

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 10th April, 1918.

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

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

DEPUTY LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.35]: As hon. members are aware, the leader of the Opposition (Hon. P. Collier) is attending a conference in Melbourne which has been called by the Governor General with a view of bringing about unity of all parties, to the end that they may work in harmony in endeavouring, if possible, to render every assistance to the Empire. During Mr. Collier's absence, my colleagues have placed me in the position of deputy leader of the Opposition.

SITTING DAYS AND HOURS, EXTENSION.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [4.37]: I move—

"That for the remainder of the session, the House, unless otherwise ordered, shall meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 3 p.m., and sit until 6.15 p.m., if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards."

I do not think it necessary to add very much to the motion. I feel satisfied that hon. members will be convinced from their own experience of the necessity for bringing the session to a close as speedily as possible. Not only is it interfering with the arrangements made by private members, perhaps to their great loss and inconvenience, but it is also interfering very materially with the administration of the departments of State. It is absolutely impossible for Ministers to give to the administration of their offices the close attention and keenness which they should do, if they have to sit as we have been sitting for a considerable period, and possibly, unless a change is made, may be required to sit for a still longer period. The object of the motion is to facilitate business so that we can clear up this prolonged session and have some time to put our departments into order before we again meet the House in the course of the next two or three months.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [4.40]: I have no objection to meeting at three o'clock, but I do not see the necessity for sitting on Fridays. Hon. members no doubt are aware that another place has agreed to close down at the end of this week, and in consequence there is no urgent necessity why this House should meet on Fridays for the despatch of business. Hon. members of this Chamber cannot be blamed because we have a large agenda paper before us. We have had Bills continually coming down, and others are to be submitted in due course by Ministers.

In consequence we have had no opportunity of restricting the length of the session. There are on the Notice Paper many Bills that would have done very well next session, Bills not by any means urgent. Quite early in the session we were definitely told by the Premier that we were to get only the Estimates and one or two financial Bills. Instead of that, we have had a large number of Bills, and to-day our Notice Paper is sufficient for the commencement of a long session. That being so, and seeing that the other place is going to close down after this week, where is the necessity for our meeting on Fridays? It is essential, too, that members should have some opportunity for looking into new measures. We cannot have a Bill laid on the Table, go through it in five minutes, and then take up the measure and discuss it with any benefit to members or to the country generally. If we are to cut out the week-end it will be impossible to give the Bills that consideration which should be given them. I am going to ask the Minister to let Friday go. If he cannot see his way clear to that in respect of next week, I will ask him to agree to cut out the Friday of this week. Some hon. members have made arrangements to leave the City on Friday, and those arrangements will have to be cancelled if we are to be here on Friday next. Personally, if there were sufficient time for us to look through the various measures which have been submitted during the last day or two, and which are still to come from another place, I would have no objection to sitting every day of the week.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): What measures are there still to be introduced?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is the Wheat Marketing Bill, the Vermin Bill, and a number of others to come, Bills which we have not yet seen. Considering the time they have been going through another place they must be of some importance. I hope the Minister will agree to leave Friday of this week clear. If he does that, I will not move to strike out the Friday.

Mr. THOMSON (Katanning) [4.43]: I support the motion. It is desirable that we should proceed with the business of the country. I speak feelingly as a country member, as one who has been here since last October. To my mind it comes with a bad grace from the member for North-East Fremantle to complain about the business of the House not being put through, because no other hon. member has taken up nearly so much time as has the member for North-East Fremantle.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have only done my duty.

Mr. THOMSON: That may be so. I am merely instancing that the hon. member who has taken up most of the time now protests about our not proceeding with the business. As a country member, I have to travel 470 miles per week to attend to my Parliamentary duties. In that respect all the country members are awkwardly placed. Some of us have other things to do besides sitting here. In the interests of the State it is desirable that the session should be brought to a close as soon as practicable. I hope the acting Premier will not accept the suggestion of the member for North-East Fremantle.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [4-45]: I am glad the Government have decided to sit on Friday, but they might show a little more consideration for hon. members whose homes are in the country, than the motion evidences. During previous sessions I have repeatedly urged that on the last day of the Parliamentary week we should sit during the day time, a practice adopted in the Victorian Parliament for some years past, with, I understand, unqualified success. The Commonwealth Parliament holds all its sessions in the day time, much to the benefit of members, and of the country. During the last two weeks country members have travelled all the way to Perth to sit on only two days, commencing at 4-30 p.m. I appreciate, of course, the desire of Ministers to be in their offices during the day time.

The Colonial Treasurer: That desire has been given up altogether.

Mr. JOHNSTON: On at least one day of the week we should do during the day time the work that we are well paid to do. In order to test the feeling of the House, I move an amendment—

"That the words 'and Fridays' be struck out, and that the following be added to the motion: 'and on Fridays at 10-30 a.m., and if necessary, until one p.m., and if requisite from 2-15 p.m. until 4-30 p.m.'"

That amendment represents the practice of the Victorian Parliament, and, as I have said, the Federal Parliament invariably sits during the daytime.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [4-48]: I second the amendment.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [4-49]: I have spoken upon this subject previously. The way in which country members are treated in the matter of meeting hours is not quite fair. Personally, I have to travel 800 miles every week during the session if I wish to visit my constituency. A country member is waiting about all day until 4-30, and then frequently he is kept here until ungodly hours of the morning. In the new session more consideration should be shown for the convenience and the needs of country members. Surely we can do a little more work in the daytime, instead of the majority of members—that is what it comes to—having to wait all day for the business of the House to start. The present arrangement is all very well for City members, who attend to their business during the day and then treat the business of Parliament as a kind of light evening recreation. I agree that the requirements of Ministers should be met, but the unfortunate position of country members, especially in so huge a State as this, should not be lost sight of. I trust Ministers in their turn will recognise the fairness of the request made by country members.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie) [4-51]: I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment. Of course, the Government will have to agree to it before it can be carried; and I hope the Government will go even further and take an early opportunity of discharging a considerable number of the Orders of the Day. With frequent all-night sittings the business now on the Notice Paper could possibly be dealt with, so far as this Chamber is concerned, by the end of July next. But I think members will agree that proper attention cannot be given to business during all-night sittings. A good many of the items on the Notice Paper could well be left over till next session. It almost seems as if the present Government

were anxious during their term of office to build up a pile of Statutes equal to the total number passed by all previous Governments. I do not wish to stress the goldfields point of view, but if an all-night sitting is indulged in on Thursday it is impossible for goldfields members to visit their constituencies at the week end.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [4-53]: In this connection we have to bear in mind that Ministers have to attend to public departmental business as well as to the business of Parliament. The morning hours are wanted by them for public affairs. I doubt whether we should get more business done by meeting at 10 o'clock on Friday morning. In view of another place adjourning for six weeks as from to-morrow, there need be no great hurry here, because we shall certainly have to adjourn for a month or so in order to be here when another place resumes. With three sitting days per week it will be possible to get through all the necessary business on the Notice Paper. Of course, the position would be different if another place intended to continue sitting and we were able to get business dealt with there; but unless we get through the whole of the Notice Paper this week we shall certainly have to be here after the other House meets again. My suggestion to the leader of the House is that during the next two weeks we should meet on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays as usual. After that, meeting on Friday may be necessary, though I do not think it will.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [4-55]: There has been a good deal of complaint lately about the Government not getting on with the work of the session. Charges of waste of time have been made in the Press. But now, when this motion is brought forward with a view to expediting the business of the House, we find hon. members objecting. Country members are chiefly affected by this motion, and I think the attitude of the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) is very generous. So far as doing any business at home is concerned, country members might as well stop in Perth throughout the session. The objections of City members to this motion are in very bad taste, especially in view of the willingness of the Country party to help the Government to get through the business.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans) [5-57]: Like the last speaker, I am desirous of having the business of the session concluded as quickly as possible; and I would support the proposal of the Government to meet on Fridays if there were any necessity for it or any advantage in it. But surely the member for Roebourne will agree that there is no possible hope of this House getting through its business by Friday next. The delays here, to which reference has been made, are responsible for another place adjourning for a month.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: For six weeks; one month prior to the election.

Mr. MUNSIE: Then there is all the more reason for our not meeting on Fridays. Even if we did meet at three o'clock and sit on Fridays, we could not complete our business until members of another place resume. Consequently, there is no need to rush.

The Minister for Works: Let us get our work done and finish.

Mr. MUNSIE: And then adjourn for a fortnight?

The Minister for Works: If necessary.

Mr. MUNSIE: That might suit the Minister, but it will not suit the majority of members.

Mr. Thomson : It will.

Mr. MUNSIE : It will not suit me.

Mr. Thomson : But you are living in Perth.

Mr. MUNSIE : Nevertheless, I visit my electorate as often as the hon. member visits his. If this motion is carried, every member who travels by the goldfields train will be debarred from visiting his electorate until after the session ends.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister) : You can get away on Saturday.

Mr. MUNSIE : Up to date the Government have not shown much aptitude for getting through business, and the remarks of the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) were absolutely uncalled for. I have had a little over six years' experience of this House and the opposition which the present Government have had is the mildest since I have been here. In fact, every possible assistance has been given to the Government by the Opposition.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle—on amendment) [5-0] : I intend to oppose the amendment but not because I am a metropolitan member. Personally, I do not care when we sit, whether it be morning, noon or night. It is my duty to be here and I am always here. But my reason for opposing the amendment is that I have had experience of the hours suggested, and that experience has been that we have agreed to certain things during the day sittings, when there have been so few members present, principally country members, and the business done in the day has had to be reviewed in the evening.

Mr. Harrison : When was that ?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : When Mr. Gregory was Minister for Mines, I think, in 1910-11, and in almost every instance the Bills had to be re-committed and we had to go through them again at night. I agree with the Minister for Works that it is necessary Ministers should have an opportunity of being in their offices in the morning. I do not take any notice of the remarks of the member for Katanning. They are characteristic of him.

Mr. Thomson : You must admit that you have taken up considerable time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : If it is necessary to go on as I have been doing, and I deem it my duty to do so, I intend to do so.

Mr. MALEY (Greenough—on amendment) [5-4] : I can claim to have travelled during last session more than any other member and I would, therefore, rather support the proposals of the Minister for Works than the amendment moved by the member for Williams-Narrogin. We private members have a certain amount of departmental work to attend to and that can only be done in the day time. When the question of the hours of sitting in the next session of Parliament is under review, some consideration should be paid to those members who live in the northern ports, so that we may be able to get away by Thursday night's train.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington—on amendment) [5-6] : The Government cannot entertain the amendment of the member for Williams-Narrogin although no doubt the arguments put forward in support of it could be considered worthy of consideration. It is absolutely impossible, however, for the concerns of the State to be carried on unless Ministers have some time to attend to their duties during the day. It is a pretty big strain on Ministers, as things are at the present time when the work of Ministers accumulates, and it is only by strenuous efforts that it is possible

for them to cope with their duties. I was in my office the other night until after 11 o'clock and it is somewhat severe to have to work from 9 o'clock in the morning until that hour of the night in order to overtake the work. The motion has been considered by Cabinet and I feel justified in asking hon. members to support the Government in carrying it. I would probably have felt inclined to favourably consider the suggestion of the deputy leader of the Opposition about Friday of this week, but we have now to bear in mind to-morrow's business, amongst which will be the Committee stage of several very important matters. We have an idea now how long the Committee stage of one of those particular measures will take. We had an instance last evening—and I am not grumbling about it—of how easy it is to take up a considerable amount of time in dealing with a question on which the people feel very strongly. When we come to the Committee stage of that measure, no doubt those feelings will still prevail and unless the Government can meet in the way which has been suggested, I do not see how we are going to get through the business. The member for Hannans stated that the Legislative Council will adjourn for some time. That probably will be so, but so far as we are concerned, no matter whether the Council adjourn or not, it should not be considered as a reason why we should adjourn or why we should hesitate to get through with our work. So far as the business appearing on the Notice Paper is concerned, there is no doubt that some of the Orders of the Day will have to be jettisoned. But if we all work with one aim, we can get through our business by the end of next week, and then we can adjourn until the Council meets again. Ministers will then be able to do their work and hon. members will have an opportunity of recuperating after their long and strenuous labours. We would not ask hon. members to agree to the motion which has been submitted if the exigencies of the situation did not demand it.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet—on amendment) [5-11] : I am acting consistently in supporting the amendment because I consider that to-day there is less excuse than ever there was for not holding sittings at least on one day a week during the day time, because Ministers have not their time fully occupied as was the case with previous Ministers.

The Colonial Treasurer : What ?

Mr. TROY : There are no fewer than nine Ministers at the present time, a greater number than there has ever been in any previous Ministry. The business of the country is almost at a standstill. There are no public works of any importance being carried on and therefore, in my opinion, the Government have not the onerous duties to discharge that was the experience of Governments in former years. I do not question the ability of hon. members to carry out their duties—

The Colonial Treasurer : It does not matter about our ability. Give us some hours in which we can do our work.

Mr. TROY : If the Federal Government can arrange their sittings of Parliament so as to have one day a week in which to do that work—

The Minister for Works : They have a full purse.

Mr. TROY : That is not the question.

The Colonial Treasurer : I suppose you think it is easier to do things with a full purse than with an empty one.

Mr. TROY: When we have not any money to spend we cannot do anything. We are not building thousands of miles of railways; we have not any huge undertakings in hand and the schemes of Ministers are merely schemes in the air.

The Colonial Treasurer: There is more detail work to do than ever there was before.

Mr. TROY: There are nine Ministers at the present time when there were only seven before. This holding of parliamentary sessions in the evening has become an institution because in the mother of Parliaments and in the Parliaments of Australia the representation of the people had been largely in the hands of commercial men and business men in the cities. It was in the interests of these people who attended to their business during the day and gave their spare time to the country in the afternoon as a side line. The majority of members of the country whose business is just as essential to them as that of members who live in the City, ask only that Ministers shall devote the whole of one day in the week to Parliamentary work. They ask for this on one day in the week. It would be impossible, as we all know, for a Minister to devote every day in the week to Parliament, but we think that for at least one day in the week we should sit here from 10 o'clock in the morning until 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

The Minister for Works: Friday is the day on which we are simply smothered with deputations.

Mr. TROY: Then let us have Thursday. As stated by the deputy leader of the Opposition we would get through business more quickly on that one day in the week than if we sat at night time. We sit here for hours, and in order to get business through the Government have either to introduce the closure or have to resort to many late sittings until members become exhausted. I do not offer these remarks in any spirit of antagonism to the Ministry, but as a reasonable and sound suggestion that at least one day in the week should be given for country members in order that the business of the State may be done here, and that they may then be able to get away to their own private business just as City members are able to attend to their business.

Mr. Johnston: The Federal Parliament sits every day in the morning.

Mr. TROY: This is not what I ask.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [5.17]: I support the motion on purely selfish grounds. There are no trains to my district on Friday. Friday is a day set apart for Ministers to receive deputations and I do not think it would be a wise thing to ask them to sit in the mornings on that day.

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

Ayes	...	...	...	...	9
Noes	...	...	...	...	32

Majority against ... 23

AYES.

Mr. Chesson	Mr. Munsie
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Troy
Mr. Jones	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Green
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Angwin	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Broun	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Brown	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Draper	Mr. H. Robinson
Mr. Durack	Mr. R. T. Robinson
Mr. Foley	Mr. Rooke
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. George	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Thomson
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Veryard
Mr. Mailey	Mr. Walker
Mr. Mitchell	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Money	Mr. Hardwick

(Teller.)

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Reappropriation of Loan Moneys.

Introduced by the Colonial Treasurer.

2. Wyndham Freezing, Canning, and Meat Export Works.

Introduced by the Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister).

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. MUNSIE leave of absence for four weeks granted to the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman) on the ground of urgent private business.

STANDING ORDERS AMENDMENT.

Time limit to Speeches.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [5.27]: I move—

"That in order to secure the despatch of business and the good government of the State, the Standing Orders of this House should be immediately amended in the direction of placing a time limit on the speeches delivered by honourable members in the House and in Committee: That the following be adopted as a Standing Order of the House—No member shall speak for more than thirty minutes at a time in any debate in the House, except in the debate on the Address-in-Reply, or in a debate on a motion of no-confidence, or in moving the second reading of a Bill, or on the debate on the Appropriation Bill, or on the Financial Statement in Committee, when a member shall be at liberty to speak for one hour. In Committee of the House no member shall speak for more than twenty minutes at any one time, or more than twice on any one question before the Committee: Provided that this rule shall not apply in Committee to a member in charge of a Bill, or to a Minister when delivering the Financial Statement, or, in regard to the number of his speeches, to a Minister in charge of a class of the Estimates in Committee of Supply."

It is gratifying to me to learn that my motion is so popular. It is very fresh in my memory that when giving notice of motion the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) interjected, "Officially inspired."

If the hon. member will take my word for it, I can assure him that I had no inspiration from anyone.

Hon. T. Walker: I never accused you of it.

Mr. TEESDALE: I have it written down here, and I have an excellent memory.

Hon. T. Walker: I too have an excellent memory.

Mr. TEESDALE: The hon. member said that I was officially inspired. I assure the House positively that I have never had any communication or discussion with any member of the Ministry with regard to this matter. I ask the member for Kanowna to take my word for it that from the first day I came into the House it occurred to me that there was a fearful lot of useless and idle repetition in the speeches that were made by hon. members.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We all thought that when we came here first.

Mr. TEESDALE: I ask hon. members to exempt me from any attempt to pose as a reformer. I have no desire to upset the procedure or the traditions of the House in any shape or form. I am not going to introduce anything in the way of closing up the bar or in regard to the payment of members, or anything of the sort. I leave these questions to those who know more about them than I do. I repeat, there is a fearful lot of time wasted in connection with speeches, and I am quite certain that the public would appreciate some move being made in the direction of curtailing the length of members' speeches. I know of four or five members of this Chamber who promised their electors on the hustings that they would do their best to bring about something of this sort, and I confidently look to them for their support. I have my eye upon two or three of them at the present moment. I do hope that they will redeem that promise made to their electors, and try to facilitate the business of the House by helping to avoid useless repetition and the going over of the same subject time and again. One cannot help thinking that it is with the idea of filling pages of "Hansard" that they do this.

Mr. Johnston: It is sometimes due to stonewalling.

Mr. TEESDALE: If any hon. member holds his position by virtue of making long speeches and filling pages of "Hansard" then, if I was in his position, I would get out to-morrow.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That does not affect you, because your electors never see "Hansard."

Mr. TEESDALE: I do think that an hon. member of ordinary intelligence could say all that he had to say in half an hour.

Mr. Jones: You are making a virtue of necessity.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am sure that there are hon. members who will support me in the contention that they can sufficiently cover any questions in half an hour, and say all that there is to be said. With the exception of a small alteration this is practically a copy of the Standing Order of the Federal Parliament. I have not had the effrontery to fix any time limit for this House, I have quoted the procedure in a House where they have considerably more business to do than we have here. I think we ought to be able to get through our business here at any rate in the same time that they do there.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5-32]: I move—

"That the debate be adjourned"

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

Ayes	...	...	...	...	11
Noes	...	...	...	...	29

Majority against 18

AYES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Pickering
Mr. Foley	Mr. Troy
Mr. Jones	Mr. Willcock
Mr. Lambert	Mr. Green
Mr. Lutey	(Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Angelo	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Brown	Mr. Nairn
Mr. Brown	Mr. Plesse
Mr. Davies	Mr. Pilkington
Mr. Draper	Mr. H. Robinson
Mr. Durack	Mr. R. T. Robinson
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Roche
Mr. George	Mr. Stubbs
Mr. Griffiths	Mr. Teesdale
Mr. Harrison	Mr. Underwood
Mr. Hickmott	Mr. Vervard
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Walker
Mr. Maley	Mr. Willmott
Mr. Money	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Mullany	(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [5-37]: I do not know the reason for the hon. member's motion. He told us at the commencement that he desired to reply to an interjection by the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) which was incorrect, and then, before the question was out of your mouth, Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier said "Aye."

The Minister for Works: We want to get on with the business of the House and not waste time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Then the Minister should endeavour to keep such motions as these off the business paper.

The Minister for Works: We have not the power.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The motion could have been adjourned. If there is anyone in this Chamber who has occupied the time more than any other member it is the present deputy Premier. If members will look through "Hansard" they will find there is not one Bill or motion that has been brought forward on which the deputy Premier has not occupied a dozen to 15 or 20 pages of "Hansard."

The Minister for Works: More in sorrow than in anger.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Very often in anger. Any member who has had experience during the last few years could form an opinion of how Parliament should be carried on, but the hon. member (Mr. Teesdale) has been here for only a few hours and has not had the necessary experience. He does not know what has been the practice in the past. He does not know what objections have been put forward; what long speeches have been made by hon. members in times gone by. Only on one occasion since the hon. member has been here has there been a long speech. On one Bill only has there been opposition from this side of the House.

Mr. Teesdale: Five hours is not too bad.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: And the five hours happened to be three.

Mr. Munsie: And not quite that.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not allowed to address the House when the Speaker is not in the Chair. When the Speaker leaves the Chair I stop. The hon. member can count the tea hour, if he likes, and the time during which the lights were out.

Mr. Foley: The hon. member accuses you of putting the lights out.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It was a warning to the Government that their lights would be put out. I want to say there are two ways of doing work in Parliament, and it cannot be amplified better or shown clearer than if we take as our subject the Minister for Works. In opposition he was continually talking.

The Minister for Works: And to a good purpose too.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: A very bad purpose, because there was no foundation for many of the arguments used, none whatever. He was talking to the gallery, shall I say, talking for the express purpose of trying, in my opinion, to put wrong views before the public, because he knew that his views would be printed in the Press, the whole of the Press being against the Government at the time except one or two newspapers. Consequently the hon. member got very fully reported. But this session there has been no opposition at all. There is the possibility of a member from the North-West, with about 350 electors, setting an example to other portions of this State.

Mr. Angelo: Quality, not quantity.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Roebourne said that if members have to keep their seats by talking, the sooner they get out the better. I have as many thousand electors in my electorate as the hon. member has hundreds, even more. There is no necessity for me to talk, none whatever.

Mr. Jones: They would not let you talk at the last election, Billy.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I retain my seat by working, and not by bringing forward nonsensical motions like this one for the purpose of gagging members. I speak when notions are brought forward which I consider are detrimental to the interests of the people of the State.

Mr. Teesdale: Does the Federal Parliament gag its members?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I should be sorry to see this Parliament get into the same state as the Federal Parliament. If we behaved in this Parliament as members do in the Federal House, the Speaker would suspend everyone of us, not only this Speaker but every Speaker we have had. It is a bedlam there. The business is not carried on with decorum; it is bedlam: dozens of voices all over the Chamber at the same time. It was necessary to do something there, but as far as this Parliament is concerned, my experience is that members behave themselves decently. They try on every occasion to obey the instructions of the Chair. That being so, there is no necessity for a motion of this description as far as this Parliament is concerned.

Mr. Teesdale: The public have asked for it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The public have never asked for it.

Mr. Teesdale: There have been plenty of letters in the newspapers.

Mr. Green: Probably you wrote half of them.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It shows the simplicity of the hon. member. I saw a letter in this afternoon's paper criticising the proceedings in this Chamber last night. It was supposed to have been written by one of the ladies then in the gallery.

Mr. Green: It was written in the Press gallery.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If hon. members were to take notice of letters in the newspaper it would be God help the members of Parliament! The hon. member has given no justification for this motion.

Mr. Teesdale: Yes, waste of time.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I think I should be safe in saying that with one exception no member on this side of the House has spoken at more than 10 minutes length on any Bill this session.

Mr. Teesdale: The motion is not directed against that side.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: But my statement applies to both sides of the House. Time has been taken up in speeches made on private members' day, but when eight o'clock comes on such occasions it is at the discretion of the Government to allow private motions to be continued. If the Government desire that motions should be continued, they move to that effect, while if they desire to close down private motions and put an end to the waste of time, they allow the Orders of the Day to be proceeded with. If members waste time on private members' day, they are wasting their own time on their own business and not on Government business at all.

Mr. Johnston: A lot of time was wasted over the Riverton estate.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There were no long speeches made on it. Two or three motions were moved. The motion for a select committee took up some time.

Mr. Munsie: And that time was not wasted.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Again, take the Estimates for this year. What time was wasted on those? I have never seen Estimates go through more quickly and with less speaking than the Estimates for this year. The Treasurer was very short with his Budget Speech, and every hon. member who spoke cut down his remarks. Nobody spoke in opposition to the Government. Hon. members were asked for suggestions as to the financial position, and those who spoke endeavoured in as few words as possible to show how the position could be improved. No time was wasted. Possibly a little time was wasted in connection with the Health Bill.

The Minister for Works: Are you in favour of any time limit at all?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have never seen any necessity for it, except when the Minister for Works was over here. But because the Minister abused his privilege, I would not be one to curtail his privilege. No doubt he did what he thought was right.

Hon. T. Walker: He was trying to put us out.

The Minister for Works: And I did so, and it was right.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not know that, for matters have been far worse since.

The Minister for Works: But they might have been still worse had you remained.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The motion is to curtail the privilege of members.

Mr. Piesse: If you speak much longer you will justify it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: At all events, motions cease at eight o'clock.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): You need not monopolise all the time till then.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Probably a little extra time was taken up on the Health Bill, but hon. members are aware that there are thousands of people in the State so deeply interested in that Bill that they would not care if the whole of the session had been devoted to it. Therefore time spent in consideration of the Health Bill was not time wasted. If even by means of a long speech one is able to convince others of the necessity for some provision beneficial to the State, then even a long speech is beneficial. One of the best speeches ever made in this House was a very long one by the Honorary Minister (Hon. R. H. Underwood) on the subject of the University. That speech was praised for its excellence by practically the whole of the local Press. If the proposed Standing Order had been in effect that speech could never have been made.

Mr. Johnston: The House can always give leave to continue a speech.

Mr. Foley: But that would be a privilege. We want the right.

Mr. Munsie: There would be a nice waste of time arguing whether leave should be granted.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There might be a good deal of opposition to it, especially if the minority thought it was inimical to the best interests of the State. The hon. member who moved the motion has been led astray by the Federal Parliament. He has seen in the Press and perhaps in "Hansard" that speeches have been occasionally shortened by the expiry of the allotted time. No doubt he is of opinion that through the introduction of such a provision the Federal Parliament has been able to get through its business with greater despatch. But, as a matter of fact, it can almost be said that there has been no such thing as a Federal Parliament of late years.

Mr. Pickering: Since when?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Since the introduction of the War Precautions Act. Australia to-day is ruled by regulations, and not by the Federal Parliament. There has been almost a continuous session, yet what Bills of importance have been put through the Federal Parliament during the last three years? I know of none. Only the other day I read in the Federal "Hansard" the debate on the Wheat Storage Bill. I am satisfied that there was more talk in the Federal Parliament on that Bill than there would have been here. Members of the Federal Parliament went into the whole of the ramifications of the marketing of wheat, the storage of wheat, even the past neglect of contractors who were handling the wheat. The whole position of the wheat trade was discussed on that Bill. It would not have been allowed in this House. You Sir, would have declared that there was in the Bill nothing relating to such questions. Yet I did not see in the Federal "Hansard" that any member was accused of obstructing the passage of the Bill.

The Attorney General: Do you read the Federal "Hansard"?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Sometimes, when we have something to consider here upon which a debate in the Federal Parliament may have a bearing. I may read some of it in this House at an early date. In my opinion there is no necessity in this Chamber for the proposed Standing Order. The hon. member has not been here sufficiently long to be convinced of this. If we were to sit here as we have done in the past, 36

or 40 hours at a stretch before rising, he might do a little grumbling. We have not been here all night once this session; that is to say, we have always got home to our breakfast. The Minister knows that many times in the past we have had our breakfast here; yet even in those days no member ever suggested the necessity for restricting the privilege of hon. members.

Mr. Angelo: You have got into a groove, and we want to get you out of it.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not so. There have been times and they will come again, when silence is golden. If I wanted a measure or a motion carried through this Chamber—a measure or a motion which I thought beneficial to the State—I would sit as quiet as possible until the matter had gone through, saying never a word. I once sat here from 7 o'clock in the evening until 7 o'clock the next morning, without opening my mouth, because I wanted the work of the House to be got through as early as possible. I did make an attempt to speak in the morning, but we had an excellent Chairman, who asked me what I wanted to speak on. On my replying so and so, he said, "Carried." And that was the end of my speaking. But I was not sorry a bit. That Chairman taught me a lesson. However, at no time have I accused any hon. member of wasting the time of the House. Never have I accused any member of talking for the express purpose of blocking the business of the House, no matter what I thought. As regards stonewalling, that is contrary to the Standing Orders. Immediately we begin to stonewall, you, Mr. Speaker, quickly pull us up. Mr. Speaker first warns a member, and then brings him to a dead stop. If a member repeats himself, the Speaker will warn him that he is guilty of tedious repetition; and if the member repeats himself again he is made to sit down. The result of this state of things is that I am utterly unsuccessful as a stonewaller, because I have not the faculty of speaking for any length of time without repeating myself. This motion practically affirms that no private member shall speak for more than 30 minutes in any debate in this House, I appeal to the Minister for Works, who, off and on, has been many years in public life, to say whether some of the large measures introduced here can be dealt with adequately in half an hour. Take, for instance, a municipalities Bill or a roads Bill.

The Minister for Works: I should say either a roads Bill or a municipalities Bill could be adequately discussed in half an hour, because such a Bill would represent the resolutions of a conference of roads boards or of municipalities, as the case might be.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am glad the Minister has replied in that way. The Minister knows as well as I do that Parliament, in discussing these questions, has to consider the whole of the people, whilst roads boards and municipalities—I myself have been a member of a municipal council for 21 years—have to consider only a section of the people.

The Minister for Works: They consider all the people in conference.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: In dealing with such Bills we are bound to see that their provisions do not in any way oppress local residents. The existing Municipalities Act consists of about 500 sections. An amendment of that Act has long been due, and has only been delayed by the war. Can it be denied that the amending Bill would cause a great deal of discussion?

The Attorney General: You will get 40 minutes on each clause.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The time allowed on clauses in Committee is 20 minutes.

The Minister for Works: Twenty minutes twice.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On the clauses of some Bills 20 minutes would be quite insufficient. Every Government in power—I care not whether they are Liberal or Labour; there is no such thing as National—endeavour as far as possible to curtail discussion, with the view of forcing their measures through as introduced. You, Mr. Speaker, will agree with me that that has been the practice ever since a Parliament has existed in this State. That being so, I ask the Minister for Works to bear in mind that, although he is now sitting on the Government benches, there is every probability that after the next general election he may be sitting on this side of the House. The hon. gentleman may consider the present Government's preparation of legislation to be absolutely infallible. But, immediately he gets into Opposition, he will not consider the Government's legislation infallible; and then he will arrive at the conclusion that it is necessary to have the fullest liberty of discussion. If three or four years ago any member sitting on the Government side of the House had attempted to move a motion of this kind, the Minister for Works would first have been struck dumb with astonishment, and then would have become rampant and raving, so that it would not have been safe to remain in this Chamber with him.

The Colonial Treasurer: If a member talks for 30 minutes, it is as much as he can do.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I guarantee that on an important measure the Treasurer will occupy more than half an hour.

The Colonial Treasurer: I have rarely done so, except on the Budget.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Unless I mistake, the Colonial Treasurer has been a Ministerial supporter ever since he came back to this House in 1914. I think the hon. gentleman will agree with me that when one opposes a measure one is apt to speak longer on it than if one supports it. However, the present position of Parliament is serious. I say that, and I honestly believe it. On more than one occasion I have told my electors, "You object to Parliament not pushing business through, but I guarantee that if we did all our business in a week, you would say, 'Why, what are we paying members for? They do not give any attention to the country's business. No wonder the State is going to the dogs.'" The Perth Chamber of Commerce have already expressed themselves to the effect that we have not the brains to attend to the country's business.

The Colonial Treasurer: They say all the brains went out of the State when Lord Forrest left it.

Sitting suspended from 6-15 to 7-30 p.m.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I was pointing out that the time allowed in the hon. member's motion would not give hon. members an opportunity of properly discussing a subject and thus bringing out their thoughts in regard to various matters which were being considered. Since the adjournment I have had an opportunity of hunting up some of the back volumes of "Hansard" to prove the difference in the opinion of some members after they get on the Ministerial side of the House. I will take some of the debates on the Estimates

to start with. The member for Canning who is at present the Attorney General, in 1915 first spoke on the financial policy. Then he spoke on the annual votes. He spoke on two occasions on the Motor Car Service, once on the Government stores, four times on Literary and Scientific Grants, once on the London Agency, once on Miscellaneous Services, three times on Woods and Forests, eight times on Lands and Surveys, once on Contingencies, three times on Attorney General's Salaries, and twice on Contingencies, twice on the Colonial Secretary's vote, once on the Avondale and Harvey estates, and he also spoke on many other votes.

Mr. Johnston: Could not he still do all that on each item?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, he would only be able to speak for 20 minutes.

Mr. Johnston: No, twice on each item.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Hon. members in 1915 generally took the same active interest in the Estimates as was taken recently. The present Minister for Works in 1915 also had a good deal to say on the Estimates. He spoke on the financial policy at some length and then on the Mines vote once, the Woods and Forests vote once, Lands and Surveys six times, Agriculture once, Police three times, Public Works and Buildings once, and so on right through. Then on the Loan Estimates in connection with which the House very rarely takes up much time the member for Murray-Wellington spoke generally and then on Railways he spoke five times, on Harbours and Rivers once, on Goldfields and Mineral Resources once, on Agriculture twice and Other Undertakings once.

The Minister for Works: Do you want the House to understand that I spoke for an hour on each item?

The Attorney General: Some of those speeches may have been of one line only.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: If the motion is carried, it will be possible to speak only twice. The member for Murray-Wellington spoke more than an hour on the general question.

The Minister for Works: That may be.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Under this motion that would not be possible.

The Attorney General: Yes on the financial statement it will be possible to speak for an hour.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Minister for Works on land and Surveys spoke six times.

The Minister for Works: Probably a minute on each occasion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am merely saying that the time of the House is not being wasted this year in following a course which has always been adopted and the hon. member in moving the motion is only guided by what has taken place this year.

Hon. T. Walker: He is too new to judge.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No time has been wasted this year in comparison with previous years. At any rate, I do not call it wasting time. I maintain that every member of this Chamber when something is being brought forward which he considers detrimental to his constituents particularly, and probably detrimental to the interests of the State in general, is justified in using every means in his power to try and convince members that the proposal being discussed is wrong.

Mr. Foley: Do you reckon that the dissertation on bananas which we had the other evening by the member for Gascoyne was justified?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The hon. member at that time pointed out that there were areas in the Gascoyne district which could be utilised by re-

turned soldiers for growing bananas, amongst other things.

Mr. Foley: Do you think he was justified in doing that?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Quite. In normal times thousands of pounds go out of this State for the purchase of bananas. I am merely pointing out that there is justification for the action which is always taken by hon. members. Of course other hon. members may think differently and some imagine that because an hon. member speaks at an extraordinary length that he is wasting time. When I came here first a statement I made to some friends of mine who asked me what I thought of Parliament was that I considered it was worth £2,000 a year to listen to some of the tommy-rot which was spoken.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): For the last 15 minutes I have been of the same opinion myself.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I have no doubt about that, but I realise that when I was a member of the Government a good deal of tommy-rot was often talked for the purpose of trying to get something from an hon. member who might have been sitting behind the Government on which to hang an argument and so discredit the Government. The Honorary Minister took me to task because I stated there were two ways of doing work, one by keeping quiet and the other by talking as long as possible. I maintain that, from the experience which has been afforded in this Assembly since the election, there has been no occasion whatever for a motion such as this. That being so, I hope it will not be carried.

Debate interrupted by Standing Order 214.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [7:46]: I move—

That the Orders of the day Nos. 1 to 10 inclusive be postponed for the consideration of Orders of the day Nos. 11 to 18."

Question put and passed.

BILL—VERMIN BOARDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Council, and read a first time.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1917-18.

In Committee of Supply.

The House resolved into Committee of Supply for the purpose of considering the Loan Estimates; Mr. Munsie in the Chair.

Vote—Departmental, £40,489:

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner—Irwin) [7:47]: The total loan expenditure provided in the Loan Estimates is as follows:—From general Loan Fund £851,748, from the Trust Fund £220,146, and from the Land Improvement Fund £142,000, or a total of £1,213,894. It may be generally thought that this is an expenditure which we intend effecting on loan works, but included in that total are the sums of £90,000 for the State smelter, water supply and sewerage £80,800, Agricultural Bank capital £75,000, repatriation of soldiers and surveys £65,000, and Industries Assistance Board £125,000, making a total of £436,000. This will be recouped, so that our anticipated general loan expenditure will be about £775,000 for this year. That is the expenditure solely provided for works and so forth. Up to the end of March, that means nine months of this year, instead of spending the proportion of

£1,213,894 we have only spent £419,819. This will show the Committee that we have been conserving our loan funds, and only applying expenditure to such works as are absolutely necessary, such business undertakings as I have mentioned that must be carried on, and financed, and such works that are not only necessary now but which will be much more necessary immediately the war is over. I think I can claim that it has been absolutely the lowest loan expenditure for that term during a number of years. For all the items on the General Loan Estimates, with the exception of three which total £10,000, and for which I am asking a reappropriation in a Bill that I submitted to-day, we have appropriations so that it is clearly before the Committee that many of these works that we have continued and have spent money upon were carried on under appropriations authorised by this House. I do not propose delaying the Committee, because so far as the items of loan Estimates are concerned they are under the charge of the Minister for Works, who will give the Committee the fullest information upon them that is desired. I merely want, so far as my task is concerned, to show the Committee exactly how much money we have anticipated that we want out of the total loan expenditure, in all directions, and how much we have spent.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [7:50]: Anyone perusing the Loan Estimates of this year will come to the conclusion that owing to the war the development of this State has not been proceeded with in the way that many of us desire. We realise that there is no way at present of going on the money market, and if money were available, in case the Government did go on the market, the price they would have to pay for it would be such that they could not proceed with a large number of the works which are necessary in order to open up this State. Consequently, the Treasurer has confined his Estimates to those works which are already in hand, works which it is almost impossible to stop at the present juncture. If these works were stopped it would be almost disastrous to the State. There is not the least doubt in my mind that the Government must try, as far as possible, to keep the wheels of industry moving. Private people follow the example of the Government, and if the Government close down these works entirely, as some of the people think they ought to do, we would find that stagnation would exist in Western Australia to such an extent that in all probability other industries would close down as well, and this would act as a detriment to the interests of the State. The Treasurer this year has raised about £700,000. He did not say how long that would carry him on.

The Colonial Treasurer: Practically to the end of June, I think.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Of next year?

The Colonial Treasurer: Of this year.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is only fair to state that the money which has been expended during the last two years, namely, 1916-17 and 1917-18, is a portion of that money which has been attached to the Labour Government. In other words, they have to take the whole of the responsibility, not only for the loan which was raised, but also for the proposals which they brought forward and of which Parliament approved, and which necessitated the raising of these loans. Hon. members will realise that a large sum of money is necessary to again assist settlers. A considerable amount of this money has been refunded

by the sale of their products, the Industries Assistance Board using the money once, twice, or three times. There has not been the necessity, therefore, for the Government to go in for fresh loans in that direction, as it was necessary for the previous administration to do. Furthermore, there is money required in connection with the smelters at Ravensthorpe. That money has also been borrowed previously and repaid, and so far as loan money is concerned, the works have not cost anything. There is no doubt after a perusal of these Estimates that members will recognise that the Government have put the pruning knife in as far as they possibly can, with due regard to the best interests of the State, and, after a close inspection of the Estimates, I do not see any way in which they could further reduce the expenditure. A good deal of the savings and economy, about which we have heard so much, has been practised, as the Estimates clearly show, and that economy particularly is in connection with the loan expenditure. If we have to curtail loan expenditure, there is no necessity for keeping on a large staff for the purpose of carrying out loan works, and there has therefore been a reduction in the expenditure of departments, particularly in respect to officers who were previously paid out of loan funds. Hon. members will see when the loan expenditure is reduced from two to three millions a year, down to £775,000, which is the anticipated general loan expenditure this year, that a number of works cannot be carried on, and that it is therefore necessary to reduce the staff which was previously employed. I do not intend to take up the time of the Committee in regard to these Estimates. I believe that it is the Treasurer's intention to get them through to another place before it adjourns. I have perused the Estimates closely, and I personally cannot see where the pruning knife can be put in any further so far as the Government are concerned, with due regard to the interests of the State.

Hon. J. MITCHELL (Northam) [8-0]: I am pleased to find that the leader of the Opposition has taken up a reasonable attitude. Most of the items are for the completion of works. I hope the Minister will be able to tell us something about the Fremantle Cold Storage Works. I notice that in 1917 plans were prepared for these works and for this year we are told that plans are in progress. These works are urgently needed and I hope they will be immediately gone on with. The cost cannot be great. I feel sure we shall not be able to deal with much of the fat stock this year at these works. We have come to a time in the history of production when we must export. In this State our consumption of mutton is limited. We kill something like 500,000 sheep a year and the production this year will probably be about a million and a half. There can be no sale of meat beyond the meat eaten locally and perhaps some small quantities for shipment. I know that we shall have an over-supply of fat stock. We have the abattoirs at Fremantle and we want the cold storage works there and I hope these works will be erected as soon as possible. As to the Wyndham works, we shall be dealing with a Bill in regard to the Wyndham works directly and we can then discuss the matter. I notice the State industries are to be assisted to the amount of £125,000. That money has all been taken from recent borrowings. We discussed this matter recently and I find now that the interest rate need not have been raised. The

excuse was that the money was costing the Government so much more. Now we find that £125,000 of this money had to be used by the Industries Assistance Board. I should like to draw the attention of the Minister for Industries to this fact, because it hardly justifies the attitude of the Government. Very little can be said on these Estimates because a great deal of the work is in hand and must be completed.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [8-4]: When the Annual Estimates were before the Committee, the question was raised regarding the interest charged by the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board and it was very late in the night when this matter was raised in Committee. I did not have all the information at my disposal to answer members' questions as to the course adopted by the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board, therefore I take this opportunity of making a short statement to members of the capital and interest adjustment of the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board. The capital on the 28th February of this year was £1,151,428 representing permanent capital of £801,633 and temporary capital of £349,795. This capital was advanced by the Treasurer at rates of 4½ per cent. and 5 per cent. Any portion of the temporary capital that remains uncleared on the 30th June next will be converted into permanent capital and such sum will be subject to interest at 6½ per cent. That is what the Treasurer charges us. The rate of interest charged to assisted settlers has been six per cent. since the inception of the board. During the year the average rate of interest paid by the board for its money has been 4·65 per cent., thus representing a difference of 1·35 per cent. only. The cost of administration, is approximately two per cent. Thus the position at present is that we are losing money. When further advances are made 6½ per cent. will be charged by the Treasury and the position becomes worse. During the existence of the board, a loss of £51,507 has been made. The increased rate of interest was provided to help cover the cost of administration and thus directly assist the Treasurer. The increased rate of interest was made commencing as from the 1st October, such date representing the beginning of the board's half-year. Notice of the increased interest charge was given to the settlers through the inspectors. I agreed at the time I am speaking of to the contention of members that increased interest should not be retrospective and accordingly I immediately thereafter issued a direction that the increased rate should only apply from the 1st April. I find a difficulty in differentiating between the new and old money where the board has to work on what is known as harvest to harvest credits. Therefore it is impossible without increasing the loss to the State to reduce the current rate on all I.A.B. advances below seven per cent. In view of the present money market, even that rate is cheap money. If it is found on actual working that the rate of interest charged gives an amount above the working expenses after allowing for usual credits, then the rate will be instantly reviewed and I shall have an opportunity after the 30th June next, of doing so. Regarding the Agricultural Bank, the outstanding balances amount to £2,753,559 whilst the cost of administering is approximately one half per cent. The capital invested in the bank is the outstanding balances referred to for which the Treasury charges rates varying from four per cent.

to now 6½ per cent. The ruling rate for the bulk of the boards advances is five per cent. and that rate is being continued. In July 1917 the rate for new advances was 6½ per cent. and for new advances as from the 1st April the rate will be 7 per cent. The honourable gentleman (Hon. J. Mitchell) is quite right in his interjection that the bank advances on mortgages already made cannot be altered, that is to say an advance made last year or two years ago was made for the term of eight years or 10 years or 30 years as the case may be at five per cent will not be altered, but I have shown it will be impossible to differentiate between the old and new money with the board. It is impossible to differentiate with the bank, and those who want money from the bank to-day will be charged on those new advances seven per cent., because the bank will have to pay a higher rate.

Mr. Johnston: Only on the new money.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: As that deals with the bulk of the money or nearly all of it, the statement I made to members in the middle of the night was substantially correct. The outstanding balances are roughly 2½ millions and the bulk of that or nearly all is five per cent. money.

Mr. Johnston: Is not most of the board money old money?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I gave the figures, £801,633 and £349,795 new money. I showed that we pay on an average 4·65 per cent. and we have charged for it six per cent. The difference is 1·35 per cent. The cost to administer is approximately two per cent. The loss is mounting up on me and I do not want to receive more money by way of interest than will meet the case. Therefore I assure members when June 30th comes round and I strike a balance with the Treasurer and re-adjust the balance, I shall again go into the question of interest, members may rest assured of that. It is the aim of the department to let those people who deal with either the board or the bank have the money that we have the privilege of lending out at the cheapest rate possible consistent with business methods.

Mr. Johnston: The majority of the money advanced to assisted settlers of the country is old money and I understand that an increase from six per cent. to seven per cent. has been made on the sum of £801,000.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I gave the hon. member the figures. The permanent capital is £801,633. Outside of that we have an overdraft with the Treasurer of £349,000, call it £350,000 in round figures. This overdraft fluctuates from day to day. As settlers bank with us we bank with the Treasury. The Treasurer makes no profit, but passes the money on to the board at the rate he has to pay for it. In respect of the £349,000; the board is only charging six per cent. up to the 1st April, but the Treasurer has had to pay 6½ per cent. on that money during the last eight or nine months. So, as a matter of fact, between the Treasurer and the board, the settler has had distinctly an advantage for the last eight or nine months. It is impossible to say what is new money and what is old money. Nearly every settler is practically cleared at the end of each season, but he wants another advance for the new season. I might almost say that everybody is getting new money, for the money is continually being turned over. But, in order to equalise things with the Treasurer this year, we are charging seven per cent. as from April to the 30th June.

I will not overtake in that period the loss, but we must equalise that interest. When the 30th June comes round we shall know exactly what the money has cost, and the rates will be fixed, so that there shall be no loss to the State and no gain by the board. One cannot say fairer than that.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [8-18]: The Minister's explanation has made it very clear, that whereas in the past the assisted settler has paid six per cent. on what he owed the Industries Assistance Board, from this month to the 30th June he will have to pay seven per cent. on all money borrowed from the board. On the money described as temporary capital the Government pay 6½ per cent. interest, whilst on the permanent capital they are paying 4½ and 5 per cent. I wish to enter my protest against this increase in the interest having been made. If the Minister had time to go round amongst the new districts he would be very reluctant to make this increase, because the people in those districts are the least able section of the community to bear the increase.

The Colonial Treasurer: You surely do not want Revenue to pay their expenses?

Mr. JOHNSTON: That is not a fair way of putting it, because certain moneys have been borrowed at 4½ per cent. for the purpose of assisting settlers. This money has been repaid and utilised in some other direction.

The Attorney General: No; it is all in the board.

Mr. JOHNSTON: At all events, there have been large repayments. Then the Industries Assistance Board makes a fresh draw on the Treasurer, who hands out new money, which may include some of the repaid amounts, and he now charges 6½ per cent. instead of 4½ per cent.

The Attorney General: Only on the new money.

Mr. JOHNSTON: Certain money was borrowed by the Government at 4½ per cent. and the assisted settler is charged seven per cent. on portion of the money.

The Attorney General: If you work it out you will find that the average is entirely fair.

Mr. JOHNSTON: For years the policy was to lend money to the farmers at five per cent. Even to-day private borrowers in many instances are paying only six per cent. The Commonwealth Bank has no overdrafts exceeding six per cent. I have had that assurance from the manager of the bank within the last few weeks. I know that my own overdraft at that institution carries only that rate. The condition of the assisted settlers at present is extremely parlous, and I find among them a feeling of unrest as to the continuation of the operations of the board on the old scale. In fact, the inspectors have stated openly that they have instructions to reduce the monthly allowance as much as possible.

The Colonial Treasurer: Quite right, too.

Mr. JOHNSTON: It may be necessary owing to the financial position, but I have seen a number of farms in respect of which the allowance has been stopped with the result that the settlers have left them. I venture to say that the loss to the State, as the result of these men leaving their holdings, is far greater than the payments which would have been made to those men had they continued on the land. I urge on the Minister that where men are, for any reason, put off the board, the Government should try to get other men on the abandoned farms without delay.

The Attorney General: So we do.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I can give the Minister several instances in which cleared areas of over 100 acres have almost entirely disappeared through delay in getting new men on to the land after the original settlers have left it. The Government should try to make the keeping of men on the land the first consideration.

Mr. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [8.25]: I could sympathise with the hon. member if he had a sound case. Surely he realises that to-day money is dearer than ever before, and that everybody has to pay an increased rate of interest. The Government cannot give that which they do not receive themselves. Hon. members have every desire to assist the farmers, but at the same time hon. members have a duty to the State. There are other farmers besides those on the Industries Assistance Board, and those other farmers are of as much value to the State as are those on the Board. The men not on the board have kept off it largely by their own efforts, while some of those on the board need never have claimed assistance from the board. The men not on the board has to renew his overdraft, probably at seven per cent. and in renewing his machinery bills he has to pay as high as ten per cent., whereas the farmer on the board has to pay only seven per cent. for the board pays for the machinery.

Mr. Brown: Was not this £800,000 borrowed at 4½ per cent. by the Government?

Mr. TROY: Even so, the Government, when they want to use the money, have to consider the position of affairs to-day, and not the position that obtained when the money was borrowed. Why should these people, who have received such material advantage from the State, complain?

Mr. Hickmott: They must be kept on the land by reduction of the interest, or else allowed to go off the land.

Mr. TROY: I know hundreds of settlers on the board, and I recognise that they are just as valuable and distinct an asset to the State as are farmers not on the board. But the conditions of the farmer not on the board are harder than those of the farmer on the board. The latter gets all kinds of consideration and special treatment from the board for which I, by way of example as a farmer not on the board, cannot hope. The other day I received a roads board notice asking me to pay rates by a certain date, and that notice bore a footnote saying, "Farmers on the Industries Assistance Board need not pay the rates which are overdue."

Mr. Johnston: The board pay the rates for them, and the farmers pay seven per cent. interest.

Mr. TROY: The position of the farmer on the board should not be dissimilar, in such a respect, to the position of a farmer not on the board. Every producer in the country is an equal asset to the country if he is doing his best. Why the farmer on the board should receive special treatment as compared with the farmer not on the board, passes my comprehension. Much as I sympathise with the farmers on the board, I do not propose to entertain any special claim for them to-night. Along the Wongan Hills railway yesterday I saw dozens of deserted farms all going back to a state of nature. The country is bearing the burden of that, because the country has lent money towards the establishment of those farms. I do not for a moment believe that the imposition of the increased rate of interest, regrettable as it is, will drive off the land any man

genuinely anxious to make a living on it. I admit that if it made a difference of £20 per annum, it would be material.

Mr. Johnston: The average difference would be from £8 to £10.

Mr. TROY: While regretting that at this period in the history of Western Australia the Government are compelled to increase the rate of interest, yet I cannot take exception to their action. The State must have a fair deal. In justice to the taxpayer, I consider that the farmer on the board should not receive any consideration which is not extended to other farmers.

Mr. PIESSE: I regret sincerely that the Government have thought fit to increase the rate of interest to seven per cent. No doubt they will make money by that increase.

The Colonial Treasurer: Absolute nonsense! What about the cost of administration?

Mr. PIESSE: The cost of the money to the Government does not amount to seven per cent, even allowing two per cent for administration. Moreover, a considerable portion of this liability is represented by arrears of rent and water rates. The water rates certainly should not be charged to these people. For those rates they have to thank the administration of the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin).

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was done at the request of the people concerned.

Mr. PIESSE: The impost is most unfair. And now these struggling settlers are burdened with an increased rate of interest. I entirely agree with the member for William Narrogin that to allow these people to leave their homes for the sake of a little interest is not for the good of the State. Many farms are going back into a wild condition. In reply to the last speaker (Mr. Troy), I say that a settler called upon to pay 10 per cent interest must be in a bad position. That rate of 10 per cent has no general application, but applies only to dishonoured machinery bills. I hope the Government will well weigh the position on the 30th June, with a view of reduction of interest.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the discussion proceeds any further, I wish to point out that we are not at the present time discussing the general Estimates. There has been considerable discussion as to rates of interest.

Mr. PIESSE: Hon. members have been replying to statements made by the Minister for Industries, who told the Committee that the farmers were not paying seven per cent.

Mr. TROY: I understand this is a general discussion on the Loan Estimates. One of the items provides an appropriation for assistance to settlers. On that item members can discuss the rate of interest.

The CHAIRMAN: I have no desire to burke discussion. I merely point out the position to hon. members.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I could make myself very popular with people for whom I feel as much sympathy as certain men express with their lips for those people. But I am holding the State's money in trust, and when it comes to charging a rate of interest I have to see that the State gets such interest as will recoup it. At present money is costing £6 2s. 6d. at the very least.

Mr. Hickmott: What about the interest on the loans on abandoned farms? How will you get that interest?

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I will get it by writing the loans off as a clear loss—a clear

loss of about a quarter of a million sterling. The Government have about 600 farms on their hands just now. Why? Because the Government cannot get men on them. Then we have to consider whether a man with 150 or 200 acres of land cleared, and receiving 9s. per day, can ever get square.

Mr. Hickmott: You should not pay him anything. In the first place he never had a chance, with 150 acres.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I say unhesitatingly that there is no place on God's earth has treated the farmers as well in this respect as has the State of Western Australia. And no man knows that better than does the member for Pingelly. The money I deal with in this connection is not my money, nor this Committee's money. It is the State's money, and in lending it we have a right at least to see that the State receives a return for the loan. We may borrow the money at six per cent., but if it is going to cost two per cent for administration I cannot make that administration cost a general charge unless Parliament tells me to do so. In that case, I shall be quite willing to make such a concession. If the House says that the administration of the Industries Assistance Board is to be a general charge against revenue, well then that is their affair and not mine. What are we going to say about the loss we have made? He is a lucky man who is getting his money at seven per cent. to-day. I had more to do with getting these people the Industries Assistance Board than any member of this House, and at that time they would cheerfully have paid seven per cent. Last year I said that at six per cent. the State would make a loss, because the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) said they would administer for one per cent. It is nonsense. They cannot do it, and experience has proved it.

Mr. Maloy: You broke their hearts by wretched administration.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: I do like listening to common sense, and not childish nonsense.

Mr. Maloy: Then give us some common sense.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The State does not want to make threepence out of it, and we are not making threepence. The Minister told us that we are losing £50,000 on administration. I am not saying that the administration is perfect, but I know that the administration might have been much more perfect if it had not been for the farmers advocating particular wants in particular districts. If the House says that the general administration shall be made a charge against revenue they can have the money at six per cent. If the House says that we are to betray our trust, that is, that we shall advance the money and not get sufficient back to cover administration, I will do it, but I will not do it on my own authority.

Mr. HARRISON (Avon) [8-56]: The trust funds have been used to assist the various settlers in different parts of the State to increase production. We have also other trust funds in jeopardy through the Agricultural Bank. If a person has had £800 advanced to him on his property through the Industries Assistance Board, the difference of one per cent. may mean that it will compel that man to leave his holding, and that man will then become a burden on the State. It is not only £10 of the trust funds, but it will very likely be £1,000 of trust funds going back to nature. That is the most weighty matter for the House to decide. We want all the agricultural land in this State to be kept productive. If this is going to act as some

members on this side of the House are afraid it will, this small increase of interest may be the means of some of the men on the land going off it. My opinion is that a majority of those on the land who are to-day trying to redeem past energy, are offering the best guarantee that they will do the best they can for the State. I trust that if any hon. member has the ability to see daylight through this matter he will tell us whether it will be a wise thing to impose this one per cent. as submitted. Of course I know that it will be a bad business from the Treasurer's point of view. The whole question has to come down to the basic principle that we have to get out money from the earth, and we must remember that one of our industries is in danger. Climatic conditions and the war are such that we are not able to liquidate our assets, and if we had received 4s. instead of 3s. per bushel, the position would have been relieved. The thing is what is best under difficult circumstances.

Mr. H. ROBINSON (Albany) [8-55]: I would like to plead once more on behalf of settlers other than sheep farmers and wheat producers, who have been helped materially, to the credit, be it said, of the Governments in power, through the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board. One hon. member stated that sheep farmers have not been helped, but I know of instances where the Industries Assistance Board has helped sheep farmers. I am making a plea on behalf of those who are producing vegetables and potatoes, and who, unfortunately, have been placed in an invidious position, I might almost say, as the direct result of the extraordinary scheme propounded by the Government—I refer to the Torbay drainage scheme. I am only hopeful that if the Minister for Works will see this for himself, he will realise what a terrible abortion it is, and what a waste of public money there has been.

The CHAIRMAN: We are not discussing drainage schemes.

Mr. H. ROBINSON: I am hoping that the Minister will see his way clear to grant assistance. If he cannot do so under the Act, then he should do what he has done in some instances through the Agricultural Bank in an indirect manner. This matter has been brought under the notice of the Minister.

The Attorney General: You are not referring to the Minister for Industries?

Mr. H. ROBINSON: I am. So far as the Minister for Works is concerned, I have no complaint to make. I received a stereotyped reply from the Industries Assistance Board, which was nothing but a waste of paper and stamps.

The Attorney General: Do you not like to have your letters acknowledged?

Mr. H. ROBINSON: What I want is to have the plea which I made on behalf of the settlers to whom I have referred attended to. If the Industries Assistance Board would only do this they would be materially helping very deserving people, who would be able to recover from the unfortunate positions into which they have drifted, and they would also be able to pay back to the Agricultural Bank some of the rents which they owe. I hope the Minister will see that some little assistance is given, particularly to the unfortunate settlers in connection with the Torbay drainage scheme. There were 70 of them there three years ago, and to-day there are 19, and if something is not done promptly there will be none at all there next year. Last year crops of ten tons of potatoes to the acre were lost through that wonderful piece of engineering, the drainage scheme, which work

any layman can see is a direct waste of public money. The engineers accountable for it should be shifted and someone put in their places.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [8-58]: Whilst the member for Williams-Narrogin was talking I made a few calculations. Take £800,000 at 4·65 per cent., add two per cent. for administration, making it 6·65 per cent., and in round figures for 12 months we get £53,000. Three hundred and fifty thousand pounds at 6½ per cent., plus 2 per cent., in round figures is £29,000, making a total of £82,000. Take the whole amount at seven per cent. the sum is £80,000 or £2,000 less than the hon. member makes it.

Mr. Johnston: Some of it is at 8½ per cent.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It costs me two per cent. to administer and the Treasurer 6½ per cent. I have endeavoured to treat the farmer fairly on a composite rate of interest, which is less than the interest would be if it had been charged in individual cases.

Mr. Johnston: That is mere sophistry.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is pure arithmetic.

General debate concluded: votes and items discussed as follow:—

Item, Bolgart Extension, £6000.

Mr. PIESSE: Is it the intention of the Government to proceed with the completion of this extension?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes. It is important that we should get on to the wheat stacks on the Kondinin line. The Public Works Department under my direction stole or acquired about seven miles of rails from the Bolgart extension for use on the Kondinin line. We are hoping within the course of a few days to get a supply of rails which will be sent direct to the Bolgart extension with a view to going on with the portion which was authorised by Parliament. As soon as we know how the funds are we shall endeavour to resume the construction of that line. I do not wish the hon. member to understand that this will mean that we will immediately begin the work. At present we have the bulk of our men on the Wagin-Bowelling line and I should like to get that line off my hands before re-commencing the Bolgart line.

Item, Busselton-Margaret River area, £2,000.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like an explanation from the Minister as to the position in connection with the Margaret River line, and also in connection with what has been done as to tree pulling. The settlers in this district are amongst the oldest settled people in Western Australia, and some consideration should be given to them by the Government.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The tree pulling has been completed and many of the trees brought together. The question then arose as to whether we should burn the trees off or not. I refused to allow burning off until I had received an indemnity signed by the people in the neighbourhood relieving the Government from any claims for damages in case the fire got away. This is very heavily timbered country and it would be almost impossible to burn off these logs without causing the fire to spread. A big fire arose along the Roelands quarry line, which cost the Government some thousands of pounds, although I am sure if the evidence was submitted to hon. members they would agree that there was very little ground for the Government paying over the money. Reverting to the Busselton-

Margaret River railway, I understand that the route passed by the House is objected to by a considerable number of people in the district, and these have supported their views very strongly. At the lower end of the line, which was purchased from Millars' Company, the Government for some time ran a train, but it cost them £3,500 to earn a revenue of £300. I therefore stopped the locomotive from running. A motor trolley has now been sent down, and this will provide for all the traffic that is required on the line.

Mr. THOMSON: I should like to know why no provision is made for the Nyabing-Pingrup railway.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is no such item.

Mr. THOMSON: I am justified in asking why it is not there.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You should have brought this under notice on the general discussion.

Item, Albany Harbour and improvements, £700.

Mr. H. ROBINSON: I should like some information in regard to this item particularly as we find that considerable sums of money are provided in respect to other harbours. What does this item mean?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If hon. members will refer to page 15 of these Estimates, they will find there an explanation of nearly every item that they want. In this particular case the explanation is given as follows—"Dredging approach to north side of new jetty to a depth of 25 feet at low water, and payment of outstanding amounts."

Mr. Thomson: What are you going to dredge with?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is a dredge down there, but I do not think it is very effective, and am having inquiries made in regard to it. What is required to be done at Albany is that a certain amount of dredging will have to be carried out to obtain the depth of water required at the particular spot concerned. There are no new works projected there, so far as I know. If there are any new works these will be shown in the Estimates for next year. It has not been possible to show any this year.

Item, Busselton Jetty extension, £250.

Mr. PICKERING: I consider that the amount shown here is altogether inadequate, and that the unexpended balance from last year should be spent at the earliest possible date. I recently went to the end of the jetty and inspected it, and found that very considerable damage had been done to it by, what I might call, faulty navigation. I drew the attention of the Minister for Railways to this, and suggested that notices should be posted up on the jetty in covered cases for the information of shipping masters, instructing them that care must be taken in regard to this jetty. I shall be glad of an assurance that as soon as an opportunity offers the full amount will be spent on this jetty. Considerable exportation must take place here within a short time, in consequence of the valuable timber in this district.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It will be remembered that during a former Ministry it was proposed to expend £15,000 on making what was considered the necessary alterations and additions to the Busselton jetty. The Committee authorised the expenditure of £3,000 to make a start and a start was made by getting 100 piles down there, which are there at the present time. The money on the Estimates is to pay for these piles. Members may wonder why the jetty

improvements were not made straightaway. It was brought under my notice just after the work was started that the Commissioner of Railways has charge of the jetty and entire control of it. He demurred in regard to the expenditure proposed and stated that, in his opinion, the jetty, with slight improvements, was sufficient for all the traffic for some years. That gave me a shock because I advised Cabinet to make those improvements to the jetty. Captain Dods, of Busselton, saw me in regard to some other matters and he seemed to be a practical man and pointed out that the proposed alterations to the jetty would be of great value if carried out. It would enable two vessels to be dealt with expeditiously at the one time, when the trade permitted. But he would not state that at the time the trade was sufficient to warrant the extension of the jetty. With certain repairs, the jetty would be all that would be required for some while. It seemed to me that, in those circumstances, I could not proceed with the work. I brought the matter under the notice of the Premier at that time—I think it was Mr. Wilson—and we decided to defer the work.

Item, Albany Water Supply, advance to Albany Water Board, £62,172.

Mr. H. ROBINSON: This water supply has been transferred, I understand, to the Albany Water Board. Have they not received some money back from the rating? The rating is very high and the Minister promised that if there was more than would pay the sinking fund and interest some reduction would be made.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Albany water supply has been transferred to the Albany board and this amount is the necessary passage through the books to complete the transaction. I am quite satisfied as to the procedure adopted in connection with this scheme. I have not had an opportunity of going into the matter fully but I will, during recess, look into the matter and shall avail myself of any assistance the hon. member is able to give me.

Item, Boring for water on stock routes, etc., £3,250.

Mr. TROY: Where is it proposed to spend this money? Some time ago there was an agitation by a number of squatters for a new stock route from Carnarvon to Ajana. It was pointed out that there were certain advantages by which stock could be travelled by a shorter journey. If this money is to be expended in opening a stock route to Ajana, I shall oppose the vote, because, if there is any body of persons in the State having a good time at present it is the squatters. Their income, despite war handicaps, is greater than at any time in their history. The wealthy squatters in the Gascoyne and Murchison areas could, by spending a few hundred pounds each, carry out this work. This stock route is not now essential because there have been bountiful rains and therefore the stock route is not necessary. The country to-day is as good as nature can make it. The squatters can well afford to spend a few pounds and open this route.

Mr. MALEY: There is a danger in connection with this stock route from Gascoyne to Ajana. Unless the Government proceed with the erection of the stock yards at Mullewa, the Government will lose money. The Midland railway are getting the benefit of the trade instead of the Government.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Provision has been made for the cattle yards construction and

as soon as financial arrangements can be made with the Treasury, they will be proceeded with.

Mr. FOLEY: There is a good deal in the argument of the member for Mt. Magnet. If the squatters want to get their stock down from Carnarvon at the present time there is a stock route a little further south and it is not badly off for water. The State should not spend money at the present time unless it is absolutely necessary and unless those in the various districts do something to help themselves. On the stock route from Peak Hill to New England, a point north of Mullewa, there is a stock route opened up, but the Government did very little towards it. The pastoralists themselves in the Mt. Magnet district have opened up that route. The pastoral industry is just as essential to the welfare of the State as is any other industry. If a man is in the fortunate position of doing well in the pastoral industry, the State reaps a benefit in consequence. Even the Federal Government are getting a great revenue out of the pastoral industry through the war profits tax. When the pastoralists, by constructing a stock route, open up a new pastoral area, they do really good work from the State point of view. We should do all we can to assist those men. In Mr. P. V. O'Brien, of the Water Supply Department, we have one of the best possible officers; monuments to his ability are to be found all over the goldfields and in many of the pastoral areas; but, of course, notwithstanding the excellence of our officers, when we have no money nothing can be done. Some 400 miles north-east of Leonora there is an area containing one of the chief stock trucking stations in the State. Part of that area has been opened up without any cost to the Government. If the Government could be induced to put into good repair the facilities existing there, and sink an additional well at a point 120 miles north of Leonora, the people would get cheaper meat. One pastoralist has spent £1,500 this year in boring for water and sinking wells, and he is also entering upon the construction of a stock route. Every possible assistance should be given to such men. From Peak Hill in the west to New England in the east, mostly the whole of the country has been opened up by the stock route over which thousands of cattle are driven at a time when cattle cannot be brought down by boat. The men responsible for that route are worthy of every consideration. I say it is far better to spend money on that route than to open up a route from Carnarvon to Ajana, for it would mean that we should get cheaper meat and would be helping the most deserving of pastoralists.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The information we have had is very interesting, but it does not apply. The amount on the Estimates is £2,250, of which £1,094 has been spent. The member for Mt. Magnet referred to the stock route from Carnarvon to Ajana. I am not aware of this route having been proposed; if it has been proposed it has not made a very deep impression on my memory. If a stock route of that sort were proposed it would be referred by my department to the Lands Department, and before any money was spent in connection with it all the circumstances would be taken into account. The member for Leonora pointed out that the squatters have had a good time, and suggested that those gentlemen should be helped in regard to the stock route. Wherever I find individuals or a local authority prepared to help themselves, if it is within my power I am prepared to help them, so

long as the benefit is to the district. Hon. members will see in the vestibule a very large map showing what has been done by the Water Supply Department in the assistance of people in the dry areas. The policy was inaugurated before I took over the Water Supply Department. The Government have said to the local authorities, "If we construct dams and wells in your district it is not unreasonable to ask you to keep them in repair." By the same reasoning if the Government put in necessary wells along the stock routes their maintenance ought to be undertaken by the people of the district.

Mr. FOLEY : On the stock route I mentioned the conditions you referred to do not obtain.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : However, when this new stock route comes before me I will try to give it sympathetic consideration. If I have any money and sympathies they go out to the men willing to do a bit themselves. It disgusts me when I get an application for a new rope on some well, a rope that would cost £1.

Mr. ANGELO : I wish to correct a statement made by the Minister. He said the stock route referred to by the member for Mt. Magnet had not been brought under his notice. If he refers to "Hansard," he will find that I mentioned the stock route, not only when moving the Address-in-reply but also when speaking on the Estimates.

The Minister for Works : I qualified it by saying that if it had been brought under my notice it had not made much impression on my memory.

Mr. ANGELO : We are told that the Government do not intend to spend money on any public works other than those of a reproductive character. I challenge the Minister to point to any work of a more highly reproductive nature than this stock route, which I hope again to bring before the Minister in the course of a few days. We have now had four or five really good seasons, and so we have been enabled to get stock down from the Gascoyne district to the metropolitan market. But one bad season would close the existing stock route, whereas if the route from Carnarvon to Ajana were opened it would remain open even in a bad season, all that is necessary to this end being the provisions of three sub-artesian bores. From Carnarvon to Hamelin Pool the distance is 140 miles, and from Hamelin Pool to Ajana it is 120 miles. The Carnarvon roads board is prepared to open up that stock route to Hamelin Pool and keep it in repair, and the only assistance they ask for opening up the route from Hamelin Pool to Ajana is the provision of three sub-artesian wells. If the Government do that they will open up three million acres of sheep country, the rents from which will amount to £3,000 yearly. This work is estimated to cost £2,500 and the income from the first year's operations will probably be £3,000 and year after year the Government in rents alone will get more than the work cost. Can anything of a more reproductive nature be shown? The people of the metropolitan area too will be assured of a cheaper meat supply. We all know that the Ajana railway is not paying, and if the stock route is opened, sheep will be diverted to Ajana and the Minister for Railways will be glad of the extra revenue which will be obtained. I have in my pocket applications for 700,000 acres of sheep country which will be available if the stock route is opened, and as soon as the promise is given that the wells will be sunk the applications will be put in. The roads boards of Northampton, Gascoyne, and Sharks Bay conjointly will con-

tribute towards the cost of the work. I trust the Minister will lend a sympathetic ear and show his business acumen by agreeing to such a good business proposition.

Item, Water Supply in agricultural districts including drainage and irrigation, £15,446.

Mr. PICKERING : I want to draw attention to the Stirling estate drainage scheme and to washaways which have occurred there. Some of the richest lands in the South-West are drained there. The land is used for dairying, but owing to the damage which has been done by water, some of the holders have suffered considerably. It is necessary that some provision should be made to overcome these recurring washaways. This provision should take the form of flood gates. Some time back the board received two tenders, the lowest being £138. The Government promised in October, 1913, that in the event of exceptional damage being done they would provide funds to make good any damage, but the amount of £50 which was given did not go far enough. I hope the Minister will favourably consider the request and that some arrangement will be arrived at by which a recurrence of this damage will be prevented.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS : In apportioning the amount which was allotted to the various boards, we gave to this particular board what seemed to be a fair amount in relation to what was given to other boards. Now it appears that the sum of £50 which was granted was not enough. Other troubles have occurred. The papers are on my desk but I have not been able to get at them. When I do so the hon. member can rest assured that so far as funds will allow I will deal fairly with his constituents.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN : The member for Toodyay has drawn attention to the fact that the Government should not charge rates to those farmers who are being served from the goldfields water scheme and who regard the rate as being an imposition. Let us see where the imposition comes in. There was a drought in those districts and nearly £100,000 was spent to relieve the settlers from the difficulties they were experiencing through want of water. At that time it was almost an impossibility to keep those people away from the office of the Minister for Works. They were continually asking that the pipes should be run from the goldfields water main, really before any scheme had been properly developed. This was done at great expense and the hon. member complains now, because a rate has been struck for this work and because the Government are charging up the cost of supplying those settlers with water. That is done in every other part of the State. For a long time those settlers did not pay anything. They were only charged on the pipes which connected their areas with the water supply. Every other district however has to pay the full cost of the water supply and the only people who have complained are those in the agricultural districts who are being supplied from the goldfields main. Before they got the water they said they would not mind what they had to pay, but after they got it they would not pay. I hope the Minister will see that they pay what they should.

[Mr. Foley took the Chair.]

Mr. PIENSE : Although the member for North-East Fremantle held the position of Minister for Works he knows very little about the subject he is discussing. The cruel part of the Nungarin

extension is the system of rating, which is grossly unfair.

The Minister for Works: It was made known to the people before the scheme was carried out.

Mr. PIESSE: True. The Bill that gives power to the Government to impose that rate was carried through the Legislative Council under a promise which was afterwards broken. The assurance was given that it was only a temporary measure and that it would be followed by a consolidating measure which would bring the whole matter again under review. No attempt was made by the Labour Government to keep their pledge, and reconsider the Bill.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They kept too many pledges, and these are what we are suffering from to-day.

Mr. PIESSE: I have on every occasion given credit to the Labour Government for the assistance they rendered to settlers in regard to water supplies, and other necessities. But when it comes to an act of injustice such as this I am going to ventilate the case. The Act in question gives power to the Government to impose a rate on any property, the boundary of which lies within 10 chains of the pipe line, and also gives power to collect a holding fee of £5. It is impossible, in many instances, to get the water to the homesteads, and yet these unfortunate people have to pay all the same. Under pre-war conditions it would in many cases, cost £300 to lay the necessary piping to the homestead.

The Minister for Works: They agreed to the scheme.

Mr. PIESSE: Yes, because a period of drought was on. It was also thought the Government would deal more fairly with them later. The rate imposed is much more than even the land could carry.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The officers of the Water Supply Department are preparing for me a complete map and report in connection with the whole of the water supply that comes from the Mundaring dam. It is felt that these rates should be examined in order to find out whether any injustice, such as is suggested by the hon. member, exists, and whether there are any means of effecting a remedy if such is the case. This applies not only to water for the agricultural areas, but also to the goldfields. I have no sympathy whatever with people who will say anything when they want to get something, but who, when they have got it, use every endeavour possible to evade their obligations. At Bridgetown recently the Water Supply Department fixed up a scheme for the Railways. Some of the inhabitants said they would like to use the scheme in order to supply the town with water. I sent the Under Secretary down there, and told him to bring back a tangible guarantee that these people would pay what they undertook to pay in the event of the necessary reticulation being carried out. He brought back a guarantee, which I did not consider good enough in the circumstances. Whilst the matter was pending, the residents held a meeting and decided that they could not pay these rates, and would not agree to the reticulation. Until I have that guarantee I am not going to give them the water supply, neither will I give it to any other township in similar circumstances. Next session it may be necessary to bring forward a fairly big proposition in connection with one of these schemes. Hon. members must recognise that it is just as much their duty to conserve the funds of the State,

and see that they are not misapplied, as it is the duty of Ministers. I call it a misapplication of funds if people, after making representations, get something which has cost the State a lot of money and afterwards endeavour to escape their obligations. There are some farmers who have not paid any of their water rates for years, and do not intend to do so.

Mr. Piesse: They cannot pay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They will not pay so long as they can get members of Parliament to advocate that they should not carry out their obligations. At Geraldton the people have a water supply which is a disgrace, but they are still paying their rates. Members should realise that there is a clear cut issue between their duties as sympathisers with their friends, and their duties as co-trustees of the funds of the State.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I was asked, when giving evidence before the Agricultural Royal Commission, certain questions in regard to the water supply for agricultural areas. I stated that my object ever since I had been a member of the House, and before that time, was to induce farmers not to go in for these extensions, because I was satisfied that the land could not carry the burden that was being placed upon it. These people now realise that the advice I then gave was good advice. It is said that it pays the Government to supply water to the goldfields at 2s. 6d. per 1,000 gallons, and yet 6s. a thousand is charged on the extensions in the agricultural areas.

The Minister for Mines: Where do they get it for that?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I understand that they get it for as low as 1s. 6d. for sluicing purposes.

The Minister for Mines: I wish they could.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I have never urged these people to go in for these extensions, but have endeavoured to dissuade them from doing so. The correctness of my argument is borne out by the Royal Commission, which pointed out that these rates were impossible for this class of land, particularly in the dry areas. If it is a national undertaking to supply water to the goldfields at these rates, it is just as much a national undertaking to supply the agricultural areas with water.

The Minister for Mines: Do not make comparisons which are not true.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The great bulk of the people who wanted these extensions did not really understand the burden that they were taking upon their shoulders. Even in the case of land which has been brought up to its maximum of production on these extensions, the proposition cannot be a payable one at the price charged for this water.

Item, Development of goldfields and mineral resources, £21,000.

Mr. TROY: I desire to express my dissatisfaction at the very small amount provided on these Loan Estimates for the purposes of mining. I call the £21,000 nothing but a paltry pittance to what has been and is the most important industry of the State. Comparing that amount with the £321,000 for agricultural development, one realises what an insignificant place the mining industry holds in the opinion of the Government of this country.

Mr. Maley: But Wyndham swallows up more than half of the other amount.

Mr. TROY: For the last six or seven years this State has poured money into the agricultural industry, and agricultural members here

still demand more, more, more, and even demand that the farmer shall not pay his just dues to the country. Members representing the agricultural industry complain that the Government charge too much in the way of interest, and they also assert that the farmers should not be called upon to pay rates for a water supply which the farmers asked for and obtained. How different is the treatment meted out by the Government to the goldfields! A paltry sum of £21,000 for the industry which has made this country! I ask the Attorney General, where are the brilliant ideas he as Minister for Mines had for the encouragement of the mining industry, the ideas he expressed at that conference?

The Attorney General: I carried out a number of them myself, and the others are receiving consideration.

Mr. TROY: Where are the results? To-day if there is one industry that can complain of bad treatment it is the mining industry. The industry is declining, which is a serious matter for the country. There was a reduction of one million pounds in the gold production last year. And, in spite of the pretended interest of members, only this paltry sum of £21,000 is provided.

The Attorney General: That is an increase on last year. I only had £8,000 last year.

Mr. TROY: Last year's vote was £20,000, and last year's expenditure £16,000. If there is one industry to-day which requires assistance it is the mining industry, because it is, unfortunately, on the down grade, and because Parliament has for years past directed all its attention to the conservation of one industry only. There has arisen in this Chamber a body of men who on every occasion cry "Give, give, give, more, more, more."

Hon. J. Mitchell: They pay for it.

Mr. TROY: They complain about paying for it. If this item represents an indication of the Government's interest in the mining industry, then God help the mining industry! The present Minister's predecessor gave us ground for hope, but there has been no realisation of the hope. I do trust that, apart from these Estimates, the Minister for Mines will find a way to assist the mining industry. Those hon. members who have expressed the desire to support all industries, and who have it in their power to control the Government, should insist on reciprocity between the various industries. Mining representatives having assisted the agricultural industry, agricultural members should now assist the mining industry. I would oppose this item if opposition could increase it.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think there is any need to discuss the importance of the mining industry at this juncture. The last speaker recognises its importance, and we all recognise it. But I do deprecate any attempt to set up one industry against another. All industries should continue to work hand in hand, as they have done in the past. The Treasurer has promised that a larger sum will be placed on the Estimates next year for the mining industry if he can raise the money.

Mr. JOHNSTON: I resent the remarks of the member for Mt. Magnet so far as they

suggest that the Country party wish the agricultural community to be permitted to evade payment of their just debts. When the hon. member referred to the cry of give, give, give that has been heard in this Chamber, I take it he refers to the demand of the metropolitan community for penny sections on the trams. The Country party stand for equal justice to all the primary industries, and not for setting up any one industry against another. I assure hon. members opposite that if they can bring forward suggestions for the advancement of the mining industry, those suggestions will receive fair consideration and proper support at the hands of the Country party. At any rate, I speak for myself. I feel sure no one recognises more than the member for Mt. Magnet how difficult it is for the Government of the day to do as much as they would like to do in a practical manner for the mining industry. When what in some quarters was termed a goldfields Government held power—a Government that did a great deal for the farming industry—that Government found it difficult to increase the productiveness of the mining industry. The Country party are prepared to assist any efforts in that direction.

Mr. TROY: In addition to the cry for more, more, more, we now have words, words, words—promises. We are assured that there is no desire to set up one industry against another, and that the Minister for Mines resents the statement that there is any such tendency. But these Loan Estimates show clearly that the Government of the day have set one industry against another. They have made no provision whatever for the greatest industry in this country, the industry which has been responsible for making the country. The member for Williams-Narrogin compared what the goldfields Government had done for the agricultural industry with what the same Government had done for the mining industry. But in those years the need of the agricultural industry was greater. Surely that position will not obtain to the end of things. Since the need of the mining industry is now greater, are not we justified in looking for something else besides mere promises and pretences of support? Whilst there is one body in this Chamber clamouring, clamouring, clamouring for all the revenue and loan moneys of the State, there will never be anything for the mining industry. When those gentlemen are satisfied, what will be left for the other industries of the country? If I may judge from the requests made by the gentlemen in question during the last hour or so, I am convinced that once they are satisfied there will be nothing to assist the mining industry. I am going to vote to see that the interests of mining get a fair deal. A paltry sum of £21,000 does not show any desire on the part of the Government to assist the industry.

Mr. MALEY: I would be pleased to know from the Minister if he can give any information in connection with the expedition of the returns of the Northampton prospectors regarding their lead ore.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: The matter to which the hon. member refers relates to the private purchase of ore. Negotiations have not

been concluded, and as soon as they are concluded the hon. member will be informed.

Item, Abattoirs, cold storage, freezing, chilling and canning works, Wyndham; refrigerating works, export depot, grain sheds, and sale yards, £170,000.

Mr. THOMSON: Will the Minister explain why the Albany cold stores have been omitted from this vote. It was mentioned in the evidence taken by the Royal Commission that with the expenditure of about £2,000 it would be possible to provide facilities for killing lambs for export.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: With regard first of all to the Fremantle cold stores, our report states that plans are prepared and another report states that plans are in progress. The position is that last year plans were prepared, but there was a difference of opinion in connection with what should be built. When Mr. Dalton came down from Wyndham the plans were submitted to him. There was a difficulty about the question of site and so far as I was concerned, the difference between the sites was that of foundations. I said, "Let the plans be prepared from the wall plates upwards, and the other question can be settled afterwards." The plans are practically completed now and will be sent to the Eastern States shortly. Mr. Hardwick, the Chief Architect, will be visiting the East and he will submit the plans to Mr. Coxon, who is the recognised expert and to whom the Wyndham plans were submitted. The "Pastoralist's Review," an influential journal in its issue last month had an article which referred to this Government as being worse than the Ryan Government of Queensland, because we would not build these cold stores ourselves nor allow anyone else to build them. The Government recognise that so soon as the Wyndham works are completed there will have to be stores provided at Fremantle to receive the meat that will be sent down here where it will have to be kept if it cannot be immediately absorbed. After the plans have been submitted to the expert in the East the Government will either decide to call for tenders or have the works carried out by day labour. With regard to the Albany cold stores, the question of adding to the present stores there was not on the tapis when these Estimates were prepared. Consequently there is no money included in the amount for Albany. Plans have been prepared and they are in the hands of Mr. Baxter. As soon as they have been passed I will go to the Treasurer and get the money.

Item, Agricultural Immigration, £1,400.

Mr. TROY: Why is this amount provided? There cannot be any immigration contemplated.

Hon. R. H. UNDERWOOD (Honorary Minister): As a matter of fact we are still bringing some nominated immigrants here occasionally. They consist solely of the wives and children of men already here. There are also a few people coming from the Eastern States, practically on the same lines. General immigration of course, is at present impossible.

Item, Assistance to settlers, industries, etc., £125,000.

Mr. SMITH: This is a very large sum. I am given to understand that up to date the Audit Department has not audited the accounts of the Industries Assistance Board.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I think you will find it has.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): I can assure the hon. member that it has.

Mr. SMITH: I would like an assurance from the Minister for Industries that of his own personal knowledge he knows that the accounts of the Industries Assistance Board have been properly audited and reported upon by a Government auditor.

The Minister for Industries: Of my own personal knowledge, I am not aware of it.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Of my own personal knowledge I know that accounts were duly audited when I was at the department.

Item, New roads and bridges in country districts, £5,839.

Mr. PICKERING: There are on the Capel-Bunbury-road two bridges for which a sum of money was approved by Parliament. Those bridges are in a very serious state of disrepair. I would like an assurance from the Minister that he will have those bridges inspected, because I am told that their condition is a menace to the travelling public.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: In consequence of the retrenchments that have been carried out in the department, we have not the same number of responsible men to send out as we had formerly. As soon as I have one available, an officer shall be sent down to inspect and report upon those bridges.

Item, Purchase of land at Nedlands, £1,855.

Mr. SMITH: Will the Minister kindly inform the Committee what land has been purchased at Nedlands, and for what purpose?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: This has come down from the previous financial year. The money is required to complete the payment on land which was resumed for university purposes.

Vote put and passed.

This completed the Loan Estimates for the year.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

BILL—APPROPRIATION.

All Stages.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

In accordance with the resolutions adopted in Committees of Supply and Ways and Means, leave obtained to introduce the Appropriation Bill, which was read a first time.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL TREASURER (Hon. J. Gardiner-Irwin) [10.52] in moving the second reading said: For the information of new members of the House, I wish to inform them that this appropriation has been passed by them in various forms, and that it practically covers the Estimates from Loan Funds, from Property Trust Funds, and from Land Improvement Funds, and it also covers

the balance of the Estimates in connection with the advances to the Treasurer for the previous year. Certain sums are set apart from the Treasurer's Advance Account, and at the end of the following year he has to produce his Estimates to show how the money has been used. This is only a matter of form and I move—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [10.54]: This is the only opportunity I shall have of dealing with a question of which I think the House will take some notice. In this Appropriation Bill there is an amount appropriated for expenditure in connection with the Perth Public Hospital. This gives me an opportunity of referring to what I regard as an imposition upon a member of the hospital board, who was summoned before the select committee appointed by another place. Any person who is summoned before a select committee of another Chamber, or indeed any House of Parliament, should be free from criticism on the part of a semi-Government institution with regard to the evidence that he or she may give before that select committee. The question upon which the lady, to whom I am referring, gave evidence, as a member of the Perth Public Hospital Board, was causing a good deal of feeling throughout Western Australia during that time. There was very little difference between her evidence and the actual facts as they stood. It is true that in 1912 certain action was taken in regard to free treatment at the Perth Public Hospital, and was also taken in connection with other public hospitals. I am not going into the question, but merely desire to point out the facts. It was also thought to be unwise at that juncture to incur any large expenditure for the purpose of providing free treatment, because it was realised at the time that, in all probability, in the near future, there would be a large number of buildings left vacant at the Subiaco hospital, which might be the means of effecting a saving of a considerable sum of money in connection with the erection of buildings. Consequently, no additional provision was made by the Government, except in a very small way, to provide for this further treatment.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is the hon. member dealing with the grant of £20,000 for maintenance?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member knows that this is not for buildings of any description, but for maintenance, and that it constitutes a loan for the upkeep of the institution.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am well aware of that. I am referring to the medical treatment which is given at the hospital.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot refer to the extension of the buildings.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not intend to do so. The consequence was that a number of persons could not, in all probability, receive that attention which they would otherwise have had. When giving evidence be-

fore the select committee the lady in question dealt with the provisions for treatment which were made subsequent to the passing of the 1915 Health Act. Seeing that it was so, and that every person thoroughly understood the position, it shows badly for a board of a Government institution to summon a lady member of that board, and then to tell her, when she asks what is the object of the meeting—

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think the lady member is quite in order in discussing the board of management under this vote dealing with buildings and extensions. It could have been done by a substantive motion.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Bill provides for £20,000 for buildings and extensions.

Mr. SPEAKER: That is for maintenance alone. The hon. member would be justified in discussing the expenditure of the amount for maintenance alone, but not its expenditure on buildings and extensions.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I am not dealing with buildings now, Sir, because you stopped me on that a few minutes ago. I am dealing with the actions of a board having an expenditure of £20,000. I refer to the actions of the board relatively to one who was pointed by the Government, and who has been a good member of the board. The conditions of the board were such that the person in question was induced to write to the Press stating that under the conditions she had no option but to resign her position on the board. My reason for bringing this matter forward to-night is that I hope the Government will take no notice whatever of it. Knowing the lady as I do, I believe she gave her evidence believing it was right.

Hon. R. H. Underwood (Honorary Minister): Oh, evidence! She has made statements all over the town that are untrue.

Mr. Teesdale: She has persistently done

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Let me say that she did not wish to deal here with the reputation of an honest and straightforward woman; I will say now that she is quite as reputable as honest, quite as conscientious, quite well known and respected in the City of Perth as are the Honorary Minister and the members for Roebourne; perhaps more so. I say it is untrue that the lady misrepresented the case. She did not bring up the case in a different way because she held different views from other members of the board. When a woman is doing what she considers right and in the interests of the community, it is our duty to see that she is not driven off the board of a Government institution in this manner.

Mr. Teesdale: I give her statements the direct.

Mr. Jones: You would not dare to do it if she was about.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The member for Roebourne would not say that if her husband were present, because he would show the hon. member very quickly.

Mr. Teesdale: She made misstatements.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Nothing of the kind. Mr. Teesdale: That has been proved in the public Press.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, certainly not. I had not intended to take up so much time, and would not have done so had it not been for the interjections. But I desire to enter my protest against such action being taken in the case of a lady who did what she thought was right, and who was for years a valuable member of the board; who, moreover, carried out her duties on the board just as well as any other member. Yet an attempt is made to force her off the board because before a select committee she gave evidence in opposition to the views of some other members of the board. With all due respect to the board, I think they made a mistake in taking the action they did in this instance. I think they adopted an unwise line of action, as a result of which some woman perhaps in the future—women are not constituted as men are—who was a member of a Government board of this description might refuse to give evidence before a select committee if there were differences of opinion on the board. I think the least the board could have done, when the lady rang up in the morning to find out the object of the meeting—I have not spoken to the lady on the subject—

Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid the hon. member does not know too much about it.

Mr. Troy: Surely, Mr. Speaker, you are not justified in interrupting the hon. member and telling him that he does not know much about the case. I think that for the moment you have misunderstood your position.

Mr. SPEAKER: I understand my position. The member for Mr. Magnet knows that I am in the unfortunate position of being Speaker at night as well as chairman of the hospital board.

Mr. Troy: I beg your pardon, then, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER: I simply said that I was afraid the hon. member did not know the position. I am placed in rather a delicate position when the member for North-East Fremantle uses the word "summoned" he is not correct. I am allowing the hon. member all the latitude he desires on account of the position in which I am placed.

Mr. Troy: The position is quite clear now. I did not take you to task, Sir, and I would not have spoken had I known of your personal association with the case. I submitted that you were not justified in interrupting an hon. member. I allow now that you were justified in view of the fact that you are chairman of the hospital board.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I do not blame Mr. Speaker in the matter at all. When some members of a board go to the chairman of the board and ask him to call a meeting—I do not say that happened in this case—the chairman normally accedes to the request and does call a meeting. I raise no objection to the calling of a meeting in such circumstances. But I object to the summons to members—

Mr. SPEAKER: All members of the board received similar notifications.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No doubt hon. members of this House have had summonses or notifications to attend meetings which they were anxious to attend, but which by reason of other engagements they found it inconvenient to attend. In such circumstances they

would naturally telephone to find out whether the business of the meeting was important, because, if it was otherwise, they would go elsewhere. In this instance the lady was informed by the people at the other end of the telephone that they did not know what business was to come on. But when she arrived at the meeting she found that it had been called on account of certain statements she was alleged to have made. That is not a fair way of conducting a board. I have raised this matter to-night because the present is the only opportunity I shall have of bringing it up during this session. I desire to enter my protest against the action which has been taken by the board.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Foley in the Chair; the Colonial Treasurer in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Schedules A, B, C, D, E—agreed to.

Schedule F:

Mr. TROY: I wish to draw attention to the item, compassionate allowance to Mrs. Jull, widow of M. E. Jull, late Public Service Commissioner, £1,500, as I was not present when this Estimate was before members. I want to know under what conditions this amount has been paid to Mrs. Jull. I do not propose to take exception if the amount has been granted under the usual terms, but I want to make an appeal on behalf of the widow and family of Warden Troy who gave the State 40 years splendid service. He was a man of the highest character. Warden Troy is no relation of mine, but whenever we are dealing with compassionate allowances, I cannot help my mind dwelling on this case. He was a man who climbed from the lowest to the highest position. He was so conscientious that when he was dying I urged him as a personal friend to take a lump sum instead of his pension, but Warden Troy would not do that because he thought it would not be fair to the State as he knew he was in a dying condition. I think even now some little consideration might be shown to his wife and family. Had Warden Troy elected to take a lump sum in lieu of his pension he would have left his family comparatively well off. His family have never made a request to me or approached me in regard to this matter but I have always felt that an injustice had been done to this man's family.

The COLONIAL TREASURER: The late Warden Troy was a servant who was an honour to the State, and when a misfortune overtakes such a servant we are apt to allow our human sympathies to override our duty to the State. Once a civil servant elects either to take compensation or a pension, whichever he takes, however much we might like to recognise his services, we must realise that in dealing with a big service that must be final, otherwise there would be no limit to applications. This is a regrettable case, but I cannot as trustee of the public estate let my human sympathy override that which is right.

Mr. TROY: I appreciate the view put forward by the Treasurer, but in the public service there are officers whose services have been of distinctive merit. One man gives remarkable services; he pioneers the country north and south and does that pioneering well. Another renders ordinary service and in doing that he is in comfortable surroundings in Perth, runs no risk, and has nothing of an arduous nature to undertake. Who then is the better servant and who should be considered most? Certainly the man who renders the most signal service to the country should receive the best recognition. The distinctive features of the services of the late officer in question, I regret to say, have been overlooked, and should even now receive recognition. This House has not always been so considerate in the way of establishing precedents. In the case of the late Mr. Illingworth, a member of this Assembly, the House voted £1,000. Mr. Illingworth did not render the country any distinctive service, and in the case of another late member, the House voted the widow a sum of money. In those instances the House did not consider that it was setting a bad example; they considered the services which had been rendered and the circumstances of the time being. Sir Newton Moore, I think it was who moved the motion granting the £1,000 in connection with the late Mr. Illingworth. Much as I admit the apparent soundness of the Minister's reply, I feel sure there are precedents. If hon. members knew the late officer in question as well as I knew him they would support my proposal. He was a man who would not take anything from anybody, who kept aloof from clubs, and gave the State of his best. I have always felt that an injustice had been done him, and that therefore I should make some reference to the matter in the House.

Schedule put and passed.

Schedules G, H—agreed to.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Bill reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

House adjourned at 11.28 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 11th April, 1918.

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

HOUSE COMMITTEE, MEMBER.

On motion by the Colonial Secretary, Hon. J. Nicholson was appointed a member of the House Committee in place of the Hon. H. Roan.

MOTION—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.33]: I move—

“That for the remainder of the current week so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable Bills to be taken through all stages in one sitting and to enable Messages from the Legislative Assembly being taken into consideration forthwith when received.”

As I explained last evening, this motion is moved in consequence of the resolution carried by the House not to sit for the period of four weeks prior to the biennial elections. That means that we must complete the business we have to do before adjourning, by not later than Saturday next. The business that, to my mind, it is essential should be completed, is the passing of the Appropriation Bill, without which money cannot be legally paid under the Governor's warrant.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: It cannot be spent until it is passed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Not legally, but I am afraid it is sometimes spent. I think it will be admitted by hon. members that it is desirable the Appropriation Bill should pass.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: You have no supply, then?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. I have no wish to hurry the discussion on the Appropriation Bill, but without the suspension of the Standing Orders hon. members will realise that when the Bill comes to us, as it will in the course of a few moments, it would be competent for me merely to move the first reading and then adjourn the debate until to-morrow. I wish to proceed at once with the second reading, and continue it just so far as hon. members feel disposed, and so on with the other stages of the Bill, and, in the terms of another motion, of which I have given notice, to continue sitting if necessary until all stages have been completed. Then we have the Employment Brokers Act Amendment Bill, consideration of which has practically been completed. I take it that there is no objection to finalising this measure so that it can go back to another place. There is also the Rabbit Act Amendment Bill, which has been fully discussed. If we are going to adjourn for a month it is advisable that this measure also should be finalised, and sent on to another place. There is, too, the Wheat Marketing Act Amendment Bill, which it is