

clause would give a considerable amount of annoyance and trouble to owners of factories. It was one of the indications of the strenuousness of the attempt to burden the factory owners of this State unnecessarily.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause followed the wording of similar clauses in Bills dealing with other subjects. One could not see what was the objection to it was unless the factory owner had something to conceal. Registration occurred once, and once only, unless it was rendered null by misconduct. He could not see what owners of factories could have to conceal, but he could see how circumstances might arise whereby it might be necessary, before a factory was registered, that farther particulars should be provided. The amendment presupposed on the part of the Government a strenuous effort to burden the factory owners of Western Australia. There was absolutely no such wish. The principle of the Bill was the protection of life and property; the protection of the young; the protection of females (to which there could be no objection), and the prevention of factory owners from sweating their employees, to which also there could be no objection. It was claimed the clause put a burden on factory owners. The inference was that some people must be contravening the provisions of the Bill. He did not think they were, but if people came to the State who wanted to do so, it was right and proper we should have a Bill to prevent it. The particulars asked for would not be unreasonable, and they were invariably confidential.

HON. G. RANDELL: If the particulars as set forth in the clause to be provided were not sufficient, he did not know how far the Government would go. It was not likely a man would be asked what money he had.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was not at all likely.

HON. C. A. PIESSE supported the amendment.

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

| | | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes | ... | ... | 10 |
| Noes | ... | ... | 5 |
| Majority for | ... | ... | 5 |

AYES.
 Hon. T. F. O. Brimage
 Hon. A. Dempster
 Hon. C. E. Dempster
 Hon. Z. Lane
 Hon. W. T. Loton
 Hon. W. Maley
 Hon. E. McLarty
 Hon. G. Randell
 Hon. J. A. Thomson
 Hon. J. W. Wright
 (Teller).

NOES.
 Hon. E. M. Clarke
 Hon. J. D. Connolly
 Hon. J. W. Hackett
 Hon. W. Kingsmill
 Hon. B. C. O'Brien
 (Teller).

Amendment thus passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:51 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 10th December, 1903.

| | PAGE |
|---|------|
| Question: Alien Labour on public contracts | 2660 |
| Bills: Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, first reading | 2661 |
| Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment, third reading | 2661 |
| Permanent Reserves Act Amendment, second reading, in Committee, progress | 2661 |
| Metropolitan Water and Sewerage, second reading | 2662 |
| Annual Estimates resumed, Lands votes, Agriculture (general discussion), also items, progress | 2669 |

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 2:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the **MINISTER FOR WORKS:** By-laws of the Cuballing Roads Board.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

QUESTION—ALIEN LABOUR ON PUBLIC CONTRACTS.

MR. WALLACE asked the Premier: Whether the Government will make it a condition in all future contracts for the public works that no alien labour will be employed.

THE PREMIER replied: The following clause is already in the "Conditions of Contract" in regard to all public works:--

26. (1.) The contractor shall not, without the express permission in writing of the Executive Engineer, employ or permit to be employed, on any works in or appertaining to this contract, any Asiatic or African labourer; and such permission shall not be granted unless for special service or duty, and until it has been proved, to the satisfaction of the Executive Engineer, that such labour is absolutely necessary for the due completion and carrying out of the works of the contract.

It is thought that this provision should be sufficient for all purposes.

AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the **MINISTER FOR LANDS**, and read a first time.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS PURCHASE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS moved that the Bill be read a third time.

MR. BURGESS: There was an amendment in this Bill which members had not seen in print.

THE PREMIER: Amendments in Bills were never seen in print.

MR. BURGESS: It was not known whether the amendment was correct.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The amendment was confined entirely to land held under pastoral lease before surrender.

Question passed.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

PERMANENT RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT BILL. SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. M. Hopkins), in moving the second reading, said: This is a short Bill. Clause 1 refers to certain blocks at Melville which were reserved for the purpose of recreation, and on which it is now proposed to erect the Old Men's Dépôt. The area of the land will total about 13 acres 3 roods 39 perches. There is a street at the present time dividing some of these blocks, and in the Roads and Streets Closure Bill we have made provision for closing it. It was proposed to erect this block somewhere on the river closer to Claremont, but the local

governing body requested that an inspection should be made, and the Colonial Secretary and myself went to Claremont and inspected various reserves. It was ultimately agreed to the satisfaction of the local body that the site now chosen was an admirable one. I think it is a very fine site, as it is located about half a mile this side of Claremont along the river and on a nice elevation. Clause 2 refers to a reserve near Claremont, No. 4228. The Works Department have sunk a bore on a portion of this reserve, and the object of the clause is to set apart that portion of the reserve to the Works Department for a water supply. It contains 1 acre, 1 rood, 33 perches. I have a plan showing it which hon. members can see. Clause 3 refers to a reserve at Bunbury, No. 4991. The portion to be excised is to be added to the show ground. There was a road through it which has been closed, a metalled road in the shape of a crescent. So far as I know there is not likely to be any opposition to this Bill. I have just briefly explained the object of the three clauses, and I do not think it is necessary to add any more. I therefore move the second reading.

MR. M. H. JACOBY (Swan): Have the Government taken into consideration the suggestion made in connection with the alteration of the reserve adjacent to the new Parliament Houses? I believe it is the intention, in a Bill now before the House, to close Ord Street; but it has been suggested that Wilson Street might be widened. This street junctions with Harvest Terrace opposite the new Parliament Houses, and the suggestion has been cordially indorsed by those adversely affected by the closing of Ord Street. Have the Government considered this matter, and will they take advantage of the present Bill to carry this into effect?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James): I think the suggestion is a good one and on the passage of the Roads and Streets Closure Bill through this House I will endeavour to have the amendment made in another Chamber. I do not want to amend this Bill in that direction now, because Ord Street may not be closed.

MR. JACOBY: It affects a Class A reserve.

THE PREMIER: I can effect the alteration in the Council in this Bill which I will keep back for the purpose.

MR. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont): I remember well when the Colonial Secretary and the Minister for Lands came to inspect this land at Claremont. It was proposed at first to take another piece of land, but the local authorities objected very strongly to that being done. At last the two Ministers saw another piece of land which they thought would do equally well, but the mayor and the chairman of the roads board stipulated that if they gave up the reserve the Government should undertake to construct a road to this particular piece of land. They thought this land was vested in them practically as a recreation reserve, and they were giving up a good deal in parting with it. It is only right they should get some *quid pro quo*, and I hope to have an undertaking from the Government that they will carry out the promise made by those two Ministers.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (in reply): If there are no farther remarks by members, I would like to say that it was not a condition precedent to the granting of this reserve or the withdrawal of any opposition by the local governing body that this road should be made. It is manifest, however, that we cannot get to the land until some road improvement is carried out. What I understood was that we had all agreed the site was eminently adapted for the purpose; and a proposal was then suggested by the chairman of the roads board, I think Mr. Stirling, that something should be done in the shape of clearing and forming the road leading to this reserve. It appeared to the Colonial Secretary and myself that it would be necessary to do something of that kind, otherwise the reserve would not be get-at-able at all; but I do not think that any distinct or definite promise was made. At the same time I do not see how it is possible to utilise the reserve for the purpose for which it was set apart unless something is done.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. FOULKES in the Chair.

Clause 1—Change of purpose of reserve 1667AΛ:

THE PREMIER said he understood that Mr. Foulkes desired to make a few

observations in relation to this clause, and he had hoped the hon. member would be able to do so from his seat; but that not being the case, he moved that progress be reported and leave asked to sit again.

Progress reported, and leave given to it again.

METROPOLITAN WATER AND SEWERAGE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed from the previous Monday.

MR. C. J. MORAN (West Perth): This Bill is a strong illustration of the unwisdom of the Government in bringing measures of this vast importance down at the end of the session, when they cannot possibly hope that such Bills will be thoroughly gone through, if we mean to rise before Christmas. Take these two Bills which we have been discussing for the last couple of days, a vast public work involving half a million, and this Water and Sewerage Bill now before us; they are measures which for a State of this character might well have a whole session devoted to them. It would pay this Parliament to give both these measures the consideration of a session. Take the measure under consideration. No one denies its vast importance nor its urgency, and no one denies that it has been promised and been considered a work of the first necessity for many years past, but what everybody ought to deny is that in the last days of the last session of a Parliament of this kind a measure of this magnitude and involving such interests can thoroughly be dealt with. I see that the Perth City Council, who are the body primarily interested and whose advice upon this matter must be treated with the greatest respect by this House, as they represent the citizens of Perth, and I see also that some of the minor councils, have expressed themselves as being surprised that this measure did not come down earlier in the session. We shall be told that it was impossible for that to be done, but I entirely deny such an assertion. This matter is an old one. It has been in hand ever since Sir John Forrest was Premier in this State; it has been on the list of active requirements and on the

programme of every Government since; and surely the present Government, which has now been in power three years, could have evolved a scheme and drafted a Bill sufficiently early to have laid the measure on the table of the House about two months ago. It is going to establish a record in Western Australia that after the suspension of the Standing Orders the bulk of the important work of this session was first initiated in this Chamber. We have had a practice here this session of laying Bills on the table for the first time on the second reading, a most unusual procedure, never adopted anywhere else; in fact I believe that strictly according to the parliamentary practice a Bill should not be read a first time until it has been laid on the table. I suppose we could at any stage on procedure alone object to the reading of Bills until they are laid on the table. It is thoroughly understood that if leave to introduce a Bill is granted *pro forma*, then the Bill is read a first time and laid on the table of the House. Many Bills this session were not laid on the table of the House at the first reading, and the Bill under review was only laid on the table only on Monday last. [THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Monday.] On Monday at dinner-time I came into the Chamber and happened to see some copies of the Bill lying about. I then sent a copy of the measure to the Perth City Council, and they immediately called a meeting and discussed the matter. We saw the remarks which the Mayor of Perth made last night, that the City Council were placed in an invidious position. This is an important measure in which the whole of Western Australia is interested, not Perth alone; and to a Bill of such magnitude, debatable and contentious, due consideration cannot be given at this late period of the session. The Mayor of Perth says the Government have treated Perth scandalously. He looks at it in this light: on the one hand if the Perth Council severely criticise the measure as they should in the interests of the people, the Government can go to the country and say, as an election cry, "We wanted to pass the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Bill, but the Perth City Council delayed us." On the other hand if the Bill is rushed through at this late hour

of the session and after it is passed complaint is found, the reply is "Why did not the citizens of Perth and the Perth City Council point out where the Bill was wrong?" Is it not an insult to the intelligence of the House and the country that measures should be placed before us in the last days of the session, and members expected to give the measures proper and thorough inquiry? The two measures to which I have referred would well employ the time of the House for a whole session. On the one hand we have a public work brought before us, the Bill is thrown down on the table of the House and reports are kept back which materially affect the measure; on the other hand we have an administrative measure, involving another large public works policy, for which the City of Perth is directly responsible—for which 40,000 or 50,000 or 70,000 people are responsible. This measure is thrown down here at the end of the session. It is a grave reflection on the amateur Government running the destinies of the State at the present time that they should treat Parliament in this way. It is a grave reflection on the administration of the Government, be their intention ever so good. As to the measure itself, it is not one of local importance alone. It is a measure of national importance. From a Western Australian standpoint we should keep the City of Perth and the metropolitan area, a place where people from all parts of the State can enjoy their holidays and not have to leave this State for the purpose. That is in keeping with the old Government ever since we have had Responsible Government in this State: it is in keeping with what has always been advocated, the beautification of our capital city in order that people may come here for their holidays from all parts of the State, and find convenience, safety, sanitation, and comfort, the same as can be found in any other Australian State. This is a work which is entirely under our own hand at the present time. The country is torn and racked about in regard to the Transcontinental Railway. We are told that the railway is of the first importance for the first capital city of Australia, but it is not of so much importance as the Bill which is now before the Chamber. Parliament has the

matter in its own hands. Our State is growing apace, our city is growing in keeping with the growth of the State. We are beautifying and improving our own national asset. None of the powers which allow us to do that have been taken from us to-day, but while contending for federal rights we must not lose sight of the important work of the State Parliament of Western Australia. This is a work of the first importance, perhaps naturally so with a climate which is of the healthiest and ought to give rise to conditions which are the healthiest. Perth with its natural beauties, with a river and surroundings second to none in Australia is not the healthy city which the people demand. Contagious diseases are all too prevalent in Perth at present. There are many contagious diseases about Perth, especially amongst children, typhoid and diptheria. We have had at times slight outbreaks of plague, and this gateway to the whole of Australia, and the holiday resort of all Western Australia, should be made a healthy place. Not only are we endangering the lives of the children particularly of this populous centre containing 70,000 people, but we are helping to spread contagion throughout Australia. Let us keep this centre of population clean, wholesome, and secure.

MR. BURGESS: It has never been clean yet.

MR. MORAN: That is why the measure is more urgent. In no other Australian State, may I exclude Victoria, nowhere else, have such a large stream, such a vast majority of the people in all their comings and goings, to pass through one place. Those who go to the old country, and they are numerous, pass through Perth; those who go to the Eastern States pass through the city of Perth. Those who go to the hives of industry on the Eastern Goldfields have to pass through this avenue, and it is eminently necessary that we should keep clean this great metropolitan area. I remember the time well when we had a smallpox outbreak in Perth; what a commotion that caused at Kalgoorlie. I remember whenever a contagious disease or infection has broken out in Perth that it is at once pointed out that there is a stream of population going through the city, and how necessary it is, first and

foremost to make the health of this place—the gateway of Australia—secure. We should have proper restrictions against the introduction of diseases from the Eastern States or from the old country, more particularly from the eastern countries through the North-West shipping service. In regard to the technical part of the Bill, we cannot speak with the knowledge that experts can. All we can do is to view, in connection with all the evidence laid before us, the opinions of the experts and utilise that common sense we have and the knowledge we have gained as to how these things are done in other places. I do not bow, in connection with this or any other matter, to the dictum that this Chamber is subject to the dictation of experts, whether Government or otherwise. This Chamber is the last resort, and our experts are our servants, whether railway experts or otherwise. We must use our own judgment. A Judge of the Supreme Court is called on to give a decision in every class of business, but a Judge of the Supreme Court is not an expert doctor or a judge of cattle, but he is the last judge, the arbiter. Therefore we should not be told that because some experts say that a certain line of policy should be followed that we should follow it. In the matter under review we are told that the new principle of sewerage is to be adopted, the bacteriological system. Speaking as a layman, I speak with first impressions and intuition: I prefer the old and well-tried system of sewerage. I do not advance that as having any weight or influence, but I like the old and tried methods first. I prefer to see Perth well drained and flushed, if it cost more; we should have no experiment. My predilection runs to moving everything on the first occasion into the ocean; but I bow to the decision of the Government, for they have given the matter great consideration, and I hope and trust that the propounded scheme will be that great success predicted of it. Of one thing we may be certain, it is this: the matter of cost in connection with this scheme will be one of its greatest considerations. We are told it is to cost 50 per cent. less than we thought it would, therefore that is a matter for congratulation since the cost is moderate and the efficiency of the scheme is not impaired. We have not had the

details of the scheme laid before us. The Minister was rather vague in introducing the Bill, in touching on the area to be served. At first he said it included Midland Junction and Guildford, and on an interjection from me—

MR. STONE: There is not a quorum present; and when an important Bill involving the expenditure of half a million of money is before us and the Standing Orders have been suspended, we should have at least a quorum present.

[Quorum formed.]

MR. MORAN (continuing): The Minister reminds me that in giving his first figures he did not include Midland Junction and Guildford; but he afterwards stated that for a specific sum, not a very large one, these two places could be included and all requirements served for a period of five years. What we listened to with the deepest interest from the Minister, and what we are glad he laid before the House, is the opinion of the experts in dealing with bore water. There is a strong prejudice in the minds of a large number of people in the metropolitan area that bore water is not good. That prejudice exists in the minds of a large number of Perth city councillors. For myself, what little experience I have had of bore water in other places, I at once say we all know that deep spring water must of necessity be the purest; anyhow the only thing injurious that may be in it is that of a mineral character; it does not contain contagious or infectious matter, since we are taught that disease comes from the surface and is generated by surface dirt. The germs are washed by rainwater into the dams and reservoirs, and there communicated to the people. I say this, and I commend it to the Minister's attention, that I was under the impression that the bore water of Perth had not a very pleasant odour after it was left standing for a little time.

THE MINISTER: That is easily altered.

MR. MORAN: I interjected yesterday to the Minister that it was no good talking of the purity of the bore water if it is being mixed with the water from the reservoir containing infectious matter. It is no good putting forth the virtues of bore water if it comes through the same pipes as the other water. If there be a

thimbleful of bad water in a glass, and the remainder is good bore water, the aggregate is bad. The Minister has told us that on the end of a needle can be placed sufficient germs to poison a regiment; therefore when we are drinking half-and-half, what is the use of advertising the virtues of one fluid when these are entirely nullified by the vices of the other fluid? Evidently we cannot have in the metropolitan area an exclusive supply of bore water, were it ever so good; so the pure and the impure come to us together. But I am under the impression that the bore water in and around this district is different from the deep artesian water I have seen in other countries. In Queensland, for instance, artesian water has not that objectionable odour which distinguishes our bore water when left standing for some time. I am under the impression that our bore water does not come from a deep enough source; that there is some sort of decayed vegetable matter in the strata that overlie the clay beds under Perth; that the water is local water from our own ranges. It is true artesian water, since it sinks into the earth through the higher strata of the gravel beds of the surrounding hills, and comes up on the plain owing to direct pressure from higher levels. This must be true, because we do not get more than 3 per cent of the water which falls on the Mundaring reservoir catchment area. Where does the other 97 per cent go? Nobody will argue that the whole of it evaporates; so it must go underground. Then there must be an immense quantity of water underlying the sandplains around the coastal area; and if that water is so perfect as the Minister believes, why not go the whole hog by using bore water exclusively? That is a matter which must in future be considered; and by a brief calculation we shall find, if what I say be correct, that the supply is fed by the annual rainfalls; that the beds absorb an enormous quantity every year; therefore here, as in the plains of Canterbury, New Zealand, our artesian supply is almost inexhaustible. All over Christchurch plain, which I visited, there is not only any quantity of water from the river, but an immense supply of shallow artesian water from the hills, originally absorbed by the high gravel beds, and coming up very near the

surface around Christchurch, so that every householder may have a small artesian well. The pressure there is not so high as ours; hence the water has to be lifted by means of rams, of which there are many. All the big meat-preserving works of Christchurch use the water, and there does not seem any likelihood of its exhaustion. We have a better rainfall than Canterbury plain—a magnificent and assured rainfall, with catchment areas on the hill sides, and perhaps fissures in what looks like original granite, through which the water is led to the clay beds of Perth. I am inclined to believe there is nothing injurious in the bore water, though there is something objectionable. It occurred to me when examining the water supply of the town of Invercargill that its artesian water was more objectionable at the surface; and I found that a method was adopted of spraying it out over an immense umbrella pipe, aerating it, allowing it to stand in open reservoirs, and then taking it into a service tank on the top of a tower. After this exposure the water was most palatable and agreeable in every sense. It was exposed as we expose condensed water, like the water in the reservoir at Kalgoorlie. Am I to understand from the Minister that the bore water in Perth loses its objectionable odour if exposed to the air?

THE MINISTER: I am assured that by proper treatment any objectionable qualities can be got rid of.

MR. MORAN: Anyhow, the objectionable matter is not deleterious to health. I believe we have an unlimited supply of water underlying our city. Perhaps for the present we cannot use it as we should like; but it is a blessing to know it is there, that it is useful, that it can be got at; and I hope the fact will not be lost sight of. The day may come when for drinking purposes, for domestic use, the bore water will be exclusively used. Apart from that I trust every effort will be made to keep as pure as possible the sources of our surface supply. I believe that is being done. I thought at one time that Mundaring reservoir might spare a million gallons per day for the metropolitan area. I venture that opinion with some diffidence just now in view of the agitation for the utilisation of this water at Northam, York, and little centres along the Eastern railway. The

Coolgardie scheme was never intended to serve places outside the goldfields; and if the goldfields want the water, let them have it. Let every drop of water be turned inland if it can be sold; but if in the fullness of time, and at a not far distant time, it is discovered that Mundaring can permanently supply all the inland demand and give Perth some as well, why not take a drop of water from Mundaring? I venture that opinion with great diffidence, and would advocate that before doing anything to give effect to my suggestion we should assure ourselves that all consumers on the upward grade are well satisfied. I conclude by hoping that the greatest amicability will exist between the Perth City Council and the Government when dealing with this Bill. I hope the two bodies will pay the greatest respect to each other's opinions. The city council have behind them the opinions of the ratepayers who are to pay for this water. On the other hand, the Government must look to the general welfare of the State; and I presume the Government will at first have to guarantee the borrowed money. I hope that will not be a charge of even one penny on the permanent revenues of Western Australia; indeed, I do not think it will. It ought not to be; and I think our prosperity is so great, and our capital city and surrounding areas are growing so rapidly, successfully and permanently, that a well-managed scheme of this kind can be no drain on the general revenues of Western Australia. Moreover, I am satisfied that we have in this State one water scheme which is and always will be a steady drain on our permanent revenue. I said that in the early days when that water scheme was first proposed—that our greatest public work would not pay its way; that is to say, would not pay its interest and sinking fund added to upkeep. I hold that opinion tenaciously, and I should still hold it even if the population of the Eastern Goldfields were doubled. In view of the vast expense and the heavy interest and sinking fund, and the fact that we are flouting precedent by pumping every drop of water up hill, we shall always leave some balance to be paid out of general revenue. The city council object to the Government nominating the board. People in Perth

are tired of nominee boards. I express no opinion; but there is no shade of doubt in my mind that the ratepayers of Perth are tired of the nominee system in respect of waterworks. It has not been an eminent success. Some will claim what may be called second-hand representation; that is, representation through the city council. Others will claim direct representation of the ratepayers, and will say, "Let the body of ratepayers, just as they elect the mayor, elect representatives on the water board." In Adelaide the water service is splendidly administered by Parliament direct. I am informed that the system is still in existence, and still successful. It has the advantage of an expert at the head of the department, whose whole study is to make the scheme successful, and to satisfy consumers' demands. He is not disturbed by annual elections; he sits down as does our Engineer-in-Chief, working vigorously for the sake of his professional reputation. In many countries it is argued that the best work is obtained by having such schemes controlled by a Government department. At the present stage I do not express any opinion; but I hope this phase of the question will be thoroughly debated in such time as is at our disposal. I venture to express the opinion that this measure will not go very quickly through the Chamber, nor yet through another Chamber. To conclude, I welcome with the greatest pleasure a Bill which should give Perth the last important adjunct needed to make her a city. She has been transformed from a sand-bed to a first-class town; she has a tramway service second to none in Australia, perhaps lighter, more elegant, and more effective than those of some of the bigger capitals. She has a national reserve on the hill, not equalled by that of any other capital for position or general utility for the purposes of the people; she has parks and gardens being laid out in different directions; she is now erecting public buildings in keeping with her dignity as the only capital on this side of the continent; and she badly needs a proper water service and a good sewerage and drainage scheme. I believe she is about to get these. I hope the works will be a great success; and while we give the Bill most careful consideration, I hope that the consideration found

necessary will not delay its being passed into law this session. I support the second reading.

MR. J. J. HIGHAM (Fremantle): The question of metropolitan water supply and sewerage has been under discussion so many times since 1896 that I do not think it necessary to go into details. I join in the regret expressed that we should receive this Bill so late in the session; yet I do not know why, even now, we should not have ample time to carefully consider the Bill when in Committee. So far as I can judge there is little room for contention as to details. There may be some little contention as to the application of the Bill to the different centres, but I do not think there is any difficulty which careful consideration will not overcome. I think it regrettable that the city council, instead of complaining so loudly of the delay in the introduction of the Bill, should not have done what they are pledged to do—bring together, as soon as they had the Bill before them, all the local authorities to fully discuss its provisions. I understand from some of the local authorities that this was the arrangement; that the city council, as the senior body, were to bring them together as soon as a copy of the Bill was procurable. So far, the city council have not made a start.

MR. MORAN: Yesterday they went through every clause in the Bill; and I have a marked copy of the Bill showing the result of their deliberations. As soon as the Bill was brought in I sent over a copy, and an hour afterwards a meeting was called.

MR. HIGHAM: That is not exactly the point. The city council, as the senior body, promised to get a delegation from each of the local authorities to be affected by this Bill; and the conference, as a joint committee, were to consider fully all the provisions of the measure. So far as I can learn, they have made no attempt to do so, and I think it is only by such a method we may get all the local authorities at one on the question. There will be no lack of unanimity regarding this Bill as to the necessity of this sewerage scheme, for all realise the immense benefit that will accrue to all local centres. I think we cannot do better than pass the second reading of

this Bill to-day, with the distinct understanding that the Committee stage will not be touched before Wednesday next.

THE PREMIER: Tuesday next will give quite sufficient time.

MR. HIGHAM: We are trying to get the local authorities to come together, and in order that they may come to some conclusion they should have Tuesday available. I do not think, when this Bill comes to the Committee stage, there will be much room for debate, excepting on a few clauses. Mostly they are purely machinery clauses, and beyond contention. I hope we will pass the second reading without any long debate, with the understanding as to the date on which we will reach the Committee stage, and that we will urge the local authorities to be in readiness, or take the responsibility of their neglect.

MR. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont): As a representative of a suburban district I have great pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill. I know from personal experience the great drawback it has been to the people of the suburbs in being forced to spend so much money on private residences to acquire a water supply. In Claremont and Cottesloe, people have had to rely on windmills and wells, and the average cost of these windmills and wells—and I am not overstepping the mark when I say it—is not less than £40 or £50. Every house has to incur a capital expenditure of that amount to obtain water. Nearly all the suburbs around Perth will welcome this Bill most clearly. Of course, they will consider that various alterations, which I consider are advisable, should be made in the Committee stage of the Bill, but so far as the main principles of the Bill are concerned, I am sure most parties will welcome the Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (in reply as mover): No one regrets more than I do that the Bill should have come down rather late in the session. I wish very much it had been possible to introduce it earlier. It may be no justification for introducing the Bill at so late a stage, but it will be some excuse, and an excuse which has some merit, when I state that this Bill involved a great amount of care in its preparation, mostly in deciding the principles under which we should set to work, especially in regard to the treatment of sewage.

Although it is said that this matter has been before various Governments for years, there were absolutely no data to go on with in regard to the treatment of sewage which we suggest. Everything that has been done towards the treatment of sewage bacterially has been done by this Government, so that it was practically new work we had to set out upon. An important measure like this and the still more important principles we have laid down as to the modes in which we propose to deal with these two works, have needed great care and consideration. Although it is late in the session, I still think that if hon. members will, as I am sure they will, devote their attention to the Bill with a desire to get it through, it will still be possible to give it all the study it deserves and to remedy any defects, if defects there may be: but as the member for Fremantle has said, it is a machinery Bill. We practically decided the principles we should adopt and brought in this machinery Bill by which these principles can be carried out. I should like to give the House this assurance, and between now and the Committee stage they can find out that what I say is correct, that this Bill is drafted principally on the New South Wales and South Australian Acts. For our guidance we have had the Acts of all the other States, including the most recent ones, and we have selected from these what seems most suited and most adaptable to the requirements of Western Australia, the principal assistance we found being in the enactments of New South Wales and South Australia. There is no desire on the part of the Government to unduly push through this Bill. We want to give every opportunity for discussion, and every opportunity to the local authorities—not only Perth, because Perth is not the only place interested, for the whole of the metropolitan area is interested in this question—to call attention to any defects which, in their consideration, there may be in the Bill. I think the House will agree that, if we fix the Committee stage for Tuesday next, it will give ample opportunity for discussion in the meantime. To fix a later day would not be desirable. I propose to take the Committee stage next Tuesday, and I hope members will be prepared to go on with the Bill so that we may place on

the statute-book what is admitted to be a very great necessity--a Bill to provide for the water supply and sewerage of the metropolitan area.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from 18th November.

LANDS DEPARTMENT (Hon. J. M. Hopkins, Minister).

Vote—Agriculture, £21,193 10s.:

MR. MORAN: The Minister for Lands should give a general expression as to how the Agricultural Department was working as a whole. Many leading farmers questioned whether the right methods were being adopted in regard to experimental farms. He had received letters from leading farmers in the South-West in this connection, and if necessary he could give their names. These gentlemen differed from the methods pursued by the Director of Agriculture, Mr. Crawford, and they raised the question as to whether he had had experience theoretical in scientific training or in practical farming.

MR. BURGESS: The present Director of Agriculture was only temporarily occupying the position.

MR. MORAN: In dealing with a department of such importance we should know from a Minister whether we were getting full value for the money, and whether the Minister was satisfied he had men under him of sufficient calibre to lead the agricultural industry in the right path. In America experimental plots were made in different parts of the country instead of at one big agricultural college. We should establish a plot on some of the cleared ground at York. [MR. BURGESS: That had already been done.] We could establish another at the Greenough, where the conditions might be totally different, utilising some cleared land for an experimental plot. Were we doing this, rather than establishing an expensive college? He desired to know in what groove the Minister's mind was running in this matter. He was sorry to have to raise the question of the high-handed action of the Government in dealing with salaries. The Minister had given increased salaries to highly paid

officers without much recommendation, and refused to give increases to the lower paid officers.

THE MINISTER: That was not so.

MR. MORAN: This was only one of the details of a general charge against the Government he had raised at the beginning of the Estimates. He did not object to increasing the salaries of highly paid officers if it was done systematically; but he objected because it was against the Government's own policy, and against common sense in not having a classified civil service, and again because the Government had refused to give the lower paid men any rises at all. If any rises were to be made he would rather see them on the lower grades first. He desired to know also whether the officers of the department were thoroughly capable, and whether the Minister was satisfied the department was doing the best work it could.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Before Mr. Crawford, acting Director of Agriculture, was placed in charge, the Agricultural Department was practically controlled by a shorthand-writer and typist, one who was engaged as such but was now filling the position of chief clerk, Mr. Hooper. This officer was very young and conscientious, but he (the Minister) did not feel that Mr. Hooper had sufficient experience to give that justice to the department to which it was entitled.

MR. MORAN: Who was supposed to be nominal head of the department?

THE MINISTER: The Manager of the Agricultural Bank had filled the position of Director of Agriculture; but when the Agricultural Bank Act was amended and its scope much increased, there was no end of work for him to do, and it resulted in his having to retire from the position of Director of Agriculture. On looking around the departments he (the Minister) found that Mr. Crawford was getting a salary of £400 or £450 (speaking from memory) as land agent at Geraldton. Mr. Crawford had moreover established and taken charge of an experimental farm at the Upper Chapman, and made a great success of it. It had been the opinion of some that the Director of Agriculture should be an expert in cattle, pigs, sheep, farming of all kinds, and be a scientist in every walk

of life pertaining to agriculture. He (the Minister) did not see that this was practicable. He would be pleased to place the file at the disposal of the member for West Perth, whose mind would, he believed, be entirely disabused of the opinion that hon. member had formed.

MR. MORAN: All that he gave consisted of the opinion of leading agriculturists in this State.

THE MINISTER: Mr. Crawford was only acting Director of Agriculture, and at present the Government were advertising in the Eastern States and in America for a person capable of fulfilling the position of Director of Agriculture. As to experimental farms, his personal opinions leaned more towards establishing and working experimental farms, say one in each district, and now we had one at the Chapman and one at Narrogin. He was in favour of having one in the remote South-West, which would ultimately be the home of the dairying industry, more particularly to make experiments in dairying in that portion of the State. The question of experimental blocks received considerable attention, and the amount on these estimates was increased from £500 to £3,000. There were blocks at York, Northam, Newcastle, and various places down the Eastern Railway, the object being to establish them on the main road or near a railway, with necessary boards, so that persons riding or driving by could see what, with the application of certain manures, a crop really was. Some of these blocks had turned out very well, but others had not been so satisfactory. Doubtless we should be able to improve as time went along. There were some details in connection with this department which he was looking forward to consider in the recess. These plots had in the past been under Mr. Wickens, who enjoyed the reputation of having for a number of years attended some of the leading colleges in the East. Mr. Crawford was a man who had held important positions in the agricultural world in the Eastern States.

MR. MORAN: Persons had written to him from various parts of the State questioning the experience of Mr. Crawford, and he was informed that this officer could not have had experience in

agriculture. He had been in this State 25 years.

THE MINISTER: The attack made in this House upon Mr. Crawford on a former occasion was then refuted. He went through the files, and believed Mr. Crawford was a very honest, conscientious, and loyal officer.

MR. MORAN: That was not denied.

THE MINISTER: He worked hard, and put in overtime in order that the work might be in hand. Before Mr. Crawford could be appointed, his farming knowledge would be weighed in the balance against that of applicants in this State or other countries. In connection with the various shows held in the agricultural districts, there was no person in the State whose services were more eagerly sought after for the judging of competitions than were those of Mr. Crawford; not because Mr. Crawford was Director of Agriculture, but because those who knew him best had the greatest faith in him. He (the Minister) had gone to the Chapman and Northampton district and the Victoria district, after hearing statements made which might have borne the aspect presented by the member for West Perth in the correspondence referred to. He travelled about among the residents of the place, farmers and pastoralists, and was surprised to hear on every hand the very high opinions expressed as to Mr. Crawford's practical capacity. The opinion was expressed on all hands that Mr. Crawford was a most able and expert officer.

MR. P. STONE: Never had he conversed on matters of stock or the cultivation of the soil with a more capable man than Mr. Crawford. Anyone who wished to make an inspection of the model farm under Mr. Crawford's control was at liberty to do so. The farm was located at a place which the general public could not get to without great inconvenience, but that was not Mr. Crawford's fault. He (Mr. Stone) saw the results of experiments with different kinds of grain grown there under different treatment, and he had seen wheat six feet high which had been grown on land that people would not take up because they thought it was not fit to grow wheat.

MR. MORAN: Was the result satisfactory financially?

MR. STONE: One could not treat the question as a commercial proposition, in relation to an experimental farm. Mr. Crawford served as a jackeroo in New Zealand and had been twice through America, where he lived for several years.

MR. HAYWARD: The results of many of the experiments and any other information which would be of use to the general public should be published.

MR. BURGESS: It was useless to go on with these plots unless the results of the experiments were published. In his part he made the results known at public meetings, which, however, were but poorly attended. If the results were published they would be most useful. Anyone about to take up a new farm would find it of great advantage to see the results of experiments with the different manures and different wheats. People came here with all sorts of ideas. Lots of wheat brought here in the last two or three years in dry seasons were almost useless, a large portion not coming to maturity. On second-class country it was necessary to have wheat which would mature early, and then people would be certain of getting good returns. The publication of the results achieved by these experiments would be useful not only to farmers at present living here but to new-comers. That would save great loss, and give better results with a direct return, instead of these men experimenting as they often did with wheats they had grown where there was a better rainfall.

[Sitting suspended for ten minutes.]

MR. HASTIE: The vote we were asked to pass was to encourage agriculture. There was one other way the Minister proposed to advance agriculture which was a complete departure from the policy of the State, to encourage a special class of immigrants to take up land. Already a vote of £2,000 had been passed for the encouragement of immigration. The Minister for Lands had propounded a scheme by which the Salvation Army and other religious organisations in Great Britain were to be paid for sending immigrants to this State. Such a thing had not been done here for a good many years, and in former years when special terms were given to organisations in Great Britain

the scheme had not been a success. What reason had the Minister to expect that the proposed scheme would be successful? If we were to go out of our way to encourage people to settle on the land we should try and get the best people available, and the proposal to introduce those connected with the Salvation Army did not seem to be likely to result in any desirable immigrants being brought here, for it was a notorious fact that the Salvation Army were in touch only with the poorest portion of the population of Great Britain. It was the glory of the Salvation Army that they alone were the only denomination in touch with the residuum of the population, people who were not in the habit of looking out for themselves, but who were classed as the inferior section of the population. If that class of immigrants was to come here, a large proportion of them were likely at an early date to become the brewers of wood and drawers of water to the other agricultural settlers of the State. The Minister did not anticipate that, because he said the immigrants had to be approved. Whom were they to be approved by?

THE MINISTER: The Agent General.

MR. HASTIE: The Agent General could not say who were likely to turn out good or bad immigrants. He could only take the certificates of character given to these people, and if a man wished to get a certificate as to respectability, there would be no difficulty in getting any number from a religious body.

MR. MORAN: That was an unjustifiable assertion to make.

MR. HASTIE: Most undesirable people got certificates of character, and if such a thing could take place here, it was more likely to take place in Great Britain, where there was a population of 40 million people. The certificate might truly state that the holder had followed respectable occupations for six or twelve months, but that was not sufficient to prove that the people would make desirable immigrants. No one would place any obstacle in the way of people who could come here on their own or assisted by their friends, but we were going out of our way to appeal to a special organisation which was more in touch with the undesirable section of the population at

home. If the State was to progress, it could do so only on account of the qualities and characteristics of the people. We should see that we had not too many of a class which any country could do better without. The Minister had said that he would follow the ordinary rule of paying half the passage money for approved immigrants, and to induce the Salvation Army to send out immigrants that organisation was to receive £2 per head for every single man sent out; for every married man £3 per head, and for every married man with three children £5 per head. How had any settlement in any part of the world especially peopled by the Salvation Army got on?

THE MINISTER: It would not follow that they would be Army people.

MR. HASTIE: Did the Minister expect people outside the Army to be sent out?

THE MINISTER: Certainly.

MR. HASTIE: The Salvation Army had very little influence or persuasive powers outside the ranks of their members, who were generally looked on as a class of paupers. The Salvation Army had very little influence, if any, amongst the farming class, and we would get a number of town dwellers which was the particular class we did not want here. Last night the Minister and other members stated that we had a number of people wishing to settle on the land but that there was no place for them to settle on; and one of the objects of building the Collie-Narrogin railway was to open up fresh land on which the people could settle. If the Collie-Narrogin Railway Bill did not pass this session, then no doubt the Minister would cancel the agreement with the Salvation Army.

THE MINISTER: There was room for ten times the present population.

MR. HASTIE: The Minister should give some very good reason why he was making this new departure on his own.

THE MINISTER: It was not "on his own."

MR. HASTIE: We had already been asked by the Government to vote £2,000 for assisting immigration. Fully three-fourths of that sum must be spent in advancing passage money to immigrants from the East, leaving the Minister £300 to carry out the new scheme for immi-

gration from England. Instead of importing Salvation Army derelicts, let us spend the money in settling on the soil people accustomed to support themselves—respectable citizens who would benefit the community, and not the doubtful class the Army proposed to import.

MR. BATH: It was contended that the State farms on the Upper Chapman and elsewhere should in the interests of our farmers experiment with varieties of produce. After visiting agricultural shows he did not consider the country got value for Government subsidies to these institutions. Better spend the money in giving prizes for the best farms. As for the proposal to subsidise a religious denomination to promote immigration, the experience of Queensland proved that assisted immigration was a failure. It was said Canada profited by the system, but immigrants were attracted by Canada's climate, somewhat similar to that of Britain; and the same could be said of the United States and New Zealand. The Eastern States failed to attract immigrants, because these could not be provided with land in the well-watered areas close to markets. There was not enough land for their own people, who had been forced out to the ill-favoured zones, where by reason of drought their lives were a bitter struggle for existence. Here we had better make available for settlement land along existing railways, adopting the policy of New Zealand by imposing a graduated land tax to compel those who held large areas not properly cultivated to either cultivate them or throw them open for settlement. If such people tried to evade the tax by setting nominal valuations on their land, deal with them by a measure like the New Zealand Compulsory Purchase Act. Not till suitable land was made available for settlement could we attract immigrants from the East or from the old country; and when land was available special subsidies to religious denominations would be needless. The Minister made a mistake in thus trying to encourage settlers. The cost of clearing land was often a bar to settlement, preventing a poor man from discharging his mortgage till he reached old age. The proposed immigration subsidy had better be spent in clearing land to attract the right class of settler.

MR. BURGESS: Clearing land had often been advocated; but for this purpose £2,000 would be useless, nor was it necessary. Within the last two years immigrants from the Eastern States had, after being 12 months on land on the Great Southern Railway, cleared it and put 1,000 acres each under crop. Plenty of similar land was now available, and settlement was proceeding every day. People could clear the land immediately and get in a crop during the first year.

MR. PURKISS: Having had much experience on the land, he knew that settlers must have sufficient capital to clear the ground, fence it, provide ploughs, horses, carts, and machinery, and wait two years before growing enough corn to feed themselves and families. If a settler had no capital he became a slave and a beggar for the rest of his life. That applied to the best farming districts of Australasia. Poor settlers were either under the whip of the mortgagee or of the landlord.

MR. DAGLISH asked the Minister as to the allegations made by Mr. Schmidt, formerly engaged as a tobacco expert. Mr. Schmidt made serious statements as to the alleged hindrances placed in the way of his experiments, which experiments, if successful, would have been very profitable to the State. As to immigration there was no necessity to take the exceptional course of subsidising the Salvation Army. Why have an Agent General in England if he could not do all that was necessary to bring our resources under the notice of people likely to prove useful citizens? This country was not getting the value it ought to receive from the operations of Agent General and his staff. There was also a large field in the Eastern States from which suitable immigrants might be drawn, if proper steps were taken to make known to them such inducements as this State was offering to immigrants from the old country. There was a considerable influx of people from the Eastern States to South Africa, many of those persons intending to enter into farming there; and if we could place before those persons the inducements this country offered, many of them would come here and, having some means, could enter into farming under suitable conditions. Religious organisations were

not likely to send out the class of immigrants suitable for this country, for we did not want men without means, nor did we want men who when they came here would congregate in the towns and start agitations. Many inquiries were received from people in the Eastern States by friends or relatives here, and if those persons could have the inducements placed before them they would probably be attracted here to a large extent. He did not believe so much in advertising as in personal effort such as lecturing, because a suitable lecturer could not only place the attractions of the country fairly before the people, but could answer questions such as might arise as the result of his remarks, and this could not be done through the medium of advertisements or pamphlets. We should send a lecturer to the Eastern States with that object, and should extend to immigrants who had some capital the same assistance as we offered to people in Great Britain. We should exhaust the opportunities of getting Australian immigrants before drawing on labour markets in older countries.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: What this State needed above all things was population, and every possible effort should be made to attract population. The method of doing it suggested by the member for Subiaco was very difficult to put into operation, because to send lecturers into the Eastern States would be regarded as an unfriendly action both by the people and the Governments there. Following up the measures adopted by a previous Minister for Lands in regard to advertising, the present Minister had taken steps to give every publicity to the inducements which this country was offering, and in this way information had been spread to a large extent and was the means of bringing numbers of people here. He knew that many inquiries from outside were made through business people in the different districts, as to the land and the conditions existing here; and these inquiries indicated that a large number of settlers were coming from the Eastern States. Still it was not to those States we should look for a large increase in our population. We should not try to deplete those other States for the benefit of this State, but rather try to induce people to come here from the old

world, as was done by the Government of Canada. The inducements offered by Canada were no better than those offered by this State, but the distance from the old world to Canada was so short and the owners of railways in Canada were offering such liberal facilities for people to settle on land along their railways, that these had a great attraction for immigrants. The railways of this State were built for the purpose of opening up the country, and although the privileges given to travel by railway in search of suitable land were sometimes abused, we must put up with that and go on trying to attract more population. We wished to settle people on the large areas available in this country, and as to the low prices for agricultural produce now ruling here, ups and downs in prices must be expected, for while last year the prices were extremely high, this year they were on a downward grade. Still fluctuations which were unavoidable should not deter men who were earnestly desirous of settling on the land and cultivating it. We should do our best to induce more people to come here, notwithstanding what had been said about the superfluity of labour in this State. He knew many instances of men settled along the Great Southern railway who began a few years ago with nothing, and had made themselves practically independent of outside help, though not to such an extent as to put them in affluent circumstances. Some men could not succeed even with capital, while others succeeded in spite of many difficulties. The great drawback was that we were apt to get the wrong class of people to settle on the land. For instance, when there was retrenchment in the public service a few years ago, many of those who were retrenched said they would like to settle on the land; but when such suggestions were made to him, he advised the men that they were not suited for that class of work and ought not to try it, as they were not likely to make a success of farming. The present Minister for Lands had an opportunity of showing what could be done in the way of land settlement during the next two or three years. We wanted more population, and when it reached a million in number we should then see what could be done with the country. Let the

question of the labour market settle itself. A fair living wage should be paid, of course, but a country like this should not be hampered by restrictions imposed in the interests of labour organisations. It was the duty of any Government to do all in its power to induce immigration; and while Canada was offering such great inducements, this made our case the harder. All parts of England had been placarded for the purpose of inducing people to emigrate to Canada; and lecturers, some of them having practical experience, were sent to England to demonstrate to people there what could be done by settlers in Canada. Ninety per cent. of the people brought here and sent along the Great Southern Railway became discontented and left for other States, because of the misrepresentations made to them. There were not sufficient people in the country to develop our resources. The country required opening up, but we must have the right sort of people brought here to do that work. Some people if placed on the land would starve. We required men who knew something of the business they they would have to engage in and who would make a success of it. If good could be accomplished by the methods the Minister intended to adopt, he (Mr. Piesse) would support them, but he preferred the Minister to take the same course that Canada was taking. However, the Minister had made a start perhaps not in the direction which the country desired, at any rate it was a commencement, and we should await the result.

MR. HAYWARD: Four years ago when in England he expected to have no difficulty in getting agricultural labourers, but in travelling through the districts of England he found that it would be hopeless to try and obtain agricultural labourers there, in fact there were not sufficient in that country for their own requirements. In going through villages he saw cottages formerly occupied by agricultural labourers, and these cottages were going to decay. He had in his possession a letter from a person in England which stated that there were not half the labourers in that country that were required. It was almost hopeless trying to get agricultural labourers from the old country now.

MR. JACOBY: Advertising our land in the other States could not be looked upon as unfriendly. Queensland advertised very largely throughout the Commonwealth every time new agricultural areas were opened up in that State, and on every occasion comments of a very friendly nature were made. There should be no hesitation in trying to induce people from the other States to come here, and if we succeeded in preventing people from going to South Africa, we should be doing good to Australia as a whole. The advertisement which appeared in the *Australasian* was amply justified. He would like to see advertisements in the newspapers of the other States, particularly those of South Australia. As to emigration we should not do anything in a haphazard style. There must be some definite scheme of settlement. There was very little prospect of getting the class of men we required from the old country, and the people likely to be sent out through religious bodies would not suit our purposes. If we desired to keep men here we must have them settled on the soil. Any scheme of immigration adopted must be one of settlement, and any other scheme of immigration should be carried out by the Commonwealth. He had urged the Minister for Lands to adopt a scheme that was tried years ago with success in South Australia. He had pointed out that it was doubtful if we could get the right class of people from the old country, and he anticipated before long, instead of agricultural people leaving England to come here they would return to the old country, if the fiscal scheme of Mr. Chamberlain was carried out. In various parts of the continent of Europe the right class of men for this country could be found, especially from some parts of Germany. Danes and Finns would make excellent settlers. There was a suggestion that something might be done in regard to getting Polish settlers, but he did not think that class suitable. If anything was done, it could only be by an organised scheme, where a specific piece of country was set apart and a whole village transported. We had, as an example, the success of the German settlements in South Australia. People came out in large bodies and settled together in a district by them-

selves. They brought their old customs with them, their church and their pastor, and became a comfortable community. For an organised scheme there was chance of success. He would like to know what was proposed to be done in regard to the fruit fly, what steps the Minister proposed to take, and whether any inquiry had been made in regard to any scheme of land clearing. This matter was touched on by the member for York, and he agreed with that member, but the scheme propounded by that member was hardly suitable for agricultural districts. A clearing scheme might be advisable in respect of fruit-growing, and though expensive the work might be profitable. Inquiries might be made as to the experiments conducted in New South Wales. Those of Canada were successful. Mr. Dougall, who had done yeoman service to our farmers by improving their manure supply, instructing them in its use, and preventing fraud, had been unfairly treated by the Government. For years he was analytical chemist to the department at a remuneration of some £30 a year; yet his service was dispensed with and the work done by the Government Chemist. That the latter officer was not an agricultural chemist was clearly demonstrated in respect of the Fertilisers Bill; for he, after altering a recommendation of Mr. Dougall's, had to admit his mistake. As to immigration, if we ever sent a lecturer to the old country, send a more suitable man than the last lecturer.

MR. FOULKES: Agriculturists in other States should be induced to settle on our land. This policy, far from being unfriendly to the other States, would prove highly beneficial to them by rescuing their farmers now suffering from bad seasons. In South Australia particularly, large numbers of agriculturists were dissatisfied with their prospects. In view of the immigration to South Africa, farmers in the East should be shown that there was no necessity to leave Australia in order to obtain good soil, a suitable climate, and a ready market. Any attempt on our part to attract farmers from Great Britain would be hopeless, for Canada held the field, mainly because of its proximity. A man who went to Canada could get back to

England within 10 days for a few pounds, while if he went to Australia his chances of returning were considered remote. Three years ago, when in England, he noted how Canada advertised her lands; and we should advertise similarly in the Eastern States. In 1895 or 1896 Canada sent 100 farmers to Great Britain to travel through each county, spreading information. In 1898 she induced the Royal Agricultural Society to select two leading English farmers, who at the expense of the Dominion Government were taken through Canada to see the country for themselves. Let us send half a dozen farmers from the Katanning district to the East. This was a splendid opportunity of settling immigrants in that district, now that a railway was to be constructed from Narrogin to Collie; for the whole of the land would thus be taken up in two or three years.

MR. MORAN: Do not run away with the idea that we were ahead of all the Eastern States in agriculture. Our land was not so good as that of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. We had less good land in proportion to our area; but our climate was milder and more equable. He protested against the perpetual cry for immigration from anywhere and everywhere. The aim of good government was not to force immigration but to make happy and contented the people already in the country. In hardly any State in the world, not excepting Canada, was more satisfactory settlement proceeding than in this. One would think settlement was at a standstill; whereas our producers were rapidly overhauling our limited market, and must soon compete with the outside world. Our farmers did not yet know what competition meant, nor what it was to farm under adverse conditions. No farmers elsewhere had such advantageous circumstances surrounding their industry as farmers in Western Australia.

MR. BURGESS: During the last ten years.

MR. MORAN: Yes; and before that it was, he admitted, a disheartening game. The "second birth" in Western Australia occurred when the goldfields broke out, and since that time the farmers had their opportunity. But when the local markets were overtaken, as they probably would be within a short

time, then would come the hardships and the severe competition which farmers must face in this country as farmers elsewhere had to do. Were we so willing to run men on to the land, knowing that within a few years the production would overtake the local requirements, that then would come a time of severe competition, and that if farmers here had to compete in the export of wheat they must compete against the world. At present the agricultural settlement in this State was going on in an eminently satisfactory way, and success had attended our efforts in the main, though many of the new settlers now going on the land would not stay there because we could see they would strike the market when it became full. Mixed farming, as suggested, would then be their only salvation. This brought up a question in which he was deeply interested, that of the culture of artificial grasses in Western Australia. Unless an artificial grass could be found that would flourish here as a fodder-plant and keep stock in condition through the dry summer, dairying and the feeding of stock could not succeed. The summer here was dryer and more trying than in any other part of Australia. No part of Australia was so poor as this in natural grasses. Leaving out Kimberley, which was tropical, no part of this country south of Geraldton had a natural grass that would keep stock in condition through the dry summer; for though the natural grasses here bloomed in winter, which was the only time for growth in this climate, these grasses were useless for stock-feeding in summer, as the grass turned brown in a fortnight. This made dairying impossible; and even in the south-west of this State with its good rainfall, there was no natural grass that would keep stock well through the summer. He hoped that some artificial grass suitable for this purpose would be discovered, though it would not pay to cultivate on a large scale artificial grasses that had to be manured. He believed there was a future ahead of lucerne in Western Australia. It flourished splendidly in Queensland and New South Wales, but he did not think it would grow here as profusely as in the Eastern States; and although it would grow in our south-west district it would not flourish to such extent as to make dairy-

ing a payable industry. In the majority of summers in New South Wales, showers fell that kept the grasses alive; but in this State the climate was too dry in the long summer for natural grasses. He believed much might be done yet in Western Australia by irrigation, and there were parts of the State very favourable for that purpose where great stretches of water might be dammed up along brooks and rivers. On the Canterbury Plains (N.Z. South Island) he saw a great object lesson in irrigation, and would like to see experiments made here. There was this advantage in the climate of Western Australia, that the rainfall was regular; and if we could only get cheap irrigation and artificial fodder-plants, this would become a splendid country for dairying. When once the farmers here overtook the market in wheat, they would have to compete against the cheapest labour in the world. If the grasses here would not keep dairy cattle in good condition through the summer, those cattle could not breed well; although for five months in the year the natural grasses were so abundant that all the stock in Australia might be fed in this State. Having lately travelled through New Zealand and the Eastern States, he knew of nothing that had done so much for Australia and New Zealand as artificial grasses. The enormous wealth that was pouring into New Zealand now as the result of artificial grasses was marvellous, and indeed there was very little natural grass left there. The artificial grasses and fodders of New Zealand were so good that pounds per acre were spent in manuring fields. In Western Australia very little effort was being made in the direction of mixed farming. We had done nobly in wheat culture. The battle of advertising Western Australia was done as far as Australia was concerned, for people were coming here. When he (Mr. Moran) joined the Throssell Government he differed with the Premier on this matter. Mr. Throssell did not think it would be good form to advertise in the other States, but his (Mr. Moran's) argument was that now we had federation, all Australia should know the different parts of the country; that there was no more harm in advertising Western Australia in the Eastern States than for York

farmers to exhibit at the Bunbury show. The difficulty in this country was to bridge over the summer. There was the compensating advantage in the long winter rains, but that did not overcome the difficulty. The time would come when the Avon River would be locked, and he expected more in the direction of irrigation in the future than in any other direction. He had raised the question of the ability of Mr. Crawford to fill the position of Director of Agriculture. Mr. Crawford was a friend of his, and he found him a loyal and honest officer; but loyalty and honesty might be found in 99 out of every 100. That was not sufficient. He did not doubt Mr. Crawford's qualifications; but when communications from various parts of the State were received stating that from Mr. Crawford's past experience he had not that knowledge to direct the whole Department of Agriculture, it was one's duty to bring the matter forward. Before a permanent appointment was made the position should be advertised, for the best man in Australia might be obtained for the money Mr. Crawford was getting. In South Australia they got a splendid man in Mr. Laurie, who was now in New Zealand, and that gentleman believed that there was as much in the practical work of the farm as in the theoretical lecture-room or laboratory. This gentleman was seized with the idea that New Zealand's future lay in the growth of stock for export; so he kept all the breeds pure, and the crossing and grading of stock were studied. Attention was being paid to this matter with good result, and we should have to do the same here. The time had come in Australia for improving the breed of dairy cattle. It was being found that to dairy successfully one must decrease the size of the stock and increase their efficiency as milk givers. Shorthorn and Ayrshire cattle were mostly valued for this purpose. In Western Australia a greater improvement in ordinary farming cattle was necessary. It was to be hoped Mr. Crawford's services would prove of value in this direction, as he understood Mr. Crawford was an expert in the breeding of stock.

THE MINISTER: The discussion and criticism which had fallen from members on the vote for the Agricultural Depart-

ment was welcome, because officers of big departments were often apt to think their Minister unduly harsh, and it was a relief to know that when the annual Estimates were considered these officers could see and appreciate for themselves that the obligation was cast on a Minister of justifying the votes. The member for Kanowna had made reference to a suggestion which was thrown out designedly in the Press for public criticism, and at the same time to afford members an opportunity of thinking it over in their minds and then expressing their views when on the Estimates. There was no better way of giving the suggestion publicity, in order that the Press and members should have an opportunity of expressing their opinions before any obligation was entered into. That course was preferable to waiting until the recess and then embarking on a scheme which would not be palatable to the House. So far as immigrants were concerned, if the right class could be introduced it would be wise to obtain them. There were numbers of files in the Lands Office containing letters from reputable citizens who were going home for the benefit of their health stating that they were prepared to bring under the notice of people in the old country, by lantern slides and pictures, the desirability of young men coming to this State. Each person had a scheme to submit. Recently an archdeacon of the Anglican Church approached him (the Minister) on this matter. This clergyman was anxious, after many years' residence in one of the agricultural districts, to do something. The last who came to him was Lieut.-Colonel Ainsworth of the Salvation Army. The scheme did not apply only to the Army but to any approved organisation. In the past if a person was nominated, and the nomination was approved of by the Agent-General, the State paid one half of the passage-money, that was if the passage-money did not exceed £35, but he (the Minister) had an idea that if a man paid his own passage-money and had funds to settle in this State, after that person had been on the land for six or 12 months he should receive his passage-money back, and it might be worth while letting this be known. His object was not to introduce farm labourers, but the sons of farmers who

were crowded out of England. At home they had to pay heavy rents, and had no hope of becoming owners of the property. Here they could become proprietors, and bequeath the land to their children. Whatever scheme of immigration was adopted, members need have no apprehension that the derelicts of the Salvation Army would be permitted even to land in this State. Such an idea was too absurd to be countenanced. Possibly some members who did not admire the Salvation Army were glad to have an opportunity of criticising the proposal. Whatever came of the scheme, members could rest assured that the doubts in the mind of the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie) were without warrant. The member for Hannans (Mr. Bath) spoke of subsidies to agricultural societies. He (the Minister) freely admitted intending to insure an adequate return for such subsidies. However, agricultural societies now gave prizes for the best farm and the best orchard; and when he was last at Bridgetown he had driven round with the judge to the farms in the district in order that the judge might give his final decision. This experience showed that some subsidies were well merited. The member for York (Mr. Burges) drew attention to the cost of clearing land. He (the Minister) had repeatedly noticed that after the first year's ring-barking of our best salmon gum country, which produced record yields, the land was brought under the plough for £1 an acre; and this year, when he was last in Pingelly with the Speaker, he saw east of that town a tract of forest gum country, the property of McLean brothers, then being cleared at 19s. 6d. per acre, the produce of which was subsequently on exhibition at the York show. These young men, after unsuccessfully working alluvial on the goldfields, had settled in the Pingelly country, starting with nothing, and had now placed themselves in what they considered an assured position for life.

MR. BATH: How did they keep themselves at first, if they had nothing?

THE MINISTER: When strong men started ringbarking, they generally did it quickly. Having done it, these men took contracts to work for other people. Did the hon. member think they would sit down and wait for the timber to die?

Once the timber was dead they fenced and stocked the land, and then went to the Agricultural Bank, which advanced them 75 per cent. on the value of their clearing. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) referred to the case of Mr. Schmidt, the tobacco expert. Mr. Schmidt had not been harshly or unfairly treated. He (the Minister) would not like to say anything against Mr. Schmidt, save that he embarked on an unfortunate enterprise for which the State not only found the money, but found and cleared the land at Hamel, and put it in a fit state to grow anything which the country could produce. When ultimately it was determined that the experiment was a farce and could go no farther, the department told Mr. Schmidt that though his service was dispensed with he could use the land, the buildings, and the plant, free of charge, and make what profit he could. Mr. Schmidt might have gone on; but he did not. As to immigration, there had been an exodus from the Eastern States; and surely we could not have a more suitable settler than a man born in some part of Australia, no matter which part so long as it was outside of a city. A man with some experience of country life would make a good settler. There was now an exodus from South Africa; and the object of the department was to try to induce both emigrants from and persons returning to the Eastern States to inspect our lands. For this object railway passes were issued. The member for the Williams (Mr. Piesse) feared the system might be abused. When he (the Minister) took office it was not safeguarded; but now an applicant had to swear a declaration as to the purpose for which he wished a pass; the pass was then issued, a duplicate declaration sent to the land office of the district he wished to visit, and the land agent reported the result. As soon as Mr. Ranford took control of the agencies he would doubtless check any small abuses he might find. The member for the Swan (Mr. Jacoby) referred to experimental orchards. After consideration, 150 trees had been planted at the experimental farm, Upper Chapman, and three acres of trees at the Narrogin farm. The search for the fruit fly parasite was to be continued. The department had anticipated experimenting with tropical fruits at Carnarvon, but

the bore water was not suitable and the attempt was abandoned. It was now proposed to utilise the prison labour at Wyndham to make a nucleus of an experimental orchard. Any proposal the hon. member might submit would be considered. The question of clearing Crown lands had not been lost sight of; and he had hoped to have an opportunity of taking some members to see the result of the experiments at Hamel. Only last week he had heard of one settler there, Mr. James Hart, from Kalgoorlie, who, after doing clerical work all his life, went there six or eight weeks ago and now had three acres under potatoes. This new system of improving Crown lands was not introduced at haphazard, but only after conference with the Director of Agriculture, the Manager of the Agricultural Bank, and other men of experience. Mr. Padbury, senior, advocated the system for many years. The extension of the system must be considered on its merits. Personally he (the Minister) was inclined to extend it, and to offer to any man willing and able to work an opportunity of settling on the land; and he was endeavouring to formulate a scheme to give such opportunities to suitable men who had sufficient funds to keep themselves in food for the first 12 months. That was his ambition, though the scheme had not yet taken definite shape. The member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) referred to Mr. Dougall, an agricultural chemist. Before he (the Minister) took office the Government Analyst was appointed agricultural chemist. Surely the hon. member, who had sat on the select committee on the Fertilisers Bill, must admit that Mr. Mann proved himself to be thoroughly conversant with the subject? Moreover, Mr. Mann had expressed a wish that he might have an opportunity of advising as to the manures suitable for the Government experimental plots; hence the results of his suggested experiments could be compared with those of Mr. Dougall. He was going to adopt that system in the future, and would see what results were obtained. He had every confidence in Mr. Mann as Government Analyst, and was hopeful that the fees for agricultural analysis might be reduced.

MR. JACOBY: Analysis in agricultural chemistry was only a secondary matter,

MR. MORAN : It was only secondary even in mining.

THE MINISTER had no apprehension that the markets of this State would be overhauled in a few years, as suggested by one member.

MR. MORAN : That remark was made in reference to wheat, not to products generally. In dairy produce there was a glorious market ahead in this State, if fodder plants that would stand the summer could be grown here.

THE MINISTER : There was a great deal to undertake in supplying the local markets before outside competition would be necessary. As to there being no natural grasses for dairying south of Geraldton, he had some knowledge of dairying in other States, especially in Victoria, and knew that where English grasses had been sown and remained they were found to be the best fodder for dairying in Victoria. The home of dairying was not where natural grasses flourished through the year, but where artificial grasses grew abundantly; and of course he was speaking of Australia. Reports on the subject had been received by the department, and he hoped later on to inspect some of the country with a view of seeing whether any grasses could be introduced in the South-West. He knew many persons in the Eastern States who would gladly rush to occupy country here which had been favourably reported on, if it was found equal to reports recently sent to the department. In framing the Estimates of this department, every care and attention had been given to the details, and these were supported by the senior officer of the department, and by officers of the various divisions.

MR. HASTIE asked where the money was to come from for attracting more immigration. Apparently it was to come from loan funds, because on these Estimates only £2,000 was provided.

THE MINISTER : The immigration scheme mentioned in his remarks had not been entered into yet; but even if entered into, the vote of £2,000 on the estimates was not new. The money in that vote had always been used to pay the passages of immigrants from the Eastern States and from the old country. In regard to passages from the Eastern States, the repayment of the money was extended

over a period, and that money was coming back to the department gradually.

MR. MORAN asked if applications from people settled on mallee country in Victoria were numerous. When he was Minister for Lands he sent a lecturer through that country, and there was a ready response; but when those farmers arrived here with implements and stock they were taxed at the customs. Probably most of the settlement which was expected would come from the mallee country of Victoria and the northern portion of South Australia; not much from Queensland. Indeed when he was visiting Queensland recently, farmers were arriving on the Darling Downs by dozens from the southern States and some from New Zealand. Land on the Darling Downs was taken up in 360 acre lots at 2s. 6d. an acre. The late devastating drought had kept that country from mopping up settlers from other States. When he was on the Darling Downs, he saw the richest agricultural land he had seen anywhere. The class of men who were likely to come here were farmers who had been growing wheat in comparatively dry country, men used to large areas giving a light yield.

THE MINISTER : Settlers were arriving here not only from the mallee country, but the principal influx was from South Australia. As to the duty on secondhand plant and other charges for putting new settlers on the land, these were now made an ultimate charge against the land, and that system was introduced since he took charge of the department.

At 6-30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair taken by Mr. FOULKES.

[Discussion on items followed.]

Item—Orchard Inspectors, £1,000 :

MR. JACOBY : In the course of two or three years every orchard was inspected, and an opportunity should be taken at the time of inspection of gaining valuable information regarding the distribution of the various fruits and the suitability of a district for growing fruits. New settlers wishing to grow a certain class of fruit did not know which district was most suitable. In the United States and Canada the agricultural department had

a plan on which was marked the districts favourable to the growth of certain fruits. This could be done here and give great assistance to newcomers, also to people already in the country. In time a map could be prepared by which it could be seen the locations suitable for the different fruits.

THE MINISTER: The fruit inspectors had certain duties to perform. Mr. Beattie was in charge of the fruit sheds at Fremantle, and the Chief Inspector was Mr. Hooper. There were other orchard inspectors. Only recently Mr. Vaughan was transferred to Albany, where he was land agent under the Conditional Purchase Inspector; he was also fruit inspector and inspector of orchard pests in that locality. The suggestion of the member for the Swan would be brought under the notice of the Director of Agriculture to see if additional data could be gathered.

Item—Librarian and Sub-editor of *Journal*, £180 :

MR. MORAN: The Government had unduly increased the salaries of high officials and had neglected to do justice to the under-paid but deserving officers in the junior ranks. That was characteristic of the Government, who were not popular with the civil servants; and any good Government ought to be popular with a deserving class who were loyal to the State and alive to its interests. In some cases the Minister had followed his own devices. The Minister eulogised Mr. Crawford's ability to administer the Department of Agriculture; but the file of correspondence regarding the application for increase made by Mr. Baker, the editor of the *Journal*, showed how much the Minister thought of Mr. Crawford's ability. Mr. Baker wrote to Mr. Crawford that, having heard from the late director that the Minister intended to reduce the amount of increase to his (Mr. Baker's) salary, as recommended by the Commission, from £25 to £10, he asked for consideration of his case. When he was invited to join the department at £150 for the first year, he was promised that, if he gave satisfaction, he would be recommended for an increase at least equal to the minimum paid by private firms for similar work; that on the death of Mr. Cowan he was requested

to take the editorship and full control of the *Journal*; that when the Estimates for 1902-3 were being framed he was informed that no increases were to be granted, and that he should await the report of the Royal Commission, as any increase recommended by the Commission would be given him. Hence he waited. The Commission recommended him for a greater increase than any other officer in the department, acknowledging that his position was the most underpaid; that he had devoted the whole of his time at home to departmental work, and had, as was shown by Press notices, greatly improved the journal; that he had refused two offers to join private firms; that the editors of small country papers received £5 a week, and reporters on the metropolitan dailies from £4 to £7; and that he had a family of eight young children, whom his salary was far from sufficient to keep in the necessaries of life. Mr. Crawford forwarded this to Minister, with a minute that Mr. Baker stated it was impossible for him to keep out of debt at his present salary; that, failing an increase, Mr. Baker must try to get another situation, and that, should he leave, the department could not procure a competent man at the same salary; that the Commission had recommended £200, and that to replace him that sum at least must be paid. To this the Minister replied: "This matter has been dealt with on the basis controlling others. No exception can be made." What the basis was these minutes did not disclose.

THE MINISTER: The Estimates did.

MR. MORAN: In reply, Mr. Baker wrote to his chief expressing ignorance of the basis the Minister referred to, and drawing attention to the fact that he had served for the last 15 months on the assurance that he would receive the increase recommended by the Commissioners; and that some officers had received the increases recommended. Mr. Baker therefore requested permission to wait on the Premier in reference to the case. To this the Minister replied: "This point has been dealt with on the basis of equity. Mr. Baker must wait till the Estimates are printed. The salary fixed is deemed adequate for the office." Why should Mr. Baker wait till the Estimates were printed?

THE MINISTER: To know what salary was set down for him, as others had to do.

MR. MORAN: Possibly he knew.

THE MINISTER: If so, he got the information surreptitiously.

MR. MORAN: Mr. Baker returned to the charge, and pointed out in another minute to the Acting Director that the Minister must be in total ignorance of the duties appertaining to the position, or else Dr. Jameson, Mr. Paterson, the Commissioners, and Mr. Crawford, were wrong in unanimously recommending the increase. Moreover, he had been induced to remain in the service by promises of an increase, and this he had a right to receive. The Estimates being available, Mr. Baker again wrote complaining that his promised increase had been farther reduced to £5, and asking whether this additional reduction was a mark of the Minister's displeasure. Mr. Baker pointed out that the Chief Clerk, salary £250, was recommended by the Commission for an increase of £20 and received £10; that the accountant, salary £190, received an increase of £20; while he (Mr. Baker) receiving £175, was recommended for an increase of £25, and actually received £5. The Minister replied that the salary fixed was deemed adequate to the office, and denied that he knew of any promise made to induce Mr. Baker to remain in the service. The Minister used his own predeliction in that matter, and was not guided by his expert officers and did not follow the recommendation of the Commissioners. Inexperienced as he was, he refused to increase the salary of an officer upon the recommendation of responsible officers of the department and the recommendation of the Commissioners; yet at the same time he gave an increase of £50 to another officer who was promoted over the heads of older officers that were more deserving.

THE MINISTER: It was almost a matter for regret that if the Government gave an increase of £50 to any officer in the Lands Department that increase was not warranted. The member for West Perth did not direct attention to that increase when these estimates were before the Committee, and the item was not even mentioned. The Commissioners classified not Mr. Chitty Baker but the position Mr. Baker held, and said that position

should carry a salary of £200 a year. Mr. Baker in previous years had been drawing a salary of £175. The committee of Under Secretaries classified the office he held as being worth £190 a year. These estimates were prepared before the Acting Director of Agriculture came on the scene, and the salary, after careful consultation with the then Director of Agriculture, Mr. Paterson, was fixed with an increase of £5 as being equal to the service rendered.

MR. MORAN: The papers he had read to the Committee showed that the Minister was wrong in his statement. Mr. Paterson did not fix that salary; on the contrary he recommended an increase. This showed what a lame excuse the Minister had made. Why should the recommendation of the present Director of Agriculture be treated as waste paper in recommending an increase of Mr. Baker's salary, no matter what the previous director might have done? This question had been going on long before the Lands Estimates were fixed up. He denied that the increase of £50 to a favoured officer was allowed to go through this House without remark. He had said then that the increase was given through favouritism, and was not merited.

THE MINISTER: That statement was incorrect.

MR. MORAN: The increase of £50 to that officer was not made on the recommendation of any responsible officer of the department, but was an increase given through the personal predeliction of the Minister. Those who recommended an increase in the salary of Mr. Baker were the previous Minister for Lands (Dr. Jameson), also Mr. Paterson, the Public Service Commissioners, and the present Director of Agriculture; so that if the Minister was right, all these persons were wrong. The present Director of Agriculture not only recommended the increase, but stated there would be difficulty in getting another man to fill the position for £200 a year.

MR. PIGOTT: The case made out by the hon. member showed once more how urgent was the necessity for a classification of the public service. He regretted to say that from the reports read, and they were presumably correct copies, this officer had not received fair treatment. So long as the service was without a

classification, items like this were sure to crop up, and this case showed the urgent necessity of bringing about a classification. If the papers read to the House were not true copies, as they purported to be, that officer could not be dispensed with too soon. So long as an officer did his work satisfactorily he ought to be paid a reasonable amount.

THE MINISTER: According to the Estimates for 1901-2, the librarian and sub-editor of the *Journal* received £100; the next year £150 was on the Estimates, that being raised to £175; and now it was proposed to pay the officer £180, after three years' service. Section 24 of the Public Service Act stated that no official information out of the strict course of official duty should be given, directly or indirectly, by any public servant, without the express direction or permission of a Minister. The documents read by the member for West Perth were interesting evidence to the contrary. The Estimates were prepared by the Agricultural Department, and the officer was recommended by the Under Secretary for £190. The Royal Commission recommended £200 for this position. After careful consultation with the then Director of Agriculture (Mr. Paterson) as to the merits of this officer and in regard to the work given to the department, the value of the services were fixed at £180, an increase of £5.

MR. MORAN: Did the Minister wish to convey to the House that this officer started to work at a salary of £100 per annum? No high-handed answers would go down with members, who had their rights as representing the people. Members were the masters of Ministers, the people were our masters, and when Estimates were before members we were entitled to information. The Minister's reply was to the effect that he could not answer the charge brought, but that he would prosecute and persecute the officer who held the position. Did Mr. Chitty Baker hold the position at £100 a year, or was it then held by another officer who filled other positions? It was understood Mr. Lindley Cowan was editor when the salary was £100 a year, and Mr. Cowan held other positions which gave him a salary of several hundred pounds a year.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Cowan was not only editor but head of the department.

MR. MORAN: Was the Minister for Lands right in saying that the officer held the position in 1901 at £100 a year, and that £180 was proposed this year? There had been an attempt to mislead members.

MR. THOMAS: The Minister had unconsciously attempted to mislead the Committee as to this item. Not knowing the facts of the case, one wished an answer to the question put by the member for West Perth, as the Minister had led members to believe that Mr. Chitty Baker was appointed at £100 a year, and was now to get £180 a year.

MR. CONNOR: Did the Minister refuse to answer the question?

MR. MORAN: It was charity to let the matter pass. The Minister was too flabbergasted to answer the question.

MR. DAGLISH: In reply to the Minister that it was wrong for any officer in the public service to give information to a member of Parliament respecting the salary, the intention of Parliament in passing the section read was to prevent the divulging to the public of information that should be kept secret. It was not intended to prevent an officer of the service who had received unjust treatment from appealing to a member of Parliament. At present there was no classification, and no civil servant had any tenure in his position. An officer could not rely on retaining his position or getting any encouragement, and the only way open to an officer who felt aggrieved was to appeal to members. Until there was a properly constituted body independent of the Government to deal with the public service, and until there was proper classification and security of tenure, civil servants were right in appealing to members if an injustice had been done them. An officer at present was at the mercy of his immediate superior; and if the Minister disagreed with that immediate superior, then the officer was at the mercy of the Minister. There should be an independent board to whom appeal could be made, or there should be classification under which each officer would know his position, rights, and disabilities. Under present conditions, one must strongly object to this section of the Act being enforced against

an officer who was trying to secure redress of a genuine grievance. The Minister should withdraw an evident threat against the officer in question.

MR. GORDON : The Minister had subjected himself to much abuse in attempting to shield his officer. As librarian, Mr. Baker had to dust the books and record outgoing and incoming; as sub-editor of the *Journal* he had to take cuttings from different newspapers. Now that the facts were known, the Minister would probably ask for the abolition of the office.

MR. MORAN : It appeared that the Minister was satisfied with the officer; but when the head of the department and Mr. Paterson recommended an increase, on whose authority was the judgment of those officers questioned? On that of the member who had just spoken.

MR. STONE : As an agricultural member, he would be sorry to see the *Journal* abolished. The officer's salary should be increased to £200 a year. The *Journal* was of interest to farmers.

MR. TAYLOR : The Minister was not fair to the member for West Perth when he induced that member to hand over the correspondence read.

THE MINISTER : The hon. member could have it back if desired.

MR. TAYLOR : Then the Minister quoted, as a threat of dismissal, a section from the Act, because he was unable in this House to vindicate his treatment of the officer. In the Minister such conduct was surprising; and the officer was entitled to be protected from such a brutal attack.

MR. DIAMOND : The officer in question might well say, "Save me from my friends." This was the worst case ever before the House of an attempt by a civil servant to browbeat his Minister and his departmental head in order to ventilate fancied grievances. The member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) had long occupied the position of the privileged bully of the House.

MR. MORAN demanded a withdrawal.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member must withdraw. It was a duty to suppress offensive personalities.

MR. DIAMOND withdrew the remark, and substituted the words "privileged jester and funny man."

THE CHAIRMAN : The expression must be withdrawn absolutely, without substituting an equivalent.

MR. DIAMOND withdrew the expression. The *Journal* consisted almost entirely of advertisements and newspaper clippings. A few notes on such subjects as "stud bulls" were followed by pages of cuttings from lectures on bacteria by Dr. Thurston, and a report of the Premier's speech at the Northam Show. Extracting these did not need much editorial skill. The member for West Perth said this officer used to be sole proprietor and editor of an agricultural journal in New South Wales. Some years ago the officer was secretary of the Trades and Labour Council in this State.

THE PREMIER hoped members would not have a personal discussion on any officer. Such discussion was unfair to the officer himself.

MR. MORAN : The minutes he had read were quoted because they were brought under his notice by the secretary of the Civil Service Association.

MR. DIAMOND repeated that the officer ought to say "Save me from my friends."

MR. THOMAS desired to discuss the item "Poultry £200."

THE CHAIRMAN : No items prior to "Orchard inspectors" could now be discussed.

MR. DAGLISH : Surely the Committee had a right to discuss any item so long as a later item had not been the subject of amendment or a division. Paragraph 3 of Standing Order 386 explicitly provided that after a question for omitting or reducing any item had been disposed of, no motion should be made or debate allowed on any preceding item. This implied that until such question had been dealt with, debate on preceding items was permissible.

PROCEDURE ON ITEMS—RULING.

THE CHAIRMAN : It was a long-established practice of the Committee not to discuss items already discussed or passed. The fact that items were not numbered did not affect the question.

MR. STONE : It was unfair that this year the items should be in many cases grouped together and not numbered. As well pass them all in a lump.

MR. THOMAS moved that the ruling of the Chairman be not agreed to.

THE SPEAKER (after the Chairman had stated the case) said: The custom has always been, since I entered the House, that a general discussion was taken on a first putting of a vote. After that, some member has specified an item on which he wished to speak. When I have been in the Chair, as soon as that item was mentioned I ticked it off, and never allowed any discussion on an item previous to that. My ruling is that it has been the custom adopted by the House, and I think it is a fair reading of the Standing Order.

DISCUSSION RESUMED.

MR. TAYLOR said he wished to speak to a certain item which had been passed. Could that item be dealt with on recommendation of the Estimates?

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Foulkes): Yes; on recommendation.

Item — Government Refrigerating Works, £1,590:

MR. MORAN asked whether careful inspection of meat in the cool chambers had been made since the time that attention was called to the existence of swine fever in the State? Had any diseased meat been found in the chambers? He had been told lately by owners of private refrigerating works that as many as five inspectors visited those private works on one day. Was there a similar state of things in connection with the Government works? Was a careful inspection made of the meat, and was this department working well? What revenue was received from it?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: A daily careful inspection of the meat was made, and only the other day the manager of the works complained that one, two, and sometimes three inspectors visited the works in a day and went through the cool chambers. The manager asked whether the same close inspection was devoted to other such works. He (the Minister) made inquiry, and the explanation was that fish was stored in the Government Works but not in other private refrigerating works, and this accounted for the visits of inspectors being so numerous. Some slight alterations in the refrigerating works were contemplated, and he believed the works

would pay interest and sinking fund comfortably. There was no trouble about overtime with the men.

Item—Experimental plots and farms, £3,000.

MR. ATKINS, referring to the experiment made by a tobacco expert, said he visited the experimental plot to see what was being done. It was well known that tobacco would grow in any temperate portion of Australia; but the difficulty was in growing it profitably because of the expensive labour. After looking over the plot where the expert conducted his experiment, he looked over the next plot where flowers and other things were growing, and he there saw a number of tobacco plants which had come up from seed scattered accidentally. The tobacco plants on the experimental plot were comparatively small, while those sown accidentally on the other plot were about 4 feet 6 inches high. The tobacco which the expert was taking all the trouble with was only 18 inches high. It was extraordinary to have a man paid by the State to grow tobacco, when the plant grew better wild. He could not see the necessity of paying a tobacco expert who was not able to grow tobacco £200 or £300 a year; and whoever put the man on was wasting money, and who took him off was doing good to the country.

THE MINISTER said he put the man off.

MR. WALLACE: It would be well if experimental orchards were not confined to the central part of the State, but were attempted also in the North. Fruit could be grown at Cue and at Mt. Magnet. Where the Government could get reliable men to take charge of a few fruit trees and vines, there the trees should be distributed. Near Cue was a good spot, where fresh water was obtainable. At Black Range was a place with good soil, and judging by the natural growth it would be a good place to experiment with fruit trees. People there were anxious to try and grow fruit trees, and if these persons made application for trees or vines and the Minister was satisfied the persons were responsible, would the trees be distributed to them?

MR. GORDON: From what one could gather, trees from the experimental farm were given to anyone who asked for them. This was an injustice to nurserymen who

grew trees and plants for sale. He believed since attention had been drawn to the matter this practice was stopped; if not he hoped it would be. Municipal councils obtaining trees from experimental farms ought to render an account of how the trees were progressing before they received more. There should be greater supervision.

MR. ATKINS: If anything was to be done in the way of starting experimental plots in the back country he advised experiments being made at Millie's Soak, five or six miles from Cue, where good fresh water could be obtained by sinking two feet.

MR. THOMAS: Last year £500 was voted for experimental plots and £569 13s. 9d. expended. This year the Government proposed to vote £3,000. He was glad to notice the increase, and was he correct in assuming that a portion of the money would be devoted to starting experimental farms on the eastern and other goldfields to encourage agriculture in those districts? He protested against the manner in which the experimental plots and farms were worked. Experimental plots should not be started in favoured places. He had been led to believe that on the Eastern Goldfields there was soil which was worth cultivating and an experimental plot should be started there; but the Government should pick an average spot, not favoured places like those referred to by the member for the Murray. Artificial manures should not be used nor should places be selected where water was bubbling up to within two feet of the surface. The Government should try to find out if something could be grown which would be of commercial advantage. If experimental farms were to be started on the Eastern and Northern Goldfields in the way in which experimental farms were run at present, they would be a howling failure as the farms had been a howling failure in the past. He (Mr. Thomas) visited the Paris Exhibition and saw the agricultural exhibits from Western Australia, and he saw wheat and other cereals which took the first prize amongst exhibits from all parts of the world; but on coming back he made inquiries and found that for experimental farms the Government picked the best pieces of land that could be obtained, with every

natural facility. At these farms little plots a few feet square were laid out, and wheat and lucerne and oats were grown in these little plots. The land selected was superior to that in the surrounding neighbourhood, and the land was treated with the best manures that money could buy, and fed with water by hand. The grain was produced and placed on a table, and sorted like pearls or diamonds might be sorted. The best grain was picked out and classed and put in a bottle, and then sent to the exhibitions as a fair sample of what could be grown in Western Australia. He entered his protest against carrying on experimental farms in the future as they had been carried on in the past. Was part of this increased amount to be spent on an experimental farm on the Eastern Goldfields, and part on a similar farm on the Northern Goldfields? There was on the goldfields soil worth cultivating. Would ordinary average plots be selected?

MR. HAYWARD: Not all the wheat which had taken prizes at the great exhibitions was grown on experimental farms. At the second London Exhibition the first prize was taken by wheat grown in a large field on the Collic River.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Wallace) was quite correct in referring to Bond Bros.' orchard, a photograph of which, recently received, showed that the fruit trees were growing luxuriantly. He (the Minister) would confer with the Acting Director of Agriculture as to the advisableness of establishing experimental plots at Millie's Soak and Black Range. The member for South Perth (Mr. Gordon) spoke of plants having been given away from the State nursery. It was the rule to give local governing bodies, schools, and similar institutions trees for their grounds. Complaints having been made some time ago that plants had been given away to private persons, it was found on investigation that the plants were given away because they were useless, and must otherwise have been destroyed. The practice, however, was improper, and had been stopped. The member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) asked why the vote had increased from £500 to £3,000. In the early stages, prior to this year, the two experi-

mental farms had been paid for out of loan. This year the cost came out of revenue. The hon. member was hardly correct in stating that such farms were started on some of the richest land in the State. Large areas comprised in the farms at the Upper Chapman and Narrogin contained much land inferior to what was known as third class; in fact, the object was to experiment with inferior lands as well as superior; and this year the crops taken off third-class lands at the Upper Chapman augured well for the future of the district, and formed a good object lesson to settlers. The hay yield, it appeared, was equal if not superior to the best private yield in the district. The older settlers, and some Pressmen who had visited the district, were highly pleased with the farm.

MR. THOMAS: The produce of the third-class land there would probably surpass that of first-class land elsewhere.

THE MINISTER: Surely not. The land in question had hitherto been regarded as sand plain. The hon. member's remarks as to special care being taken to produce sample wheat had no bearing except on an experimental plot at Hamel, where an expert was engaged in hybridising and producing special varieties, so that the wheat yield generally might be increased. The matter of an experimental farm on the Eastern Goldfields was receiving attention. The Minister for Works was considering whether it could be carried on in connection with the Coolgardie Water Scheme, and under the supervision of the Department of Agriculture.

MR. HOLMAN: Early in the session he suggested here that the Agricultural Department might assist occupiers of the garden areas dotted all over the Murchison Goldfields. The department should supply fruit trees, plants, and vegetables for experimental purposes, on the understanding that the recipients reported results, these results to be published for general information. On this matter he had written to the department, but had not received a reply. Some holders of garden areas offered to experiment and report. There were large numbers of spare plants at the experimental farms.

THE MINISTER: Not fruit trees. The suggestion, however, was worthy of consideration.

MR. WALLACE: The Royal Commission on Forestry suggested experiments, specially on the goldfields, where indigenous timber was scanty, with trees valuable for their timber as well as for ornament, such as Tasmanian blue gums and sugar gums. The wattles planted along the Eastern Railway were growing well. The Government might distribute shade trees to police stations and post offices, where there was generally a water supply, and might ultimately turn barren wastes into dense forests.

MR. THOMAS: The Minister dismissed in two words the question of a goldfields experimental farm. The sooner we ascertained whether we could cultivate goldfields waste lands, the better.

THE PREMIER: Did the hon. member suggest an experimental farm *plus* irrigation?

MR. THOMAS: No; not a farm using the water from the Scheme, but a plot under natural conditions. For some years past Coolgardie had 11 or 12 inches of rainfall, and nine inches sufficed for wheat if rain fell at the proper time. Secure an area of 100 or 200 acres between Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, in the grassy country, and ascertain what would grow there naturally.

THE MINISTER: With that object, inquiries as to the grounds of goldfields race-clubs had already been made.

MR. JACOBY warned the House against unduly encouraging people to embark on agriculture in dry country unsuitable for hay and cereals. This mistake had been made in South Australia. There being millions of acres of good land well watered, there should be no necessity to induce people to cultivate in dry areas, and he protested against any attempt to encourage them to do so.

MR. YELVERTON asked where the funds were to come from for experimental farms and plots, the amount in the estimates being £560.

THE MINISTER: This would come out of the loan vote for "development of agriculture."

MR. MORAN: Trees had been given away lavishly from State nurseries, not only to local bodies but to individuals. A number of nurserymen were growing

trees in and around Perth for sale as a business, and it was not fair to compete with them by giving trees away to individuals.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member would not object to give trees to local bodies, without going beyond them?

MR. MORAN would not object to that; but several of the nurserymen in and around Perth had asked him to call attention to this matter, as they thought it was not fair that the State should compete with them by giving away trees in a lavish manner.

THE PREMIER: That had been stopped.

MR. MORAN: Public bodies which received gifts of trees might, as an act of courtesy, send reports annually to the department stating which trees were doing well in the particular localities. He would dearly like to see this country covered with trees such as the wattle, which was highly ornamental and grew well in portions of this State. It was a pleasure to see ornamental trees growing in such numbers in States were planting had been done systematically. The wattle might grow on our goldfields, also in the North, and particularly along railway lines wherever space was available. The pepper tree was the only kind grown on the goldfields, and he would like to see other kinds such as the wattle to relieve the monotony.

MR. STONE suggested that farmers might be supplied with small quantities of seed from the experimental plots, to test which were most suitable in particular localities. Many farmers for want of knowledge sowed the wrong kind of seed; and if they could see in an experimental plot in their neighbourhood the kinds of seed most suitable, they would know what to grow. The rainfall was too short in this climate for certain kinds of wheat to mature; they blighted off, and would not yield grain.

THE PREMIER: The seeds were distributed in that way now.

MR. STONE: To a very limited extent.

MR. BURGESS: Caution should be used in distributing seeds. Some years ago samples of burley, for which the Government paid up to 14s. a bushel, were sent out in small quantities to farmers, and in some instances within his knowledge the samples were found to be full of different seeds such as were

likely to be a nuisance to the country. One settler at Greenhills picked out 14 different seeds from a sample of barley in a jam-tin. Some of the small men, on seeing that seeds were being distributed free, applied for them to save expense, and they might commit serious mistakes unless they understood what they were sowing.

MR. STONE understood from the Acting Director of Agriculture that all seeds sent out by the department were put through a grading machine, so there should be no fear of bad seeds being mixed.

MR. MORAN: Machinery for cleaning and grading seed was now brought to such perfection that there should be no danger in treating seed. He hoped that no seed sent out by the Agricultural Department would prove a curse. Was the machinery here suitable for cleaning and grading seed?

THE MINISTER: Yes.

Item—Insects Pests Act, £1,500:

MR. TAYLOR asked for information as to this expenditure.

THE MINISTER: The amount of this item had been increased from £1,200 to £1,500, necessitated by the appointment of two additional travelling inspectors and also because the vote of last year was not adequate for requirements. With the advent of the codlin moth, it was not possible to relax the stringent inspection which had been enforced by the department. Every care was being exercised to prevent any outbreak of this kind occurring.

Item—Noxious Weeds Eradication, £200:

MR. THOMAS: For some years past the Estimates had shown a small amount of money voted and a large expenditure. Last year £600 was expended beyond the amount voted. Would it not be better to ask for £1,000 or some adequate sum, instead of exceeding the vote?

THE MINISTER: A Noxious Weeds Bill had been introduced; but in the Upper House it was so amended as to make it worse than the present Act, and the Bill was dropped. It was estimated that £200 would be sufficient to cope with noxious weeds in certain districts where they had been practically got under.

MR. TAYLOR: This amount was not for salaries?

THE MINISTER: No.

Item—Conference of Producers, £180:

MR. CONNOR: If there was to be a conference of producers, why not a conference of miners?

MR. JACOBY: It was to be hoped these conferences would be conducted on better lines than in the past. The subjects generally discussed at the conferences were nearly all of a political nature. On one occasion only was there a matter of agricultural interest debated, and that was brought forward by Mr. Hardwick—the growth of barley for malting purposes. In other States, producers' conferences were called to discuss matters affecting pastoral, grazing, farming, fruit-growing, and other interests of vital moment to farmers; but on no occasion had he known discussions on such questions here. On one occasion he made a note of the matters discussed at a conference, and found that 80 per cent of the questions brought forward had been dealt with by previous conferences, and that there were numbers of items on the business paper which had previously been dealt with. The officers of the Agricultural Department should organise these conferences, and arrange for delegates to give papers on various subjects. It was a waste of time for delegates to attend these conferences, which if properly conducted would be useful. Such a subject as the effect of various manures used should be discussed, also the different cereals grown. The member for York had placed at the disposal of the Government a portion of his farm for experimental purposes, and in other parts of the country similarly other people had placed ground at the disposal of the Government. It would be a great value to farmers if the result of the experiments were discussed at the conferences.

MR. BURGESS: They ought to be published.

MR. JACOBY: These conferences were nothing but picnics to a number of people and did no good. Forty or fifty delegates came to Perth, but only five or six attended the meetings at a time and discussed the subjects.

THE MINISTER: The item was increased this year by £30, as it was found

that the amount voted last year was insufficient. The Agricultural Department stated that 75 per cent. of the money voted went back to the revenue in the shape of railway fares.

MR. JACOBY: But free passes were issued?

THE MINISTER: The fares were paid out of the vote, and there were incidental expenses for printing and so forth.

MR. MORAN: The agricultural conferences were looked up to in some of the Eastern States, where steps were being taken to hold similar meetings. There was no better asset than this amount which was expended for improving, educating, and enlightening the minds of those who were scattered far and wide over the agricultural areas of the country. It was admitted that a great deal of balderdash was talked at the conferences, generally by young farmers with a lot of theoretical knowledge but with little experience. What was done at the conferences was the least of the good that occurred. The farmers who came to Perth met farmers from other parts of the State, and talked about what was being done. They talked farming when together in congenial groups, and learned of the conditions of farming from one another. The producers got a vast amount of information from the skilled officers of the Agricultural Department, in whose hands they practically were all the time they were in Perth. As far as the money was concerned it was principally spent in entertainment, but when one took into consideration the great agricultural interests of the State, and the vast importance of that interest to the State, we should never refuse to grant £180 if it was simply for the delectation of men who were bearing the brunt of the battle in the backblocks. There was generally a trip down the Swan River, and the farmers who came to Perth perhaps only this once in the year had an opportunity of seeing how work was going on around the place. Large sums of money were spent in little functions on the goldfields. The advice given by the member for the Swan would no doubt have a good effect.

MR. THOMAS moved as an amendment:

That the item be struck out.

He did so on principle, and although not desirous of stopping the Government entertaining the delegates, in taking them for a trip to Mundaring or down the Swan River, still he objected to the money being put on the Estimates as an annual vote. If the Government wished to entertain the delegates, let the amount be passed as an incidental vote. No money was voted on the Estimates for a conference of mine managers or mine workers.

THE MINISTER: There were subsidies for miners' institutes.

MR. THOMAS: Money was also spent on agricultural halls and mechanics' institutes, and every agricultural show was subsidised by the Government. If this amount was to be voted then he asked the Government to bring down Supplementary Estimates in order to provide money for other conferences in Perth. Delegates to the producers' conference came here for their own special business, and there were railway regulations which provided for fares being granted at reduced rates to those attending the conference.

MR. QUINLAN: The hon. member (Mr. Thomas) had wasted enough time on other matters without wasting any on this.

MR. THOMAS: Was the hon. member in order?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. QUINLAN: The member for Dundas, ever since entering the House, had been chiefly responsible for wasting time. True, speakers at the producers' conferences sometimes discussed politics; but, on the whole, the conferences were educative, and discussed matters of interest to the community generally. The objection to this small item came with an ill grace from a goldfields member, seeing that tens of thousands were being paid by the State for the Coolgardie Water Scheme, carried out solely for goldfields purposes. The hon. member intended to move for similar provision from mining conferences. The mining community were well provided for by expensive institutions, such as the school of mines at Coolgardie.

MR. JACOBY: The South Australian conferences discussed practical subjects. Our own conferences might be made of great value to the producers if they

would discuss cultural subjects as in the East.

MR. CONNOR called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and quorum formed.

MR. JACOBY: The last South Australian conference discussed the pickling of seed wheat, adulterated chaff, best manure for dry districts, manure for lucerne, shortage in the weight of manures, the best crop to grow on salt patches on the farm, dairying, production of butter fat, production of churn butter, cattle tests, pig breeding, poultry farming; and there was an address by the Director of Agriculture. At our last conference were any of the discussions beneficial to anybody? Many of our best agriculturists had refused to attend the conferences, owing to waste of time. Some time ago he and others impressed this upon the late Secretary for Agriculture, who, however, looked on the conference as a sort of annual picnic; and nothing was done.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The motions discussed at the conference were suggested to the Director of Agriculture by the various societies; and a committee of delegates, with the Director, arranged the business paper. What was the use of quarrelling with the Government because of the arrangement? The last speaker might have brought the matter under notice on some other occasion, instead of aiding opposition to an insignificant but amply warranted item. The United States and Canada spent large sums on annual conferences of producers. While it was the right and privilege of every member to question even the smallest item, the member for Dundas could hardly be sincere in moving that this item be struck out.

MR. HAYWARD protested against the amendment. He had attended a number of conferences, and had seen useful work done. True, the attendance was occasionally scant, because of poor speaking. As to the river picnic, was it likely that men would travel hundreds of miles and lose several days for the sake of a trip down the river? He did not believe the trip induced one man to attend. The conference was the farmers' annual parliament; and the societies ought to be the best judges of subjects for discussion.

MR. TAYLOR supported the amendment. Few of the conference members availed themselves of even the trip down the river. The conference dealt with the same items year after year, and seemed to do nothing to justify this expenditure. The Government were anxious to assist people where political support was expected, but were not so anxious to assist other people. As a sample of the expenditure, a dinner was given at Cottesloe to members of the conference, and what good did that do to the country? For anything the conference had done he would prefer to see the item struck out.

MR. CONNOR asked for more exact information from the Minister, who appeared not to know what this item was really for. He had said that to the extent of 75 per cent. it was for paying railway fares for delegates to the annual conference; but how much was paid for the trip down the Swan River? The absence of information showed the ignorance of the Government in bringing down Estimates which members were expected to swallow. He did not object to this item, but wanted it to be explained so that the Minister might show he really knew what the item was for. At the last conference the business which ought to have been attended to was not done, and the delegates went outside of that which they ought to do.

MR. THOMAS : The member for Toodyay had accused him of deliberately wasting the time of the House. He hurled back the insinuation in the teeth of that member, who instead of attending to the business of the country spent only a few minutes of the day in the Chamber. If conferences were good, why subsidise only one class of persons in the State?

MR. QUINLAN : If the member for Dundas had conducted himself in a proper manner, he (Mr. Quinlan) would have had pleasure in paying attention to the business of the House, as he had always been a regular attendant in the past. His health would not allow him to pay much attention now. It was impossible to sit in the House while members caused such a positive waste of time.

MR. THOMAS Was the member in order in saying that he (Mr. Thomas) had positively wasted the time of the House?

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member did not accuse any particular member of wasting time.

MR. QUINLAN : There had been a waste of time in the House during the last five months, and it ill became the member for Dundas to speak as he had done. He (Mr. Quinlan) could not attend as in former sessions, for his health would not permit him to sit until two or three o'clock in the morning, but he was at the House every day. If the member for Dundas would keep to the question at issue, other members could listen to him.

MR. MORAN : It was to be hoped the item would not be struck out. He had yet to learn that one minute of the time of the House had been deliberately wasted by any member. We were apparently approaching the time when silence and *sub rosa* methods of debate were to take the place of open discussion.

Amendment negatived.

Item—Agricultural and Horticultural Societies' Subsidies, £2,500 :

MR. MORAN : It was to be hoped that agricultural societies would pay attention to the eradication of pests, and one of the greatest curses to the land in the Eastern States was the prickly pear, which had made its appearance in Western Australia. The prickly pear was one of the greatest pests that ever struck Queensland and a great part of New South Wales. Land on the Darling Downs which was worth £10 an acre without the prickly pear, was now offered free with £1 per acre to clear it of the pest; but no one would take the land.

MR. HAYWARD : Prickly pear had been known for 40 or 50 years in the South-West; but it would not spread in this State.

MR. TAYLOR : That was the greatest condemnation of the land of the State, for if it would not grow prickly pear it would not grow anything. Prickly pear was as bad as the rabbits.

MR. MORAN : There were certain qualities of ground that would not grow prickly pear. Years ago we heard it stated that rabbits had been seen in the State for 40 years, but they would not live here; people made light of them. We should take care that we were not doing the same about the prickly pear.

Item—Destruction of Wild Dogs, £500 :

MR. WALLACE: Last year the amount was £1,500. An expert trapper had since been engaged. Why the reduction?

THE MINISTER: It was believed that £500 would be adequate. Many practical men considered that Mr. Ross would reduce the cost of eradicating dogs.

Item—Incidental, including advertising, etc., £2,650 :

MR. PIGOTT: As to a departmental pamphlet entitled "Agriculture in Western Australia," he had been informed that it was printed locally in the offices of the *West Australian* and *Morning Herald* newspapers, and that more than a fair price had been paid. There was a widespread belief that there was something shady about handing this printing to newspapers.

THE MINISTER: The publication cost about £800. It was specially authorised. As many copies as the type would print—probably 60,000 or 70,000—were ordered, so as to exhaust the type; and the object was to send a copy to each farmer in South Australia and Victoria. The matter was published in the *Western Mail* also, for local information. The copy was written and illustrations furnished by the staff of the *Western Mail*; and before the expenditure was authorised Ministers fully discussed the subject. The *Morning Herald* had nothing to do with printing this pamphlet, though it had printed a pamphlet previously issued under somewhat similar conditions. The first-mentioned pamphlet was set once only.

MR. PIGOTT: Did not the *Morning Herald* print any copies?

THE MINISTER: No.

MR. PIGOTT: For all such printing tenders should be called, and for advertising also, thus preventing unpleasant insinuations.

THE PREMIER: With its printing plant, the *West Australian* Newspaper Company would have easily been the successful tenderer.

THE MINISTER: The crucial point was that not only the printing but the subject-matter was provided by the newspaper staff and afterwards checked and revised by the Lands Department. The

newspaper provided the photographs also.

MR. ATKINS had heard the same complaint as to the printing. If such work were let by tender, stories of this kind would not get about.

THE PREMIER: A matter like this could not be let by tender. A newspaper with a large organisation and plant like that of the *West Australian* could do the work better than any private firm could be expected to do, as no private firm would have such complete appliances. This was shown in the case of the printing of the Federal rolls, the *West Australian* Newspaper Company having appliances that enabled them to do the work rapidly. All that was done in this matter was open and aboveboard; still he was glad that attention had been called to rumours which appeared to be in circulation, and indeed it amused him to hear the number of rumours going about in regard to various matters concerning the Government.

MR. ATKINS failed to see why a certain price should not have been got for the work, and that price made public. The Premier was a good hand, as were also some of his Ministers, at making excuses when they did not want to do a thing. One was trying to keep the Government clean, for they were in need of it.

MR. PIGOTT: The Minister for Lands might give some farther information to the House on another occasion. He (Mr. Pigott) had been asked to move the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to this matter, but he would not take that course. The Minister might bring down a statement later.

MR. MORAN: As to the effect of advertising for increasing the settlement of the land, what had been done by this Government that had not been done by previous Governments? The Minister appeared to take special credit to himself. Was the advertisement in the *Review of Reviews*?

THE MINISTER: No; the advertisement was withdrawn recently, and the matter of advertising had been left with the Colonial Treasurer to regulate.

MR. MORAN: No more fruitful advertisement was ever paid for by the Government of this State than that which appeared in the *Review of Reviews*. When

Minister for Lands he (Mr. Moran) received letters from all parts of the world in reply to that advertisement. Dozens of letters came from South Africa.

THE TREASURER: The English edition of the *Review of Reviews* would not contain the advertisement; it would be in the Australasian edition.

MR. MORAN: The advertisement was very fruitful. He had no desire to see an inrush of people who were hard up. There were too many of that class here already. We wanted men with money; this was no country for men without means. If a man was hard up, there was no Government work doing and a person would have to go hundreds of miles into the country to other large centres. What was being done in advertising now? Where was the money being spent? He believed an officer was appointed at a salary of £350 a year to control the advertising in this State.

THE TREASURER: The work was being done now for £150 a year.

THE MINISTER: Standing advertisements were not inserted in newspapers now; that was an idea that had been exploded long since. One advertisement was inserted in the *Bulletin* and one also in the *Australasian*; the advertising was done intermittently. Attention was being directed to the Eastern States and the advertising was done economically.

MR. MORAN: What was being done by the Lands Department as to advertising this State in the old country?

THE TREASURER: Previous Governments probably did what the present Government had done. The Forrest Government advertised in the *Leader* supplement, and did the same as the present Minister for Lands had done in regard to other supplements referred to in the debate. The Government supplied the photos, and the person looking after the advertisements got the necessary particulars. The Government had to take a certain number of copies of the newspaper at so much per copy, and in regard to the *Leader* a charge of £25 a page was made. There was a Murchison supplement brought out by the late Mr. Kenny, who was a member of the House. As to the *Review of Reviews* supplement the Government had to take a number of

copies of that. In regard to advertising in English newspapers the Government were quite dissatisfied, and he thought members were quite dissatisfied when the particulars of the advertising were laid on the table of the House. The Government asked Mr. Moss, who was going to England, to make the fullest inquiries as to what Canada was doing, and what means that country was taking for advertising their resources. When that information was received it would be put to use. Mr. Moss had just come back, and had promised to see him (the Treasurer) and give the fullest particulars. When that was done the steps necessary in order to freely advertise this State in the old country would be decided upon. If farther information were wanted, it could be supplied later in connection with the Treasury Estimates.

MR. QUINLAN: The time had arrived when the Government should endeavour to save the cost of paying rent for offices outside the Government buildings. A sum of £250 annually was paid as rent in connection with the Agricultural Department; this had been going on for years, and should be stopped as soon as practicable. It was undesirable that considerable sums for rent should be paid to the West Australian Newspaper Company or to any persons, when the Government could provide sufficient offices if they would only endeavour to do so.

Vote put and passed.

Agricultural Bank, £2,040 :

MR. MORAN hoped this vote would not be dealt with till the Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Bill had been discussed. The management were going far in talking of 75 per cent. advances.

THE MINISTER: Two-thirds.

MR. MORAN moved that progress be reported.

THE PREMIER hoped members would assist to make more progress when next we dealt with the Estimates. He would not say time had been wasted, but adequate progress had not been made. After a long discussion (which ceased some hours ago) on agriculture generally, we had not made much progress with items. If we could not finish work before Christmas, we must resume after Christmas.

Motion (progress) passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 17 minutes past 11 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council, Friday, 11th December, 1903.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Question: Poison Leases, Stocking Conditions ... | 2694 |
| Privilege: Absence without Leave, committee appointed ... | 2694 |
| Bills: Agricultural Bank Act Amendment, first reading ... | 2694 |
| Kalgoorlie Roads Board License Validation, third reading ... | 2696 |
| Evidence Amendment, second reading, in Committee, reported ... | 2696 |
| Mining Bill, in Committee resumed, Ministerial Statement; Clauses 10 to 54, progress ... | 2697 |
| Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment, second reading, in Committee, reported ... | 2703 |
| Factories Bill, in Committee resumed; Clauses 9 to 25, progress ... | 2704 |
| Roads Act Amendment, second reading, in Committee, progress ... | 2706 |
| Private Bill: Fremantle Tramways, in Committee, reported ... | 2708 |

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Regulations under Rabbit Act, Cemeteries Act, Land Act; By-laws under Roads Act.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Assembly, and read a first time.

QUESTION—POISON LEASES, STOCKING CONDITIONS.

The Hon. W. MALEY (for Hon. C. A. Piesse) asked the Colonial Secretary:

If it is a fact that the "stocking conditions" in connection with poison leases are not insisted upon by the Lands Department, and that titles are issued on the inspector's report that the land is free from poison.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: The regulations under which most of the poison leases in the State are held contain no "stocking conditions," but, nevertheless, it is not the practice of the department to grant the fee simple of land so held before it has been stocked.

PRIVILEGE—ABSENCE WITHOUT LEAVE.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): Before the Orders of the Day come on, I desire to raise a question of privilege, and the Colonial Secretary knows that the matter may be either decided off-hand or referred to a select committee. The question of privilege to which I have to draw attention is that of the vacancy caused by the absence of the Hon. W. G. Brookman. I believe you, sir, reported from the Chair on the 8th December that Mr. Brookman had not obtained leave of absence entered upon the journals for two months. If that be so, and I presume it is correct, Mr. Brookman's seat is gone as absolutely as if he were dead. The words are expressed in the Constitution Acts Amendment Act, which provides that if any member of the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly after his election fails to give his attendance in the Legislative Council or in the Legislative Assembly, as the case may be, for two consecutive months of any session thereof without permission of the said Council or Assembly, as the case may be, entered upon its journals, his seat shall thereupon become vacant. If your report is well founded, and two months have elapsed and permission for the absence of Mr. W. G. Brookman is not entered on the journals, the seat is gone, and has in due course to be declared vacant. So far as I know, there is no possible way of evading that conclusion. I beg also to draw the attention of the House as to this question of privilege with regard to seats, which is the most important of all questions of privilege, that such questions are invariably decided at once; but in the case of Mr. Brookman I assume that the leader of the Government in this