles. This is the problem I am faced with: Those people went out there with the promise of that railway. We all thought the railway would go within a few miles of the rabbit-proof fence. The work has been stopped, and if that line is not built to-day on this extension, it will not be built for long years to come, because the Government will not readily agree to send out there a complete plant to build a length of ten or 15 miles. I understand the three departments concerned are to go there shortly to choose townsites. I hope they will select a sufficient area of land to provide for the necessities of the people, such as recreation grounds. It is remarkable the trouble I have over these recreation grounds. I am sorry the Minister for Lands is not here, for I wanted to speak out pretty straight on this question. It is an oversight on the part of the officials that sufficient land is not provided, for in the beginning it is just as easy to get 600 acres as it is to get 100 acres when declaring a townsite. And these towns on the wheatbelt develop into pretty big towns. In most of the wheat districts,

in localities about 25 miles apart, one can see that we are going to develop fine towns. Our experience proves that. It follows that the people in those towns will require certain necessities, such as recreation grounds, show grounds and racing grounds. There should be quite sufficient land set apart for the purpose. I have had a somewhat peculiar experience in this respect. For instance, at Koorda, a place the member for North Perth knows well, only 11 acres were reserved for a recreation ground. It was not big enough for a football ground. I went along and saw the Minister for Lands, but he would not meet me in any way. Eventually I found much greater sympathy in the Railway Department, and secured from them 96 acres to make a recreation ground for the people of Koorda. It was very fortunate for those people that the Railway Department had a large area of ground they were not using. At present I am having difficulty in Mukinbuddin. I have tried to get the Minister for Lands to grant this request, but he is very stubborn about it. In consequence, the people of Mukinbuddin are continually writing to me urging that I should secure for them another five acres for their recreation ground. I can see no reason why the Minister for Lands should not give it, because the ground is on the farther side of the railway line. He could easily let the people have the small area of land they require. The member for Collie (Mr. Wilson) referred to the price of butter. He may know something about coal, and he should know a little about butter, inasmuch as quite a number of his electors are group settlers. When he tells us the price of butter is 1s. 10d. in London and 2s 2d. here, he is saying what is quite true, but does he know the reason why? I think a member representing a group settlement area that produces butter should know the reason for these relative prices. The hon. member does not say anything about the prices that miners in England are getting for winning coal, as compared with what the Collie miners get. Yet he is prepared to say that the men producing butter in Australia sell it cheaper in England than they do in Australia. I will tell him why the price of butter is cheaper in England than it is out here. A Royal Commission was appointed in Victoria to inquire into the dairying industry. The report of that commission showed that the industry was

kept going by the slavery of children. Does the hon. member want that sort of thing?

Mr. Wilson: No, he does not.

Mr. LINDSAY: The result was that the Paterson butter stabilisation scheme was brought into existence. What for? It is the same position as obtains in the dried fruits industry. All the butter made in Australia, every butter factory and every condensed milk factory, comes under this scheme. They have agreed that butter in Australia shall be sold at a certain price, and they utilise part of that price to pay a bonus on butter exported to the Old Country. Under this scheme Western Australian producers are the gainers from the rest of the people of Australia; because they get the whole of the additional 4d., yet do not export any butter, and so do not have to give any rebate.

Mr. Wilson: You believe in cheap coal.

Mr. LINDSAY: The hon. member insinuated that he wanted cheap butter, and I merely wished to show him why the price of butter in Australia was higher than it is in England.

Mr. Wilson: But you wanted cheap coal.

Mr. LINDSAY: I do not remember that. At all events, if I did, I have changed my mind. The hon. member went on to talk about the drop in the prices of agricultural products, and the soldier settlement scheme. Of course there has been a drop in the prices of agricultural products, and there has been a big drop in the price of dried fruits. That industry is in serious difficulty over the irrigation settlement. The hon. member said there was no irrigation in Western Australia. But a lot of our soldiers went in for dried fruits in the Swan Valley, and very few of them are left there to-day. There we get another illustration of relative prices, for we have to pay more for our own dried fruits than is paid in England. Why should not the producers engaged in the dried fruits industry receive a reasonable price for the product they sell to the people of Australia?

Mr. Wilson: I did not say they should not.

Mr. LINDSAY: We have an Arbitration Court to fix the wages of the workers, not on English conditions but on Australian conditions, so why should not producers get a reasonable price for their products.

[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]

Mr. Wilson: I said nothing about that.

Mr. LINDSAY: No; but I am surprised at the hon. member questioning the price of butter in Australia.

Mr. Wilson: Mr. Chairman, the hon. member should not suggest that I said anything of the kind.

The CHAIRMAN: What are you complaining about?

Mr. Wilson: I did not say anything about fruit being sold in England cheaper than it is sold here.

Mr. LINDSAY: I sincerely hope that the Premier's estimated surplus will be realised. The principal item on which he has based his estimate is an increase in railway revenue. I do not know whether that increase is likely to be realised in full. I hope it will be. Unfortunately the rain that has fallen this week has not been as general as it might have been, and there is not the slightest doubt that the crops in my electorate are not in as healthy a condition to-day as they were a few weeks ago. If the crops in the other parts of the wheat belt are in the same condition as those in my electorate, we shall not secure the increased amount of railway freight that the Premier anticipates. With every other member, I shall be pleased if the Premier is able to end the year with a surplus, because it will assist to place the finances of the State on a sound footing. I again warn members that the Premier has based his estimate for a surplus on something that is fleeting and not permanent. The Financial Agreement may be a very fine thing for this State during the first few years of its currency, but as the years pass the benefits will diminish, while in two years' time we shall lose the special grant we are receiving from the Commonwealth Government. Then, unless an attempt is made to reduce taxation before such a step becomes compulsory, succeeding Premiers are likely to find their position rather difficult.

MR. ANGELO (Gaseoyne) [10.13]: This is the twelfth financial debate to which I have listened in this Chamber. Year after year the Treasurer of the day delivers his Budget speech and it is replied to by the Leader of the Opposition who, in most instances during those 12 years, had previously been the Treasurer. Those two mem-

bers are really the only ones who can speak with much authority on or knowledge of the subject. The way in which the public accounts are placed before members makes it very difficult for anyone not well versed in financial matters properly to comprehend them. Sound finance is said to be sound government. Therefore it is the duty of every member, especially of this branch of the legislature, to evince a keen interest in the finances. It is our duty to ensure that the money is wisely and judiciously spent, and that not more revenue is taken out of the pockets of the taxpayers than is necessary to finance the country. I have frequently taken pains to study the finances as presented to the Chamber, and I candidly confess that I have found it very difficult to follow them or criticise them. They are presented in a manner so different from that in which other accounts are compiled and with which people who have to deal with financial matters are accustomed. Nearly every session I have heard the Treasurer claim to have done all that possibly could have been done with the money at his disposal, and the Leader of the Opposition has then proceeded to pick his statement to pieces. A few members have also contributed to the debate, perhaps on some of the texts delivered by the Leader of the Opposition, but where has it led us? It is seldom that the Treasurer replies to any criticism; it is seldom that the Treasurer ever explains any of the questions raised during the debate. After 12 years in this Chamber I have come to the conclusion that some other method of checking the finances of the State should be instituted. This Chamber, to a far greater extent than the other branch of the legislature, is responsible for watching the finances of the State.

Mr. North: Was not a change made in New South Wales recently?

Mr. ANGELO: I do not know.

The Premier: Yes, but only with the object of deceiving the public as to the real financial position.

Mr. ANGELO: I think we should adopt some more comprehensive method, one that would be continued year after year, and one that would not only assist the Chamber, but prove a careful check on the finances and be of assistance to the Treasurer. What I suggest, therefore, is that a public accounts committee be appointed. Such a body has been found most useful in the Common-

wealth Parliament, and I feel certain it would be found equally useful here. I do not say we should have such an elaborate committee as that appointed by the Commonwealth, but suppose we had a committee of four, two members drawn from the Government side and two from the Opposition side of the House, with full authority to look into the accounts immediately they are presented to the Chamber, to keep in constant touch right through the year with the finances, have full access to the account books and each year present a report to the House, members would be in a far better position to deal with the finances. As we are in the dying hours of the present Parliament, it would probably be too late to appoint a committee to deal with the finances for last year, but there would be time, if the Government were agreeable, to pass a Bill that would enable a public accounts committee to be appointed immediately after the new Parliament assembled. It might be asked what powers should such a committee have. The Commonwealth Public Accounts Committee work under an Act passed in 1913. The duties of the Committee are as follows:—Paragraph (a) says—

To examine the accounts of the receipts and expenditure of the Commonwealth, and to report to both Houses of the Parliament any items in those accounts, or any circumstances connected with them to which they think that attention should be directed; (b) to report to both Houses of Parliament any alteration which the Committee think desirable in the form of the public accounts, or the method of keeping them, or in the mode of receipt, control, issue or payment of the public money; (c) to inquire into and report upon any questions in connection with the public accounts which are referred to them by either House of the Parliament; (d) any other duties assigned to the Committee by Joint Standing Orders approved by both Houses of the Parliament.

I suggest sincerely that the Government should do something in this direction. It is the only way to get a correct insight from year to year into the financial position. Nearly every session select committees are appointed. A few nights ago the Minister for Health brought down a most important Bill dealing with mental defectives. A select committee was at once appointed so that a proper investigation might be made before the Bill became law. Sound finance is sound Government. Probably it is the most important duty that we, who are directors for the taxpayers, have

to perform. No matter which party is in power, members should have a close insight into the affairs of State. The only way to get that is to delegate authority to three or four members to carry out the work above any other duty that may form part of their political life. Mr. Speaker is not asked to take part in the debates. He carries out certain functions in the high and honourable position to which he has been elected. The Chairman of Committees is also asked to devote his first and chief attention to those particular duties. If a public accounts committee were appointed, and the members of it were told exactly what their duties were, they would carry them out most willingly with great advantage not only to Parliament but to the State. I suggest with all deference that the Premier should introduce a Bill this session to appoint such a committee, so that when the new Parliament meets next year it will be ready to function.

**MR. LATHAM** (York) [10.22]: I wish to protest against having to deal with the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure without having before us a copy of the Public Accounts and the Auditor-General's report. I can imagine what would happen if the directors of a company were to receive a balance sheet without the auditor's report. I know it is not the Premier's duty to interfere with the Auditor-General, but that officer has had three months in which to make up his report, and it should be here now that we are called upon to discuss the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure. We should have his views upon any matters appertaining thereto. I do not know whether we can alter the position now, but something should be done to protect members before next session.

The Premier: It never has been the case.

**Mr. LATHAM**: It ought to be, and the Premier will no doubt admit it.

The Premier: The matter is entirely in the hands of the Auditor-General. If I delayed bringing down the Estimates until his report was presented, members might have some justification for complaint.

**Mr. LATHAM**: If I am here next session, I hope I shall be able to do something to ensure the presentation of the Auditor-General's report and the Public Accounts prior to the Estimates being dealt with. It is very difficult to follow anything in the Estimates dealing particularly with

the interest and sinking fund. I do not profess to be an authority on accounts but I should like to have some knowledge of what is going on. I congratulate the Premier on his estimated surplus, and hope he will realise it. It will show the people that we are beginning to appreciate the necessity for economy.

The Premier: It will depend largely on the harvest.

**Mr. LATHAM**: I know that many factors enter into the question. I have looked at the railway returns, and hope the Commissioner will realise his estimates. I have some doubts about the figures that have been produced. I believe that Western Australia, as well as other parts of the Commonwealth, is facing a pretty severe time. Not only will the Commonwealth and the State Governments be called upon to economise, but everyone will have to do so. Less money will have to be spent on amusements and frivolity. It will take us all our time even then to balance the ledger.

The Premier: Individual economy is needed more than governmental economy.

**Mr. LATHAM**: I suppose they go hand in hand. I am sure that, owing to the lack of business faculty in the individual, he all too frequently expects the Government to render service to him without asking where the money is to come from.

The Premier: Too much money is invested in non-reproductive enterprises, and too little in industries that are of some value. If money is required for an industrial enterprise, very little is forthcoming, but if it is required for a picture show plenty is available.

**Mr. LATHAM**: Yes, and when a tax is placed upon amusements there is a loud squeal from the people concerned.

**Mr. Angelo**: Government loans pay better interest. They absorb a good deal of private capital.

**Mr. LATHAM**: The public ask for Government services that could probably be provided at less cost, owing to the roundabout system employed in Government undertakings, if private capital were to provide them.

The Premier: It sometimes has cost more to bring a deputation to me than the job concerned would cost.

**Mr. LATHAM**: People should be made to realise that if they provided the services themselves they would save a considerable

amount of money. Unfortunately the pernicious system has grown up whereby people go to the Treasurer with very little regard for his ability to find the money.

The Premier: Nowhere in the world do people ask for so much Government assistance as they do here.

Mr. LATHAM: The time will come when that must be stopped. No doubt any Treasurer who said "No" in answer to requests for financial assistance would remain in office for a very short time. The sooner people are made to realise that a service costs them more by Government means than by private means, the better it will be for all. We shall have an opportunity later to deal with the different departments. I hope the Premier does not intend to rush the Estimates through to-night.

The Premier: Only down to the Mines Department.

Mr. LATHAM: If so, we might as well have a good go at them now, for we shall be here all night. Later on I wish to say something about the settlement of land under present conditions. I appeal to the Minister to hold up land settlement beyond a reasonable distance from the railways, until we see what are the prospects of prices for the product. We do not want to have a setback after the years of success this State has enjoyed. Anything further I have to say I shall reserve until the items are reached.

MR. SAMPSON (Swan) [10.31]: On these Estimates a good deal could be said, though I do not think it could be said conveniently or wisely at this hour. I wish to refer to the need for electric current throughout the producing districts which are in close proximity to Perth. It is a remarkable fact—I do not blame the Government for it—that ample current is available for picture shows and electric street signs, but not for pumping water. Reference might be made, and very profitably, to the great importance of electric power to many centres. I may mention Mundaring, East Maddington, Forrest Field, Lesmurdie, Wattle Grove, East Bedfordale, Eighth Road Armadale, Piesse's Brook, Roleystone, and other centres, all of which would, if this facility were provided, become comparatively well to do. One particular example, to which I respectfully draw the Premier's attention, is the producing

area known as Canning Vale, a mile or two from Cannington. When Mr. Scaddan was Minister for Railways a deputation waited on him to urge that the electric cable should be extended to Canning Vale. The then Minister for Railways went into the question, and decided that Canning Vale should have electric current. It is a fact that from being a comparatively poor community, Canning Vale has become comparatively well to do, the reason for the change being entirely the provision of electric current. The people engaged in vegetable production there, are able to pour water on their plants at critical times; hence the altered outlook. If it were possible to furnish other centres with this advantage, I would feel most grateful; but it does seem—every circumstance justifies this statement—that no consideration is given to areas in the outer suburban districts, that consideration is restricted to localities within the metropolitan area. Another example is Bickley, in the hills. Bickley is hardly distant a rifle shot from the cable as extended; nevertheless, in spite of the written guarantee of the local people to provide interest and sinking fund, no steps have been found possible in respect of extending the cable. I do not for a moment doubt that the Minister for Railways is sympathetic, but the unfortunate fact remains that no extensions are being made. The position regarding electric current in those districts is the same as that of extension of water supply to Parkerville, that old trouble. Parkerville, too, should have electric current. It possesses a large quarry employing a considerable number of men, but in spite of the fact that the Government provide electric current, and have the sole right of selling current over certain areas, nothing is done. The power used at the Parkerville quarry is comparatively out of date. The cheap, convenient power furnished by electric current is denied to those people. I wish to refer to another matter—the incidence of water conservation in the Wongong district out beyond Armadale. It is the case of Mr. R. G. Marsh, a settler who has lived in the district for 30 or 40 years, and who throughout that period has enjoyed the right of using water from the Wongong Brook. This water flows along what is known as the southern branch. The Government decided that the water was necessary for the

supply of the metropolitan area. Since Perth needed it, Perth got it; but in the getting of it the rights of this settler were entirely disregarded. In fact, he was treated with the most outrageous injustice that could be meted out to any person.

Mr. Lambert: I shall get up and give you the pain and agony of thousands of electors of mine if you give us that.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the hon. member does that, he will be doing his duty, which will be a nice change for himself and for the rest of hon. members. Idle threats thrown promiscuously across the Chamber have no effect on me. The case of Mr. Marsh calls for consideration. It is not new to this Chamber. I discussed the matter in November of last year, and then pointed out that in summer the water was desired by the department, and that consequently the stream did not flow as vigorously then, portion of the water having been taken by the department. I urged that fairness should be shown to this man, fairness with respect to compensation in view of the fact that some of his rights had been taken by the Government. He had had to sink a well, put up a mill, and erect troughs. It was a comparatively small matter, the Government being asked to find an amount of £150 as part compensation for the injury which the settler had suffered. After I had outlined the case the Minister for Agricultural Water Supplies, in response to my declaration that fairness ought to be shown to this man, said, "It shall be shown." I replied, "That means compensation." I regret that in spite of that decision, the department is still obdurate and still adopts the unfair attitude of denying compensation to this man. I am not in a position to say whether he has any legal rights, but there is every moral reason why he should receive consideration. I again urge upon the Minister that he should give consideration to the case of Mr. R. G. Marsh, of Armadale. In July, 1928, in reply to a letter to the department, that gentleman received the following communication—

In reply to your letter of 7th May last, in regard to supply of water in the south branch of the Wungong River. I have to advise you that the department denies any liability, and we can take no responsibility in connection with the matters referred to in your letter.

That is not dealing with the matter in the spirit of fairness that, I submit, this settler has a right to expect. On the 23rd of May this year, in answer to a letter from myself, I received the following communication—

Adverting to your letter of the 2nd instant in regard to the case of Mr. R. G. Marsh, I desire, by direction, to advise you that the matter has been further considered, but I can only refer you to my letter of 18th October last indicating that the case did not warrant payment of compensation, and to our letter of 2nd July, 1928, to Mr. Marsh, a copy of which is enclosed.

I would appreciate consideration being given to Mr. Marsh, which I consider the circumstances justify. There is a very remarkable silence on the part of the Ministers regarding this matter.

The Premier: I am not taking the slightest notice of it.

Mr. SAMPSON: Perhaps just a little.

The Premier: Not the slightest! This is the first time I have ever heard of an individual's grievance being brought up during the general discussion on the Budget.

Mr. SAMPSON: I think this is a very good opportunity.

The Premier: Undoubtedly there are other opportunities when it could be brought forward.

Mr. SAMPSON: If the Premier would prefer—

The Premier: I have not taken the slightest notice of your remarks; I do not propose to interfere at all.

Mr. SAMPSON: I regret it is not possible at this juncture to obtain favourable consideration, and perhaps at some later stage I may bring the matter up again. I feel that Mr. Marsh is justified in expecting consideration, because he has been deprived, at least partially, of rights he has enjoyed for a long time.

[Mr. Lambert took the Chair.]

MR. SLEEMAN (Fremantle) [10.45]: There are some matters to which I desire to refer. The unemployment difficulty has been in evidence and at Fremantle there are works that could be put in hand to relieve the position. I refer to works such as sewerage installation in the North-East Fremantle district. That has been held over for some considerable time. I suppose that instead of the work being put in hand



to relieve the unemployment difficulty at the worst time in the year, we may expect it to be put in hand at a time when it is easier for people to obtain work. In my opinion such undertakings should be started during the slack periods and not during the busy periods. I admit that those sewerage works represent a temporary measure of relief only, and I think we should turn our attention to schemes of a more permanent description. There are such undertakings as land settlement in the vacant areas in the Fremantle district. If efforts were made along those lines, I believe it would lead to the relief of distress in that district. Large portions of the Peel Estate and other areas more adjacent to Fremantle are lying idle. In the past we heard a lot about those areas being reserved, and being cut up into blocks so that men working on the wharf or in the wool stores would be able to take them up and go in for poultry raising and so on, thus enabling them to tide over the slack period. I believe something tangible could be done so that men engaged in seasonal occupations would have means by which they could keep going during the slack times. They would then be able to eke out a better existence for themselves and their families, and yet be available when their services were required in the busy periods. By such means practically hundreds of the men could be placed in a better position. That could be done on blocks at the Peel Estate and throughout the area between Hamilton Hill and the Peel Estate. Another matter that should receive attention is the payment by the Government of the pound for pound subsidy to local governing authorities. Had the Government adopted that scheme, I think it would have been of advantage to them, and to the workers. At the present time, even if some such scheme were adopted in the interests of married men, it would be of assistance to the Government because while the amount involved individually in providing sustenance for married people may not be great, it must amount to a large sum in the aggregate. I believe that if the Government had granted a pound for pound subsidy to local authorities to enable them to engage upon necessary works, the labour thus available would have absorbed the unemployed, and it would have been a cheaper proposition than providing them with sustenance. For every pound made available by

the Government the local authorities would have had to contribute a further pound, and the money so provided would have gone a long way towards relieving the unemployment problem. I hope that something will be done between now and next winter so that the people of the Fremantle district will have an opportunity to secure blocks of land close to Fremantle where they can establish themselves and develop home industries. Hon. members realise that it is necessary to have a lot of men employed on the Fremantle wharves so that they will be available at peak periods. During the slack periods, however, not 50 per cent. of them are able to make wages. Because of this, I think something of a permanent nature should be done to enable these people to have something to do during the slack periods when there is no work on the wharves or in the wool stores. A large number of men are required during the wool season, but immediately it is over they have to be put off. I hope that some steps will be taken to remedy the position and thus avoid the necessity of these people coming to the Government for sustenance. At the time when they are put off, there is no work available in the country districts, very little on the wharves, and none at all in the wool stores. If something permanent were done it would enable us largely to solve the unemployment problem. I believe that if a committee were appointed to go into the matter and seek to solve the problem and do something for the unfortunate people cast on the unemployed market for many months in the year, it would result in finding a way out of the difficulty. All the governments of the world seem to be at their wits' end to know what to do about unemployment. If we confess we are not able to cope with the problem, we should appoint some committee to go into the matter and evolve a scheme that would be of benefit to the country. There is also the immigration problem added to that of unemployment. While we have no jurisdiction over foreign immigration, we certainly have over British immigration. I admit that during the last 12 months there have been very few people coming out from England as migrants. But there have been quite a number of nominated passengers and many of those nominating them are not in a position to keep them on arrival, and so a number of the nominated passengers are cast on the Gov-

ernment, for support. We are also bringing out a large number of boys to various States of the Commonwealth, including Western Australia. It seems to me there is being made an organised attempt to bring them here, while nothing is being done for our own boys. It is harder to secure a position for a boy than for a man or a woman. I have here a copy of the "Sunday News" of London, dated the 14th July. In it I find this advertisement—

Australia.—100 Boys Wanted to sail on White Star s.s. "Vedic," 19th October, Salvation Army auspices. Enter for preliminary farm training in this country during August. Outfits provided. Assisted passages. Also 100 Young Women wanted for domestic service. Free passages. Work guaranteed. Boys and women also wanted for Canada. Write or call: Branch Manager, 3, Upper Thames-street, London, E.C. 4; 12, Pembroke-place, Liverpool; 203, Hope-street, Glasgow; or 5, Garfield Chambers, 44, Royal-avenue, Belfast.

In another paper I chanced upon exactly the same advertisement. It would be interesting to know whether the Salvation Army are paid anything to secure these boys for Australia. It is peculiar that they are advertising for boys to come from the Old Country to Australia, where there is practically no work for boys, and where our own boys cannot get positions. One of the cruellest sights in this State is to see the number of lads knocking about our cities with nothing to do and no hope of securing employment.

Mr. Sampson: Nor of learning a trade.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No, nor of learning a trade; because those avenues are full, and all the other avenues are not enough to employ our own boys. Yet we are bringing boys from England where, it seems, there is a shortage of juvenile labour. Here is a report I have taken from an English newspaper of May last.

Shortage of Youth. Fewer Juveniles available for Employment.—A warning is given by the London Advisory Council for Juvenile Employment respecting a shortage of juvenile labour which is beginning to overtake industry in and around London.

There is a danger, the council's fifth annual report states, that boys and girls may be worked for too long hours.

The shortage of youthful labour is due to the fall in the birth-rate during the war years. The council's report estimates that by 1932, without allowing for those who will continue whole-time education, the number of youths and girls available for industry will have fallen by 77,262 in the London area.

At the moment there is an unsatisfied demand for juveniles between the ages of 14 and 16 in several London districts, and the number of boys and girls employed at these ages is exceedingly small.

Excellent work continues to be done by the council. The young workpeople are visited at their places of employment, and their futures discussed with employers. Last year the officials paid 37,932 visits to employers in London.

Whilst we are advertising and doing all we can to bring boys to Australia, at the same time there is a shortage of juvenile workers in Great Britain. It is a most remarkable thing, but there it is in black and white. Then we come to our railways. Last year our railways showed quite a respectable deficit. I believe we should easily be able to return a better financial result than was shown last year. For instance, we are battling along with slow, cumbersome old trains on the suburban lines, and with first and second class compartments. Any day between 10 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. a person who purchases a first-class ticket, or a Parliamentarian travelling on his pass, can get a whole compartment to himself. It is bad policy on the part of the department to be running these heavy, lumbering trains day after day, month after month, and year after year between Perth, Midland Junction and Armadale. It is a costly business dragging these heavy old trains between those places. It is a pity that something cannot be done to speed up the trains and at the same time reduce the fares.

Mr. Sampson: It is time we had electric trains.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I agree. It would be a preferable and much cheaper form of transit. And while we are using these big, lumbering trains, the people are not patronising them, preferring the charabanc conveniences along the road.

Mr. Angelo: Who would travel by a train when he could get a bus?

Mr. SLEEMAN: That is what I am saying. But there is a way by which the Railway Department could get back the business they have lost to the buses, and that is by reducing fares and running lighter trains. It is better to carry 500 passengers at reduced fares than to carry 200 at full fares. Railway fares could well be reduced below those of the buses.

Mr. Angelo: Then there are the trams.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am not dealing with the trams just now. The position is that

people wishing to use the trains have to walk to the railway station and wait a long time for their train, and even when the train starts the passengers have to sit a long time before they reach Perth. They can do the journey much faster and more cheaply by motor bus. And every 3d., 6d. or 1s. saved by the workers of this country means a lot when they have to keep their wives and families on their present-day earnings. If the railway fares were reduced below those of the buses the department would get their trade back. And it would be economical for the department to cut off the first-class carriages. Why should that obsolete system be retained? When we travel by a bus we do not ask for a first-class or a second-class ticket. There is no distinction made, either in a bus or in a tram. If it is proper for a lady or a gentleman who would travel first-class on a train to ride on the same level as the rest of the people in a bus, there can be no reason for retaining the distinction on the suburban trains. If people can rub shoulders on tram and bus, there is no harm in their rubbing shoulders in a train. The best is always good enough for the poorest people in the land, and if we have decent second-class railway carriages provided, they should do for the whole of the population, whether rich or poor. I hope that in the near future we shall be able to give that a trial. There are other places in the world where only one class of railway ticket is issued, and if we find it satisfactory on the trams and in the buses, it should be satisfactory also on our suburban trains. Let us reduce the fares and run lighter and faster trains, and we shall get back some of the revenue we have lost to the buses. If we are not prepared to do that, I consider the time has arrived when we should nationalise buses. In South Australia the Government run buses on the roads in competition with the privately owned buses. If we do not run our trains for the convenience of the public, so that they can compete with the buses, the Government should put a line of buses on the road. While on the question of railways I wish to refer to the carriage of wheat. Quite a lot has been said about the carriage of different classes of goods. Wheat is carried at a fairly low rate and super is carried at what is certainly a low rate. The flour-milling people are building up an industry in this country but they are penalised, unduly I believe, be-

cause they are not granted a through rate from mill to port.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: They get 12½ per cent. rebate.

Mr. SLEEMAN: In the Eastern States they get a through rate right to the port. If that can be done in the Eastern States, it can be done here. Why should the milling industry bear the whole of the burden? Even if the granting of the through rate to millers involved a small increase of freight on the farmers' super, we should foster the flour-milling industry. Reference has been made to the fact that boys in this State are not being employed because of the fowness of our industries. There are very few flour mills running full time at present. The other day I was told by a responsible member of the Flour Mill Employees' Union that only one mill was running full time. In a country like Western Australia that should not be. It is much better to export flour than wheat. By exporting the flour we keep the offal here for the use of our dairy farmers and provide employment for our own people. It would be quite easy to reduce the rate on flour, even if we added a little to the freight on wheat or superphosphate.

Mr. Lindsay: Do not you think super as well as flour creates industry?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, but the farmer should not get the whole of the golden egg. If the farmer is going to get everything carried for nothing—

Mr. Lindsay: The farmer gets nothing carried for nothing.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Super is carried for next door to nothing. Experienced farmers have told me that it is not such a great boon to get super carried at the cheap rate. Some of them have told me that they never get theirs carried at the cheap rate because in their opinion it is better to get the super after the date for carrying at the cheap rate, so that they have it fresh on the ground when they want to use it. That is the opinion of some experienced farmers.

Mr. Teesdale: You will know a little about it in a couple of years' time.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Perhaps so.

Mr. Lindsay: All the super cannot be carried during the period of the cheap rate.

Mr. SLEEMAN: A great portion of it is carried during that period and it is carried at a rate that certainly does not pay the Railway Department. While the Railway Department are doing that for the

farmer, the mills are subjected to a certain disadvantage on account of not being able to get the through rate that applies in the Eastern States. The wheat buyers talk about patronising the railways and paying on the railways, but they are out all the time to get all they can. During this year the buyers of wheat tried to put one over the Government in the matter of demurrage. They are not satisfied with getting their wheat carried at a reasonable rate or with the farmers getting their super at a reasonable rate. One of the wheat buyers, Messrs. Dalgety & Co., wrote to the Chief Traffic Manager on the 16th February, 1929.

Mr. Lindsay: Was there any strike on at the time?

Mr. SLEEMAN. No, there has not been a strike for a long time. The letter read—

We regret to advise that owing to heavy rain yesterday, the wheat in trucks could not be handled after 2.30 p.m. Consequently there were a few trucks left under demurrage, and these with fresh arrivals up to 7 o'clock this morning totalled 66 on our account and 128 on account of Westralian Farmers. This morning it was impossible to get sufficient labour to discharge 50 per cent. of these trucks before noon, and although we handed over 66 trucks over to Bunge, we accepted a transfer of the 128 trucks belonging to Westralian Farmers, as we had agreed to take their wheat over the present week-end. They, however, endeavoured to secure labour, and were prepared to take over as many trucks as possible into shed in order to relieve the position, but it was impossible to obtain any labour apart from that required to load vessels in port.

I want to tell the people who wrote that letter that it contains a deliberate lie. On that date in Fremantle there were hundreds of men out of work. If labour had been required that day it could have been obtained, but they did not want it and they tried to put one over the Railway Department to save demurrage. No member will say that on the 15th February last there were no men in Fremantle to handle wheat.

Mr. Sampson: Were there men available who were accustomed to handling wheat?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes.

Mr. Lindsay: It is a strong statement to make that the letter contains a deliberate lie.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I am challenging the statement that there were no men available on that day. There were hundreds of unemployed anxiously waiting for work.

Mr. Sampson: Are you sure they could have done that particular class of work?

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, and they were anxious to get it.

Mr. Lindsay: It is a strong statement to make that they were telling a lie.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have made the statement and, if the hon. member wishes to challenge it, he can do so.

Mr. Lindsay: Prove your statement! Your word is no good.

Mr. SLEEMAN: My word is just as good as that of the hon. member, seeing that I was on the spot at the time and know what I am talking about. The only time the hon. member wished to go to Fremantle was when there was wheat there with whiskers on it. He got into trouble for going there, and he had no desire to go again. His party also "went crook" on him. On another occasion I invited the hon. member to see some wheat. It was supposed that wheat could not be topped up. The Minister for Agriculture told us tonight that wheat could not be topped up, but I showed the member for Toodyay some that had been topped—half of it was wheat and the bottom half was gravel.

Mr. Lindsay: That is not correct. You showed me sprouting wheat but I did not see any gravel.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Did not the hon. member see the gravel in the bag? Of course he did and said it was a mistake.

Mr. Lindsay: I did not see it.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The hon. member did and he knows that he did. He saw the wheat on the ship's deck. The lumpers called me over and showed me the bag, half wheat and half gravel. That is how wheat is topped up. But for the fact that that lot of wheat was being bulk-handled, it would have been successfully topped up and the purchasers would have been paying for wheat and getting gravel.

Mr. Sampson: Who sent that letter?

Mr. SLEEMAN: It is signed "A. Gilmour." On the day when it was signed there were hundreds of people in Fremantle who could have done the work. These firms say they want the railways to pay and, on the other hand, they require wheat and super to be carried free, and then put it over the railways to get their demurrage back.

Mr. Lindsay: Do you say they would ask for the demurrage back when there were

men out of work who could handle the wheat?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I know that if they put up a truthful and a reasonable case the Government would consider it, and always see that no one was imposed upon.

Mr. Lindsay: If there was a strike as the result of friction between the A.W.U. and the lumpers, do you think firms should be charged demurrage?

Mr. SLEEMAN: There was no strike at the time, and no industrial trouble in the State. I challenge Dalgety and Company to say there was no labour available in Fremantle if they had desired to get it.

Mr. Teesdale: How did you come by that Government letter?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I found it on the wharf.

Mr. Lindsay: It is a letter addressed to the Railway Department.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes, to the Chief Traffic Manager.

Mr. Lindsay: And yet you have it here.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I have a copy of it.

Mr. Lindsay: That is pretty hot.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The letter is hot. It is the hottest thing I have ever seen.

Mr. Lindsay: It is hot that a member should have a copy of that letter.

Mr. SLEEMAN: No employee of any Government department gave it to me.

Mr. Sampson: I suppose you found it on your table?

Mr. SLEEMAN: I found it on the wharf.

Mr. Teesdale: You will get another employee disgraced now.

Mr. SLEEMAN: There is no need for the hon. member to fret about that. I wish now to deal with the Traffic Act. When it was being put through I believe we all thought it was the last word in that type of legislation. We were told that the buses and taxis could not go off the road over which they were authorised to run, and the owners could not even take out their wives and families on a Sunday because of the restrictions imposed upon them. The department now admit that what was said on that occasion was not correct. We should take steps to see that all sections of the traffic get a fair deal. It was said that the buses could not leave their licensed routes. At the beginning of last December I introduced a deputation to the Minister for Police on behalf of the taxi people who plied for hire at

the Fremantle railway station. These taxi men stay on the stand, and have to make their living out of the fares which come along. The omnibus and other taxi owners have the run of the road to Perth and ply for hire there. These people, it is now found, travel here, there and everywhere off the licensed route, and even take passengers who rightly belong to the taxi owners who have the railway stand, and have to make their living there. Following upon the deputation, the Minister consulted with his officers, and sent me the following letter dated the 31st December:—

With reference to the deputation from the 'Taxi Owners' Association, which you introduced to me on the 10th inst. regarding taxi omnibuses leaving their route to engage in work as passenger vehicles, I have to state that a report was called for by me regarding the position, and it would appear that taxi omnibuses are passenger vehicles similar to ordinary taxi cars, and there is nothing to prohibit them carrying passengers or doing similar work to a vehicle that is licensed as a passenger vehicle only. In addition to being licensed as passenger vehicles, such omnibuses pay a seating fee, which authorises the owners of such vehicles to ply on a prescribed route as an omnibus, and provided that a regular service to the satisfaction of the local authority is maintained, then no offence would be committed if the owners of such taxi omnibuses undertook other work such as that mentioned at the deputation.

This means that people who are attempting to make a living on that particular stand can be cut out by the omnibuses and taxi owners, who are allowed to leave their licensed route, convey wedding parties to their destination, passengers to the steamers, and so forth. The living of the taxi people who have the stand is at stake. They cannot make a living in any other way. For many years they have paid their licenses to the Commissioner of Railways, and are prepared to stay on the stand so long as they get a fair deal. The traffic regulations should be altered to prevent others from competing with them. I hope the Minister will, during the session, do something to relieve the situation. These people are being starved out from their stand owing to the intrusion of the opposition element. Something should also be done with regard to motor-cycle number plates. These plates are generally fixed in front of the handle bars over the front wheel. I know of one case where, in an accident involving a motor cycle, an unfortunate young lady was practically cut

to pieces by the number plate. Some method should be devised for placing it in a less dangerous position. If there is an accident, the plate in its present position seems to act like a knife. It would be far less dangerous if it were fixed elsewhere. We should see that the community does not take more risk than is necessary. The time has arrived when no man should be given a driving license unless he has taken out a comprehensive policy. Some person may be implicated in a motor accident, and may knock into eternity the bread-winner of some family. The cause of the accident may be a man of straw, and the dependants of the deceased may have no way of recovering anything from him. It is not right that a motor vehicle should be licensed unless the owner takes out a comprehensive policy. If I had my way I would double the license fee on all motor vehicle drivers and would pay half of it to the hospitals to compensate them for the number of cases they have to deal with of persons who are injured as a result of motor accidents. If people are to be knocked about, motorists generally should contribute something towards the injuries sustained.

Mr. J. H. Smith: Why not have national insurance?

Mr. SLEEMAN: We seem to be a long way from that.

Mr. Panton: Wait until after the Federal elections.

Mr. SLEEMAN: If Mr. Scullin is returned to power, it will afford us the only chance we have of getting national insurance. If the member for Nelson is sincere in his remarks, he will support Mr. Scullin's party in order to bring that about. I would be very loth to hand to private insurance companies the work of issuing comprehensive policies, and allow them to have full sway in the event of the public being compelled to take out such policies. No doubt it would be a good thing for the companies, for once it was made compulsory to do this, they would raise the rates, and we know what kind of deal they would mete out to motorists. When this is brought in, it should be stipulated that the State Insurance Office should issue the policies. I know from experience that motorists get a rough deal when they go to private insurance companies. Just in passing I may refer to the sexual crimes committed all over Australia during the past few years. The time has come when something should be done to pre-

vent criminals from coming out of gaol and repeating their offences. Such people in many instances ought to be sterilised. Experience shows that they have returned to gaol for the same crime shortly after being released. They cannot always be blamed for their conduct, which is due to a disease that renders them irresponsible. If they were sterilised while in prison, it would be a guarantee against the repetition of their crimes upon release. This morning a select committee of which I am a member heard the evidence of a well-known medical practitioner to the effect that sterilisation prevented any repetition of the offence.

The Minister for Mines: Sterilisation would make such people ten times worse as regards committing the offence, though they could not perpetuate the species.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The doctor's evidence did not convey that to me.

Mr. Davy: I thought you were against capital punishment.

Mr. SLEEMAN: So I am.

The Premier: What you propose is worse.

Mr. SLEEMAN: The Premier and I must differ. However, it is only a matter of opinion. Now I come to the price of meat, which is worse than the price of bread, and the latter most of us believe to be higher than is warranted. However, the average householder spends more on meat than on bread. Near the country represented by the member for Roebourne, there is what is known as the pleuro line; and that line I believe to be partly responsible for the high price of meat. The despatch of cattle from one side of the line is prohibited; from the other side it is permitted. Yet there are, on the side supposed to be clean, quarantined stations.

Mr. Teesdale: They are all boxed up.

Mr. SLEEMAN: Yes; the cattle mix and intermingle, and are separated at musterings. It is in the opinion of many North-Westerns, a farce to continue the line. It would be an advantage if Wyndham products were given a better chance in the local market. There is an unreasoning prejudice against them. Some people will say, "We want fresh rather than frozen meat." However, I would try to popularise the Wyndham products. Our people now buy Queensland frozen meat at the price of fresh meat. For my part, frozen meat will always do me. When a Fremantle butcher tried to popularise Wyndham meat a couple of years ago, I bought it all the

time he stocked it. Consumers eat frozen meat every day without knowing it. On the voyage to London first-class passengers get frozen meat all the time, and praise the ship's diet very highly; but on land they will not look at frozen meat, insisting on fresh. I would severely penalise butchers who sell frozen at the price of fresh meat. Those who sell frozen meat should be compelled to state that it is frozen. It is just as good as any other meat in the world. It is supposed to be ticketed "frozen," but that is not done. I have here a letter addressed to the member for Cue, Mr. Chesson, and from it I quote the following:—

Kindly ask Mr. Drew how it is no Wyndham dripping is available in Perth. My friend McKenzie has been trying for months to get me some, without avail. The stores say it is not procurable, that it is all exported. I use it in the hot months instead of butter. It is a good substitute, and is the best dripping canned in Australia. Nearly all of the other canned dripping is more or less tallow. There is a screw loose somewhere when we cannot get products manufactured in our own State. I understand the meats are available, but not the dripping.

I confess I have not seen any Wyndham dripping down here, but I have noticed Wyndham tinned meat and meat extract. I have been told on good authority that a lot of the Wyndham meat extract is sent Home, there watered down and then sent back here for our consumers to buy. Surely it is better for our people to purchase their own local product rather than to have it sent to England to be watered down and returned to them in an inferior form. It reminds me of the wool that we send to other countries where it is mixed with a lot of rubbish. Then we buy it back in the form of cloth. People do that instead of patronising our local woollen mills at Albany! If they acted differently they would help to establish a secondary industry here and assist in keeping our young Australians employed. The suit I am wearing at present was made up from Albany tweed, and hon. members would be surprised at the trouble I had to get it. I had to wait for a fortnight to get the sample before I could decide on the cloth I would have made up. There are many factors influencing against the operations of the Albany Woollen Mills, but if anyone is fortunate enough to get his requirements there he will have tweed that is as good as the world's best. So it is with the Wyndham

products. I am told that quite half the tweed turned out by the Albany Woollen Mills has to be sent out of the State to be sold.

Mr. A. Wansbrough: More like 90 per cent.

Mr. SLEEMAN: I did not know the percentage was so high. If it is good enough for the people in the Eastern States to purchase Albany tweeds, surely it should be good enough for our own people. During the course of his speech on the Address-in-reply the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) went to great lengths to decry another of our State industries—the State Implement Works. He made many statements about that concern, and he spoke about a reaper-thresher that had been sent to Wyalkatchem where it was left for some time and after a while it was suggested to the member for the district that he should communicate with May Bros., who were said to have made the machine, regarding the defects. The information placed before the House by the member for Toodyay was not quite correct and there is an explanation for the incident. I made inquiries about that particular machine that was sent to Wyalkatchem as the hon. member indicated. It was not sent there as a product of the State Implement Works, but was a sample machine sent over to those works with a view to turning out a similar machine. When it reached there, the owners stipulated that it had to be horse-drawn. However, the people who wanted to demonstrate it desired to use it with a tractor. A certain period elapsed before those concerned could get in touch with the owners, and after their consent had been obtained it was fixed up so that the tractor could operate it. As a matter of fact the machine was made by Morrow & Morrow and not by May Bros. Then, again, the member for Toodyay said the farmers had lost hundreds of pounds worth of wheat through using locally manufactured implements, and asserted that the State Implement Works machines could not compare with those manufactured elsewhere. That statement is not correct, because the State Implement Works are turning out machines equal to those manufactured in any other part of the world. He also said that they had endeavoured to get the State Implement Works to turn out a

certain type of road grader and practically stated that the article delivered was such that it could not be used. It may surprise hon. members to learn that the State Implement Works actually export road graders. That proves that we can do work here just as well as it is done in any other part of Australia. The member for Toodyay and some of his colleagues got out of their way to deride the local works that we have in this State, but the fact remains that with most of the implements turned out at the State works no fault can be found. At one time difficulty was experienced in connection with the harvesters that were manufactured, and that gave the Implement Works a bad name and resulted in loss of sales. Nowadays most farmers will vouch for the statement that the State Implement Works plough is one of the best in Australia. Yet how many farmers patronise the State Implement Works and purchase their ploughs? There are very few who do so. If the farmers patronised the works for their ploughs alone, that undertaking would be flourishing instead of merely struggling for an existence. The works can turn out not only agricultural machinery that is well up to standard, but they are able to compete with the products of other parts of the world. Recently tenders were called for the construction of a dredge to be used in the Swan River reclamation work. Prices were received from all over the world, but the State Implement Works were the successful tenderers. The dredge has been built to specifications and was finished on the day stipulated. Everyone concerned in that work must be highly pleased with the results achieved. Next I come to the Fremantle harbour and the bridge, or bridges, that have to be constructed there. During the last few months the report of Mr. Rustat Blake, the British engineer who was sent out to report on the Stileman and other schemes, was received, and now everyone should be satisfied that the work should go ahead. There is no doubt that the extension of the Fremantle harbour is a matter of vital importance. The Harbour Trust Commissioners and everyone else in authority are of opinion that the work should be gone on with straight away. Even if we passed the necessary legislation that would enable a start to be made to-morrow, it would be quite three years before the bridges con-

templated could be completed, and probably five years before extra berths would be available in the Fremantle harbour. Of course one could be made available on the north side fairly quickly if the Government so desired, but it will be quite five years before the extra berthing accommodation contemplated will be ready for shipping. If the output of wool and wheat increases year by year as it has in the past, the Fremantle harbour will be most congested. I hope that during this session something will be done to authorise the commencement of the work. I presume it will be done bit by bit and for that reason a start should be made straight away. If we were to authorise the work this session, the Government could go ahead with the purchase of material and the preparations for the construction of the bridge. At present the existing traffic bridge is in such a condition that it is practically useless. If the big dredge that is moored near the bridge were to slip its moorings one night and strike one of the piles, I am afraid the traffic bridge would be in the same position as the railway bridge was some years ago when the flood water swept one span away. Another important matter that affects the Fremantle district is the question of hospitals. I am sorry that there does not seem to be any chance of legislation being passed this session to place our hospitals on a better basis. I regard this question as most urgent. Something must be done. At Fremantle the authorities are at their wits end to know what to do regarding the finances of the local hospital. Already they are about £1,500 behind, and I do not like to think what will happen if something concrete is not done very soon. It is quite possible that part of the institution will have to be closed down, and if that is done it will be a standing disgrace to the State that we are not prepared to provide for our hospitals. I believe that those institutions should be a first charge upon the Consolidated Revenue of the country. We must look after the sick whatever happens to the rest of the people. At the present time there seems to be no way of getting over the difficulty. I was thinking that perhaps the Treasurer could have got hold of some of that money earmarked for the sinking fund, and then we might possibly have got a small portion of it for the hospitals. But there seems to be no chance of



that. Something should be done, and if the Lotteries Bill were again introduced, perhaps fate would be kinder to it than it was last time. It is ridiculous to be sending out money to Eastern States lotteries and so keeping the Eastern States hospitals going. If we had any chance to prevent gambling as a whole, there might be a reasonable excuse for saying we should not have a lotteries Bill in this State. But we cannot prevent gambling, and whilst some people say such a Bill would mean a tax on one portion of the community alone, still that portion will have their little amusement, as they regard it, and it is better far that we should keep their money in the State for the help of our own hospitals than to have their money going out year after year, and our own hospitals starved. I trust something will be done for the hospitals during the session. I do not like to think of what will happen if something is not done. All our hospitals are in a bad way, not only those in the metropolitan area, but also those in the country. They are all hard-up for money. We should put our heads together and get something evolved to support our sick and needy. I hope the Minister for Health will bring down that lotteries Bill, because even if it failed to do all that is required to do for the hospitals, at all events it would materially help them. The Minister for Health is the most sympathetic Minister we have ever had in control of hospitals, and I can well imagine the worry he has with people approaching him day after day and month after month crying out for money with which to keep the hospitals going. If the Minister could see his way clear to bringing down a lotteries Bill, I am sure it would go through and would result in affording him quite a nice little revenue for hospitals. I will not keep the Committee any longer, but I do hope this question of hospitals will be gone into so that something may be done for our sick.

*[Mr. Panton took the Chair.]*

**MR. J. H. SMITH** (Nelson) [11.43]: Possibly this will be the last opportunity many of us will have to speak on the Estimates. This debate, perhaps, affords us our best chance for criticising the Government on the score of their misdeeds. I am not going very deeply into the question of

finance, for we have left it to our leader to show the glorious opportunities the present Treasurer has had as compared with what his predecessor had. On the figures submitted by the Leader of the Opposition we can leave the general public to decide between us and the Government next March. But I would not be doing my duty if I did not voice my opinion about the shortcoming of the present Administration. The Treasurer tells us he is going to have a surplus of revenue over expenditure of a little over £100,000. You, Sir, will remember the blunder made last year in estimating for a surplus. You will also remember that last year the Treasurer had an unexpended balance of £500,000 odd of the Commonwealth grant, which gave him a let-off of over £300,000. If that had been added to his deficit, where would he have been? Yet notwithstanding that unexpended money, we had unemployment right throughout the State.

The Premier: You are a perfect wizard at finance!

**MR. J. H. SMITH:** Now the Premier tells us he proposes to add that unexpended balance to this year's grant, and to spend a million and a quarter of money on roads this year. Are we to suppose that he intends to do what was done three years ago and rush helter-skelter in the first week in January hundreds of men to different parts of the State to be ready for the March elections? Has the Premier earmarked that amount of money with that end in view? Certainly there is a nigger in the woodpile somewhere. During the last 12 months his hands have been pretty full dealing with the unemployed problem, yet he has not explained the reason why all that money was left unexpended last year when people were crying out for bread in Perth and in the country districts. To-night when the member for Toodyay was speaking on main roads the Treasurer interjected that the road contractors would employ foreigners. But the Treasurer knows, and the party sitting on that side know, that the Main Roads Board contracts are let under A.W.U. conditions. And there is nothing in those conditions to prevent a foreigner from joining the union and so becoming privileged to work on the roads or elsewhere. Despite that, the Government, through the Minister for Mines, have brought down a Bill to prevent foreigners from working in the mines. In the Legislative Council the Chief Secre-

tary in answer to a question last night stated that over 1,400 foreigners were working in our mines. That would mean almost 50 per cent. of the men engaged in the mining industry. Then why all this camouflage? Why say we do not believe in foreigners? They make good unionists, and as such they contribute certain moneys to the political fighting fund of my friends opposite. Everybody belonging to that organisation contributes to the fighting fund of the party. Then why not take these foreigners as we find them and say, "Yes, you now belong to us, whether you were born in Australia or whether you have come from overseas. Dealing with the £400,000 lost by the railways last year, the Treasurer in his Budget speech proposed to make that up this year. How? Is he going to increase freights, or does he propose to do what is being done to-day in the supplying of Government sleepers? Does he propose to get Government sleepers cut at a price below award rates? The other night I was twitted about this, and I asked the Minister for Railways was it a fact that a week or so earlier the Government had bought 1,000 condemned sleepers from a non-naturalised alien. The Minister for Railways was quite candid about it and admitted that the Government had brought condemned sleepers cut by foreigners for 1s. per sleeper, which worked out at 26s. per load, and those sleepers were put into Government railways. Though it may be termed a business deal, it is not fair to the men who have been engaged in the sleeper industry for so many years. I have letters from people in my district requesting me to bring this matter forward. Why should not the Government pay the award rates? The award was delivered by Mr. Justice Higgins in 1920 and stipulated as the cutting rates £2 8s. 9d. and £2 6s. according to the size of the sleepers. In 1923 the Timber Workers' Union made an agreement with the Sawmillers' Association under which the rates were increased from £2 8s. 9d. to £2 10s. 6d. and from £2 6s. to £2 7s. 6d. Consequently the figures I quoted when dealing with the question of the Address-in-reply were 1s. 6d. to 1s. 7d. below the award rate. Yet the Government are asking men to engage in the industry for £3 15s. per load of jarrah sleepers and £4 7s. per load of wandoo sleepers on sidings. The award for wandoo sleepers is £3 5s. in native bush and £3 10s. in old bush.

Mr. Wilson: Where do you find that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: In the award.

Mr. Wilson: It is not in the award.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The rate offered by Controller of Stores at Midland Junction is £4 7s., which does not permit of the union cutting rate being paid. No wandoo sleepers were being cut when the award was delivered, but the rates agreed upon between the union and the employers were as I have mentioned.

Mr. Wilson: Why did not those men complain to the union?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The secretary of the Timber Workers' Union, Mr. McKenzie, is not worth his salt. It is the duty of the union organiser to see that the men are getting a fair deal.

Mr. Wilson: He is doing his job.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is not right that I should have to come to Parliament and champion the cause of the men.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr. McKenzie has nothing to do with these Estimates.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It was an interjection that led me to that subject. When men are paid to safeguard the interests of the timber workers, it should be their care to see that the award rates are paid. No Government, and least of all a Labour Government returned to power by the workers, should ask men to cut sleepers at less than the ruling rate.

Mr. Wilson: They do not.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: But the Controller of Stores will pay the lower rate and no more. The member for Collie knows the award rates as well as I do, and he also knows whether sleepers can be sold at £3 15s. per load on siding after payment of the insurance premium. When the Mitchell Government left office they were paying £4 5s. per load on sidings. The insurance then cost 2s. 6d. per load and just afterwards was increased to 3s. 9d. To-day, when the men have worse bush in which to operate and longer distances over which to cart the sleepers, the Government are offering £3 15s. or 10s. less, notwithstanding that the insurance rate has increased fourfold.

Mr. Wilson: What is the price of sleepers for export?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Surely the hon. member does not suggest that because the price

of export sleepers is down to £5 per load, the men in the industry should be sweated proportionately! I do not think he would suggest that for a moment.

Mr. Wilson: I would not.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The hon. knows that the award rate is not being paid by the Government. The last New Zealand order for sleepers was at the rate of £5 15s. per load ship's slings Bumbury, and the hon. member knows that the contractors are getting sleepers for less than £3 per load on trucks, due to the undercutting of prices by the foreign element. I have a letter in which the writer asks whether the men should be expected to accept 33s. 9d. per load cutting rate. The industry is in a deplorable condition and this is being aided and abetted to a great extent by the Government in sweating the workers. I wish to refer to the Forests Department. During the last few months there has been a dedication of a large forest area in the South-West, the details of which make very sorry reading indeed. The Premier in his Budget Speech, anticipated that the railways would be more profitable this year on account of the prospective buoyancy of the timber industry. The Premier is rather optimistic if he can see any prospect of buoyancy in the industry. If the Premier had made inquiries I feel confident he would have been informed that the outlook for the industry was never blacker than it is at present.

Mr. Clydesdale: What is the cause of that?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The cause seems to be world-wide. Timber is not now being used to the extent it was used in years gone by. One has only to walk down the streets of Perth to realise what an important part steel and concrete play in building construction nowadays.

Mr. Clydesdale: Is not that due to the cost of the timber?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It is not a paying industry. The hon. member could not point to anyone in the industry who is making money out of it at present. Perhaps that is due to the cost of production, but how are we to reduce that? In Melbourne a judge of the Arbitration Court dealt with a dispute in the timber industry. He said it was necessary to

reduce the cost of production, as the price of the commodity was too high for the competition it had to meet. Instead of giving the workers engaged in the industry a 44-hour week, he delivered his judgment in favour of a 48-hour week, and a strike has followed ever since. If I knew the reason for the present cost, I would be a wise man. I do not know where the Premier obtained his figures to induce him to refer to the buoyancy of the timber industry in Western Australia. The industry in the past has been a great thing for the State. Members generally realise what it has meant to the South-West, as a result of their perusal of the annual report issued by the Forests Department. We hear remarks made as to what the harvest means to the railways. Last year the freight paid to the railways exceeded that paid on wheat by over £10,000. The outlook to-day is very black. A great deal of this so-called timber country is now locked up for cultivation. The dairy-ing industry is making strides by leaps and bounds, and we are gradually whittling away the amount of money that is sent to the Eastern States for dairy products. The Leader of the Opposition said last night that whilst we were importing £2,000,000 worth of goods, we were exporting only one million pounds worth. This cannot go on. I believe the South-West will be an important factor in retaining capital within the State. But that cannot be done unless the Minister for Forests will reconsider his attitude in respect to the dedication to forestry of a large area of cultivable land. The country that has been so dedicated is capable of being turned into a thousand or more dairy farms, from which the State would derive great benefit. I would point out how impossible it is for the group settlers to make good under present conditions. They are well satisfied that they have received a fair deal in the matter of the writing down of the capital charges, but they have not received any more than is their just due. There has been a good deal of bungling going on ever since the present Government came into office. At the beginning of their career, Mr. Angwin told this Chamber he expected that at least 54 groups would go on to the Agricultural Bank almost immediately. He gave us figures which showed that the average cost per block was about £1,300. After five years we find these groups are not on the bank, and that some of the holdings have

increased in cost to approximately £4,000. The result of this was that Parliament gave the Government authority to appoint a revaluation board. Prior to that a group settlement board controlled the situation under the Minister. The revaluation board made valuations of 327 holdings. I have no fault to find with these valuations. The settlers are very active and are anxious to make good. They have prepared a scheme and submitted it to the Minister. They believe that, by means of this proposal, they could get round on their financial obligations. Part of the scheme is that they should start at once paying off the statutory mortgage and the interest on their holdings. A man having a capitalisation of a little over £1,000 on his holding, with a statutory mortgage of £350, would have to pay between £130 and £140 a year in interest and principal. The settlers claim they cannot, starting off scratch, do that. This means an outlay of nearly £3 a week, and they say it is impossible for them to live and pay that away. The most cows they have do not exceed 15, and many have not even half a dozen. Some have their pastures laid down, and yet have to work on the roads to make a living. These settlers have put up a proposition to the Government, through the Minister for Lands, and I will read it to members. It is dated 7th August, 1929, and is as follows:—

I beg to submit for your consideration and approval a scheme drawn up by my association for the liquidation of "Statutory mortgage account" over a period of five years, and "Capital account" over a period of 25 years.

The proposal of the Government is that the period should be 30 years for the capital account. The settlers ask that this should be reduced to 25 years, because they want to gain something in the beginning, and give something back at the end. The letter continues—

The matter of the repayment of statutory mortgage and interest on capital account has engaged the attention of my association for some time past. A special committee was formed to consider same, and report to the general meeting of members. The attached detailed scheme is the outcome of the committee's deliberations, and was approved at the general meeting on 7th July. We have stayed our hand

in forwarding same to you until such time as the Valuation Board made their recommendations. Now that same are in your hands, I am instructed by resolution carried at a meeting held on the 4th inst. to submit same to you. You will note that in our scheme we propose liquidating the stock and implement account within the prescribed five years—except that in our scheme the five years is to date from the time of taking over of holding. We note that the board is of the opinion that it may be necessary to extend considerably the term of repayment on this account. We are opposed to extension; any extension would be against our interests. It is our desire to lift this mortgage at the earliest possible moment. We are aware that the bank would still retain their lien, by way of further security, over livestock, chattels, etc., so far as same have been supplied by the Department of Lands and Surveys, and this aspect has been duly considered. In the matter of "Capital Account," you will note that our scheme provides for "interest free" for a period of three years, and graduated interest for a further period of three years, reaching 6½ per cent. in the seventh year; also our scheme provides for the maximum interest charge to be 6½ per cent. You will note also that our scheme provides for the commencement of principal repayments in the sixth year, instead of the 11th year, and the final payment in 25 years instead of 30 years. In asking for the "interest free" period, we suggest that we are supported by the board's recommendations. The values placed on the holdings by the board, are the values of the holdings 3 years hence, the values having been arrived at with regard to the prospective income derivable from the holding, and the board, for given reasons, estimate a period of three years to attain full productivity. In this we entirely agree, and we suggest that a free of interest period is fully warranted, with a graduated interest period for a further three years. The figures, "Statutory mortgage, £300," and "Capital account, £1,000," are used merely as a basis to work on, and any lesser or greater amounts would work out proportionately. We desire to mention that the values placed on the holdings by the board appear to be quite fair, and provided our scheme is approved, we consider we should have every chance of making good. We submit this scheme after considerable consideration, and in all sincerity. Trusting it will be approved, Yours faithfully, D. Hale, Secretary Nelson District Group Settlers' Association.

The Group Settlers' Association in the Nelson electorate, comprises practically every group settler in the area. Here are the figures submitted by the association—

**SCHEME TO LIQUIDATE STATUTORY MORTGAGE OVER A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS,  
AND CAPITAL ACCOUNT OVER A PERIOD OF 25 YEARS.**

Capital Account to be free of Interest for a period of 3 years, 4th year Interest at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., 5th year  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., 6th year  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., 7th year and thereafter  $6\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. In the 6th year and thereafter 1/20th of Principal on Capital Account to be met per annum,

Figures hereunder are based on Statutory Mortgage £300 and Capital Account £1,000.

Years after taking over at valuation.	Statutory Mortgage—£300.	Capital Account—£1,000.	Total Annual Payments.
First year ...	<div> <div>£ s. d.</div> <div>Interest 7 per cent. ... 21 0 0</div> <div>Principal ... 60 0 0</div> <div>£81 0 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>£ s. d.</div> <div>Interest free</div> </div>	<div> <div>£ s. d.</div> <div>81 0 0</div> </div>
Second year ...	<div> <div>Principal—£240.</div> <div>Interest 7 per cent. ... 16 16 0</div> <div>Principal ... 60 0 0</div> <div>76 16 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>Interest free</div> </div>	<div> <div>76 16 0</div> </div>
Third year ...	<div> <div>Principal—£180.</div> <div>Interest 7 per cent. ... 12 12 0</div> <div>Principal ... 60 0 0</div> <div>72 12 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>Interest free</div> </div>	<div> <div>72 12 0</div> </div>
Fourth year ...	<div> <div>Principal—£120.</div> <div>Interest 7 per cent. ... 8 8 0</div> <div>Principal ... 60 0 0</div> <div>68 8 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>£1,000 at <math>3\frac{1}{2}</math> per cent.... 35 0 0</div> <div>35 0 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>103 8 0</div> </div>
Fifth year ...	<div> <div>Principal—£60.</div> <div>Interest 7 per cent. ... 4 4 0</div> <div>Principal ... 60 0 0</div> <div>64 4 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>£1,000 at <math>4\frac{1}{2}</math> per cent. 45 0 0</div> <div>45 0 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>109 4 0</div> </div>
Sixth year ...	<div> <div>Principal—Nil.</div> <div>Nil.</div> </div>	<div> <div>£1,000 at <math>5\frac{1}{2}</math> per cent. ... 55 0 0</div> <div>1/20 of Principal ... 60 0 0</div> </div>	<div> <div>105 0 0</div> </div>

**ANNUAL REPAYMENTS OVER THE PERIOD OF 25 YEARS.**

	Statutory Mortgage:		Capital Account:	
	Interest.	Principal.	Interest.	Principal.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1st year ...	21 0 0	60 0 0	Nil	Nil
2nd "	16 16 0	60 0 0	Nil	Nil
3rd "	12 12 0	60 0 0	Nil	Nil
4th "	8 8 0	60 0 0	35 0 0	Nil
5th "	4 4 0	60 0 0	45 0 0	Nil
6th "	Nil	Nil	55 0 0	50 0 0
7th "	"	"	61 15 0	50 0 0
8th "	"	"	58 10 0	50 0 0
9th "	"	"	55 5 0	50 0 0
10th "	"	"	52 0 0	50 0 0
11th "	"	"	48 15 0	50 0 0
12th "	"	"	45 10 0	50 0 0
13th "	"	"	42 5 0	50 0 0
14th "	"	"	39 0 0	50 0 0
15th "	"	"	35 15 0	50 0 0
16th "	"	"	32 10 0	50 0 0
17th "	"	"	29 5 0	50 0 0
18th "	"	"	26 0 0	50 0 0
19th "	"	"	22 15 0	50 0 0
20th "	"	"	19 10 0	50 0 0
21st "	"	"	16 5 0	50 0 0
22nd "	"	"	13 0 0	50 0 0
23rd "	"	"	9 15 0	50 0 0
24th "	"	"	6 10 0	50 0 0
25th "	"	"	3 5 0	50 0 0
	£83 0 0	£800 0 0	£752 10 0	£1,000 0 0

So the scheme works down, until after the lapse of 25 years the settler will have paid off the whole of his liability. I commend the proposal to the Minister for Lands in all sincerity. Presumably the Premier is aware that numbers of these settlers have large families. Their problem is how to place their sons; indeed, that is a question with all South-Western residents. The sons are all crying out for land. Is the land to be locked up for all time on behalf of the Forests Department, or will the Premier reconsider his decision and open up that country? Does the hon. gentleman want future generations of Western Australians to become nothing but hewers of wood and drawers of water? We should give the sons of the soil a chance to go on the land.

Mr. Clydesdale: But if it is necessary to write off three parts of the expenditure it is a pretty rotten proposition.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Who is to blame for that necessary writing off? The Minister for Lands admitted that 25 per cent. of the writing-off was due to overhead and administrative charges. The former Minister for Lands, before proceeding to the Old Country, stated that the settlers were prepared to go on their own. Yet the old conditions still exist, and expenses continue at the old rate. The member for Canning, who interjected just now, saw what was going on; but he made no effort to prevent further losses. The previous Government established the groups, spending only five millions in the process. The present Government have spent six millions under similar conditions. The sons of South-Western pioneers and settlers should be allowed to settle on good land under ordinary homestead farm conditions. I feel justified in asking for that. South-Western people are long-suffering.

The Premier: We are long-suffering people here, too.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: This is the last opportunity many of us will have of discussing Estimates.

The Premier: It will be, if I can bring about that very desirable end.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We know all about that.

The Premier: This balderdash will not do in March next.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I don't know that it will not!

The Premier: They are more intelligent than that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I think it will do very well.

The Premier: They are not so stupid as that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: All I know is that I am making new friends every day, even amongst the Premier's supposedly loyal supporters. When I point out to them what the Government have been doing regarding the employment of alien labour in the forests, how they have been allowing sleepers to be cut at rates that are below those set out in the award, thus scabbing on the men who put the Government in power, then they say, "That will do us. Goodbye Collier and his crowd." Yet the Premier says he will come down to my electorate and endeavour to defeat me!

The Premier: You begged me last time to stay away from your electorate.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Perhaps I had some reason for it, although I do not know that I have ever begged the Premier to do anything. I do not know that I begged him to open the Bridgetown show, although we were delighted to have him with us. But when he threatens me, I will not stand for it.

The Premier: You have been threatening all night.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: We want some railways. I wish I had half the influence with the Premier that the member for Canning (Mr. Clydesdale) disclosed when he got his tramways authorised. I know it was not the present Premier who authorised that work, but still we know how that hon. member can get things done. When the Premier was in Bridgetown, he received a deputation and the railway proposition was discussed with him. The Premier said, "Yes, go away home and rest contented. My Government will build your railway!" So far nothing has been done, and I am afraid the Premier will have to hurry up if he intends to do anything. I am waiting for the Loan Estimates to come before us to see if he has any intention of keeping his word. If the work is not put in hand before March, the present Government will not be in a position to do it.

Mr. Clydesdale: You are an optimist.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The people of my electorate are greatly disappointed. Re-

cently the Minister for Education visited that part of the State and was astonished at what he saw. He admitted that he had never seen such country elsewhere. He looked at the fields covered with clover and expressed his admiration in no uncertain terms. The member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) was also present and said that he could hardly realise that it was the same country he had visited a few months earlier. The Minister for Lands visited the district and spoke in the same strain. He told the people that if he were a young man he would desire no better lot than to be able to go to the district and make a home there for himself. Despite these assurances by Ministers, nothing has yet been done in connection with the railway. Then there were the Minister for Agriculture and the Director of Agriculture. They went down and told us that they had no idea such country existed in the State. Despite that, we have the Premier adopting an attitude at variance with the views of Ministers in that, if he had his way, he would lock up the whole of that beautiful country for the purpose of growing trees. When I referred to that phase some time ago, the Premier interjected in a rude manner, "Your trouble is that the trees have not got votes." The Premier anticipates that he will have a surplus of £100,000. He told the Committee that the operations of the railways will be payable and that there is buoyancy in the timber industry. He forgot to tell the Committee that there is an enormous shortage in the forest revenue.

The Premier: How many millions?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: To be correct, I think it is about £40,000.

The Premier: I thought you would have made it millions.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Although there is that shortage in the forests revenue on account of royalties, the Premier proposes, at the instance of the Conservator of Forests, to put an army of men in the timber country on work there. Some three million acres are to be dedicated for forestry purposes. Terraces of houses are being built in Great Britain to-day and not one inch of timber is being used in them. In Western Australia buildings are being constructed of steel and concrete. Despite that tendency in the building trade, the Government intend to lock up 3,000,000 acres of good country in the South-West. Why? Some time ago the Empire Forestry Delegation

visited Western Australia. When they saw our forests they said to the Government, "You have a splendid heritage here for all time to keep and maintain." But at what cost! People from the Eastern States viewed our forests and said in effect, "We have scrapped our useless timber and have gone in for agriculture. We have laid down something for all time. You people have the timber; we have agriculture. We do not want you to go in for the dairying industry. Never mind about your agriculture; you people here are keeping us going. You send us nearly £2,000,000 every year for the purchase of our products. You keep your forests and send us your money. We are satisfied. We have the people and a stable industry. You have your timber and vacant spaces." That is what the Government's policy means to this country. I feel like going on for a long time in discussing the present position. I should like to read the award delivered by Mr. Justice Higgins in 1920 in connection with the timber industry.

Mr. Maley: For God's sake, don't do that.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: It may be of interest to the Premier as Minister for Forests, and to the member for Forrest also. I should like to read a few personal letters from those fellows employing foreign labour in cutting sleepers for the Government to-day. However, I do not see that any good purpose would be served by it. I notice that my friend has come back from Xantippe. I had the pleasure of seeing some of his collections there.

Mr. Lindsay: Xantippe is in my electorate.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Is it? Well, all they seem to be able to grow up there is sandalwood. My friend thought sandalwood would be very good to recommend to the Minister for Forests for locking up the country. I suggest that the Minister, instead of concentrating on the jarrah country, should go up to Xantippe and lock up a lot of that country for sandalwood. I am convinced that would be in the best interests of the country. I believe the Government are very ill-advised in building railway after railway pell-mell. All that is necessary is for a deputation to come along to the Government, saying there is somewhere a beautiful patch of country 40 or 50 miles from a railway. The answer is, "All right. We have the 3,500 farms scheme, and we have to do something be-

fore the next general election to show that we are sincere in our agricultural policy." Then away go the surveyors 50 or 60 miles out, and the railway is built, perhaps without the authority of Parliament. Yet railways recommended by the Advisory Board years ago are neglected. I want to sound a note of warning in regard to the dry areas. We have heard a lot about group settlement, and I am satisfied that for every penny expended there the State will be repaid one hundredfold.

Mr. Clydesdale: You are not.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Every penny spent on group settlement will be repaid one hundredfold in the years to come because such a thing as a bad season in the South-West has never been known. We have had good seasons continuously down there, and sometimes we get better ones. But in regard to the 3,500 farms scheme, what are the Government doing to-day? They are tearing out right through Forrestania without any possibility of railways being built, without any water schemes, in fact, without any roads. Men go out in that dry area selecting land. What do they expect?

Mr. Maley: They expect to do well for themselves, of course.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: If my amiable friend could get out in that dry area for a month or two it would do him the world of good.

Mr. Clydesdale: You ought to go with him. He would be lost on his own.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not think it fair that people should be allowed to go out with a promise of a railway when the Government know that on account of unfinancial stringency there is no prospect of the railway being built. What is going to be the result? The Agricultural Bank are making advances day by day, and a good deal of clearing has been done under Agricultural Bank conditions. Men will come in and leave those holdings, because there are no roads and so they cannot afford to grow anything. Then in a year or two the country will be overgrown and worse than it was originally. There is no possibility of there ever being a come-back on that, and so I want to warn the Government to be very careful in that regard. Would the Premier like me to enlighten the Committee as to what is taking place at Pemberton to-day in consequence of the unemployed problem?

The Premier: I would not ask you to do the impossible.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: The Premier is trying to evade the subject, because while he can get these men out there in Pemberton and other country districts, it takes a load off his shoulders. But those men are there seeking for work and begging bread. "What sort of a Government is this?" they ask. "God bless us, cannot a man get a job anywhere? Give us back Mitchell, for when the Mitchell Government were in, there was not a man out of work anywhere." One of the principal planks in the Labour Party's platform is the right to work. But what right to work can a man have when there is no work for him to do? The men at Pemberton have been there for months waiting for their job to start. They are camped on the job. What do we find? Men are being sent down from Perth every day. Three chaps came to me at Bridgetown the other day asking for work. I told them they might have a chance at Pemberton, but they said they had just left there, and that hundreds of men there were camped on the job. That is what is happening in country districts. It is not so marked in Perth, because in Perth there is a possibility of a man meeting some good Samaritan who will give him at least a meal. Of course, that does not apply to the independent man who prefers to tramp the roads rather than ask for charity in Perth.

Mr. Clydesdale: What are the conditions in the other States?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I do not know.

Mr. Clydesdale: And you don't want to know.

Mr. J. H. SMITH: Sufficient to the day is the evil thereof. That is always my cry. Why should we worry about the Eastern States? What is the position in the Eastern States? What was the position when the Commonwealth Government gave us over half a million of money to expend on public works last year?

Mr. Clydesdale: What did they take from us?

Mr. J. H. SMITH: And that money was placed in a trust account and the Government did not spend it. I cannot understand why my friend, supposed to be a champion of the unemployed, sits behind a Government that would allow that sort of thing to occur. If he did not care to appear disloyal in the matter, why did he not go to the party meeting and there lay it before the Premier and say, "Now look,



there are thousands of men seeking work, and you have half a million of Commonwealth money to spend on public works. Why not use it for finding employment for those people?" When no one would take up the cudgels for the unemployed and the poor beggars held a demonstration in Perth to prove to the people that they were unemployed, the men were hunted away by the police. I feel that I have done my duty by bringing these matters forward. I believe the member for Avon is keen to discuss various matters, and I believe he will be capable of keeping the debate going for a couple of hours. We have been shirking our duty by going home at 6 o'clock on some evenings, and I consider it our duty to clean up the general debate on the Estimates before the present sitting closes.

This concluded the general debate. Votes and items were discussed as follows:—

*Votes—Legislative Council, £1,814; Legislative Assembly, £2,939; Joint House Committee, £4,988; Joint Printing Committee, £1,851; Joint Library Committee, £375—agreed to.*

*Vote—Premier's Department, £13,955:*

Mr. DAVY: There are one or two items that might be of importance and might be criticised if members were present.

The Premier: If members had been reasonable, they would have had plenty of time.

Mr. DAVY: The Premier cannot complain of the business having been held up.

The CHAIRMAN: That is not the question. The hon. member must discuss the Premier's Department.

Mr. DAVY: I do not wish to create a discussion, but I submit it is hardly fair to ask us to deal with items at this hour of the morning.

The Premier: These are small departments on which there has never been any discussion. They cover mainly the salaries of officers.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. member wish to discuss an item?

Mr. DAVY: Yes.

Item, Travelling concessions to members of Parliament and life pass holders: £3,000:

Mr. DAVY: The item shows an increase of £277. The increase might be entirely justified, but members are entitled to an explanation.

Mr. Angelo: It is the same amount as was voted last year, but a saving of £277 was made last year.

Mr. DAVY: That does not matter; it is an increase of £277 on last year's expenditure. The time has arrived when we might reasonably ask the Premier to report progress.

The Premier: We ought to go on a little longer.

Mr. DAVY: I should like to hear an explanation of the increase.

The PREMIER: The amount is purely an estimate. It was considered last year that £3,000 would be required, but we got through with something less. The amount is a varying one, depending as it does on the amount of travelling done by members. The item covers an amount for the Commonwealth and Eastern States railways, and in some years members travel more than in other years. It is expected that £3,000 will be required this year.

Item, Ministerial and Parliamentary visits and State ceremonials (not including departmental visits) £1,700:

Mr. DAVY: Will the Premier explain how he expects to keep this item down by £109 on the expenditure of last year.

The PREMIER: The same explanation covers that. The vote last year was the same, but the expenditure was £109 more.

Item, State Gardens Board, grant for maintenance and improvements, public gardens, foreshores, Crawley, etc., £2,100:

Mr. NORTH: Does this item include any amount for dealing with White City?

The PREMIER: No, but White City will be included in future because it is now controlled by the State Gardens Board, and any expenditure on White City will come out of this amount.

Mr. DAVY: Has any account been taken of the possibility of White City being used for a parking area or has that project been abandoned?

The PREMIER: White City is under the control of the State Gardens Board and not under the direct control of the Government. Many suggestions have been made, but I cannot say what will be done with that portion of the Esplanade. It may be made a source of revenue perhaps by using it for tennis courts. Personally I do not think it would be suit-

able for use as a parking area, especially as we have motors parked on either side of the road on which White City abuts. It would be much better, and more in keeping with the surroundings, if we were to use it for some kind of recreation, perhaps lawn tennis or some other game. No decision has yet been arrived at.

Item, Empire Forestry Conference, £130:

Mr. J. H. SMITH: I see that the expenditure on this account has been £229, and that another £130 still remains to be spent. What is the reason for that?

The PREMIER: This was for expenditure in connection with the Empire Forestry Conference that visited the State last year. Between 40 and 50 members were involved, and they remained in the State for eight or nine days, during which they travelled fairly extensively. The £130 is for the balance of the expenditure that was incurred last year.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Governor's Establishment, £2,440; Executive Council, £5—agreed to.*

*Vote—London Agency, £12,489:*

Mr. DAVY: What is the reason for the appointment of an indent officer at a salary of £600 a year?

The Premier: He is not a new officer. He was there last year.

Mr. DAVY: He is not mentioned in last year's expenditure. If he is not a new officer he must have been an honorary one last year.

The Premier: He is recorded as being an officer last year.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Public Service Commissioner, £1,526—agreed to.*

*Vote—Government Motor Car Service, £6,561:*

Item, Purchase of Cars, £500:

Mr. SLEEMAN: Who decides what make or style of car shall be purchased when the Government require motor vehicles?

The PREMIER: Nearly every make of car on the road is represented in the fleet owned by Government departments. The great majority of our motor vehicles are of the cheaper kind, ranging in price up to £240 and £250.

Mr. Sleeman: What about the British cars?

The PREMIER: It is admitted that the low-priced British car is not suitable for Australia. To get a British car that is suitable for our conditions it is necessary to pay up to about £600, at which price it is possible to get a car equal to anything else on the road.

Mr. Coverley: Is it not more economical to buy the better car?

The PREMIER: No, because of the class of roads over which they have to travel. When it is possible to work with a British car, we do so. Up till quite recently Great Britain had not put on the market a cheap road car that was suitable for Australian conditions. Because of that fact, a party of British manufacturers visited Australia last year to ascertain at first hand the conditions, so that they might lay themselves out to meet the requirements of the market. One reason why the British car has not been suitable is because of the horse power. The horse power is all very well in England, where the country is fairly level, and the roads are of the billiard-table variety. A high-powered car is not necessary there. In this State much of the work for which a car is required is done in the country districts on roads that are not exactly good. We therefore require a vehicle of greater horse power. The reduced horse power in the case of British cars is due to the system of taxation in Great Britain, based, as it is, upon the horse power. Manufacturers, therefore, keep down the horse power, for the most part to about 15. Cars are built in that way in order to escape the higher taxation, because it is calculated on the basis of so much per horse power. Engines of that power will not do the work required in this country. When we have to deal with the better type of British car, the position is different. It is expected that, as a result of the visit of British manufacturers last year, a light British car that is suitable for the Australian market will shortly be available. I believe that a few of these arrived recently. No doubt they will meet Australian requirements. Manufacturers in England realise the importance of catering for the Australian market. An enormous sum of money goes out of the Commonwealth every year for motor cars, and America has had almost the whole of it. Knowing the market that exists in Australia, I believe the manufacturers intend to specialise in order to meet its requirements. There is a car

known as the Morris-Cowley. It is a cheap car, and I found when in England that it was the most popular light car in that country. It is not only cheap but light, effective, and suitable for the conditions. It was not found very suitable here, at all events with regard to the first shipments that arrived. It did not track.

Mr. Davy: That is not the position now.

The PREMIER: I believe we still have not received the latest Morris-Cowley that will suit our conditions in the matter of horse power.

Mr. DAVY: I am no more of an expert in motor cars than is the Premier, but I know there are at least two views on the subject. There are many persons who know something about the matter, and are prepared to assert very strongly that there are English motor cars every bit as suitable for Western Australian conditions as any American cars, and they are cheap ones too. I do not desire to advertise any particular brand of car. From all I have heard, I know of no reason why every penny the Western Australian Government propose to spend on motor cars should not be spent on cars manufactured in Britain, if they cannot be manufactured in Australia. At present, I think, the Government own not a single motor car or motor truck or motor vehicle that has not been made in America.

The Premier: Yes, we do; several; a good many.

Mr. DAVY: A very small proportion of the total number. I know a station owner who in hard, rugged country remote from Perth uses only Morris cars and trucks, costing approximately the same as Chevrolets or Fords. Governments are not deterred by a difference of £10 or £20.

The Premier: No; but if you come to a difference of £100—

Mr. DAVY: The difference is not £100. It is only in the middle rank of motor vehicle, the semi-swell car, that at present the value of money is in favour of American makes. The Government could reasonably afford to buy English cars, and thereby would get just as good, if not better, value for money as by buying American makes.

Mr. LAMBERT: A good many years ago I urged the Government then in office to inquire carefully into the purchase of motor cars, and also of motor trucks. It is an outrage that the various departments should be allowed to buy different brands of motor trucks, the parts of which are not inter-

changeable. The Government should concentrate upon not only a standardised car but also a standardised truck. Then the parts would be interchangeable, with a consequent saving of about £25,000 annually. It is a stupid sort of departmental head that allows the State to buy all kinds of motor cars and motor trucks. I hope the advice I tendered to the Government of a decade ago will now be accepted. If the Government had an officer to advise them, they could be directed as to the best class of car or truck to buy. Even if it cost a little more, preference should be given to British products. Under the existing conditions, the Government use utility trucks and motor cars of various types and makes, and operate them all over the State. If the Government are unable to secure English vehicles and are forced to buy American products, they should be standardised and the parts made interchangeable, thus saving money on account of renewals and upkeep.

Mr. Lamond: But what about the difficulties involved in the rapid changes of models?

Mr. LAMBERT: If the Government were to approach, for instance, the Morris Company in England, that company could be told that the Government required so many cars and trucks per year and ask the company to guarantee, in the event of the Government purchasing their cars and trucks, the interchangeability of parts. The present haphazard, happy-go-lucky method of purchasing is not in the interests of the State.

Mr. LINDSAY: I would not have spoken had it not been for a statement made by the Premier regarding English cars.

The Premier: I do not profess to know anything about cars myself.

Mr. LINDSAY: I can say that what the Premier said was incorrect, and can say so from my own practical experience. I have driven English cars for some years, not high-priced cars either.

The Premier: I suppose 95 per cent. of our cars are bought at from £200 to £230 each.

Mr. LINDSAY: A good deal has been said about Morris cars; mine is an Austin, and could be bought at about £300 to-day.

The Premier: We do not pay £300 for our cars.

Mr. LINDSAY: When the Premier says that the English cars cannot be driven over the hills because of the gears, I disagree with him. I have driven over all the

hills in the vicinity of Perth and in most of the country districts and I have not experienced any difficulty at all. Although the price of the English cars may be a little more, that is more than compensated for in the extra life of the machine compared with the American article. I think the Government would act wisely if they purchased more English motors.

Mr. DAVY: I do not wish to labour the point, but I think that if the Premier caused to be consulted men who had a complete knowledge of modern motor vehicles imported into Western Australia, he would come to the conclusion that there are no bad modern cars. The English cars are just as good as the American cars, if not better. We can get at least equal value for the same money, but I think it would be a very proper thing if the Government of Western Australia decided they would buy none but British motor vehicles. Until we can make them in Australia we should purchase our requirements from Great Britain. The Government will not stop at an extra £10 or £20, even though the extra life of the British car might not be regarded as altogether sufficient compensation.

Vote put and passed.

*Votes—Printing, £76,135; Tourist Bureau, £2,121—agreed to.*

*Vote—Literary and Scientific Grants, etc., £11,217:*

Item—Royal Society, £100:

Mr. Sleeman: What is the Royal Society?

The PREMIER: The society is one of the oldest-established bodies and exists in practically every part of the British Empire. It comprises scientists, professors, engineers and men in that category. They investigate scientific matters and their work is of value to the State. I think they are doing a very great deal for our knowledge of science and its possibilities.

Item—Anthropological research, £24:

Mr. Davy: Will the Premier tell us something about this item?

The PREMIER: It is a small grant of assistance to Dr. Whittington's expedition to the North-West to study the primitive life and customs of the aborigines. Dr. Whittington's company consists of highly trained men from the Old Country.

Vote put and passed.

*Vote—Centenary Celebrations, £15,085:*

Mr. ANGELO: I understand the Government have given some £20,000 in all for the centenary celebrations, and that a committee has been appointed to disburse that amount.

The Premier: Not to disburse it.

Mr. ANGELO: Well, to see to the spending of it. But with the exception of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition, there is on that committee no member representing the country.

The Premier: Yes, the Leader of the Country Party is on it.

Mr. Lambert: He does not represent the country.

Mr. ANGELO: I have been told he was not on it. The point I want to make is this: The amount comes out of general revenue, and so is contributed by the taxpayers of the whole State. Yet all this money is being spent in the metropolitan area. There are other parts of Western Australia on the map, and the people resident in those parts are just as anxious to celebrate the centenary as are the people of the metropolitan area. The Premier should tell the special committee to distribute portion of the sum in districts beyond the metropolitan area, districts too far distant from the centre for the local residents to come in to the celebrations. Surely the pioneers who have gone outback should be remembered in this regard.

Mr. LAMBERT: I, like the hon. member, consider that instead of allowing the country districts to scratch for themselves and provide the money necessary for their centenary celebrations, some little recognition should be given to them. Why should all the expenditure be centralised in the metropolitan area, where there are powerful societies and associations that can well afford to contribute to the cost of the celebrations? One would think we had an overflowing Treasury, and that the Treasurer had nothing to do but look for avenues of expenditure.

Mr. Angelo: I do not say the sum is too big.

Mr. LAMBERT: Of course not. If it were twice as much you would not think it too big. But I imagine that the expenditure of £15,000 on something useful and permanent would be better than entertaining with it the over-entertained population

of the metropolitan area. However, I do not know that complaining about it will do any good.

The Premier: Except that it will serve as a guide when the next centenary comes around.

Mr. LAMBERT: It is to be hoped the Treasurer in making this money available will remember some of those outback places that a few of us represent in Parliament. In little places like Coolgardie and Southern Cross it would be very nice as a tribute to the prospectors, such as Paddy Hannan, who did so much for Western Australia, if a couple of hundred pounds could be allocated against the cost of the local centenary celebrations.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It surprised me to hear from the member for Gascoyne that very little of this money has been spent in the country districts. I was under the impression that assistance was being given to a lot of the celebrations in the country. I join in the general protest against the whole of this money having been spent in the metropolitan area.

Mr. TEESDALE: I do not know that preceding speakers have made out much of a case for their districts. Most of them have railway communication and boast of picture shows, but the children of the North-West will not know anything about the centenary.

The Premier: If they are at school, they will.

Mr. TEESDALE: The children of the North-West have a pretty bad time, particularly those of Roebourne.

The Premier: They will know that it is the centenary because it has been celebrated in all the schools.

Mr. TEESDALE: We have no newspaper up there, and I do not think more than three "West Australians" are taken in that town, the number being limited by the aerial service on account of the weight. So the people of Roebourne are not in touch with what is happening. I doubt whether the occasion has been marked by any significance short of an address at the school. If the event could be made memorable to the children by the distribution of £10 worth of toys and confectionery, it would be a good thing. Such places in the North-West have far more claim to consideration than have Coolgardie, Kalbarrie or Hannans. The people in those places

have ample pleasure provided for them, but it would be a novelty for the children of Roebourne to see a picture show or to have a celebration in connection with the centenary.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 1.35 a.m. (Thursday).

## Legislative Council,

Thursday, 26th September, 1929.

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

### QUESTION—MINING, GEOLOGICAL REPORT.

Hon. E. H. HARRIS asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Will he lay on the Table the recent geological report of Dr. Stilwell on the East Coolgardie Goldfield? 2, If not, what is the reason for withholding the report?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, Yes. 2, The report is still in the hands of the Government Printer, and will be made available as soon as practicable.

### QUESTION—YUNA RAILWAY, EXTENSIONS.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL asked the Chief Secretary: 1, Have the Railway Advisory Board been requested to report on any exten-