

ing branded as a criminal because he gave his friend a glass of whisky out of his flask. He was quite willing to agree to the formal passing of the clause to assist the Minister to advance the Bill one stage, but it must be on a distinct understanding that a full opportunity would be given to discuss the matter.

Hon. R. LAURIE asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

First schedule agreed to.

Second Schedule:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The second, third, and fourth schedules referred to members of the licensing court, and were therefore not now required.

Schedule put and negatived.

Third and Fourth Schedules put and negatived.

Fifth Schedule to Twenty-ninth Schedule—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and ordered to be returned to the Legislative Assembly, requesting them to make the amendments agreed to by the Committee.

#### BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

Received from the Legislative Assembly and on motion by Hon. B. C. O'Brien read a first time.

#### CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

Hon. J. W. HACKETT: Could the Minister give members some information as to when it was likely the House would rise for the Christmas holidays?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: So far as this House was concerned, indeed both Houses, the adjournment would probably be made this day week for the Christmas recess. This House would probably adjourn for three weeks; that was supposing we got through the Licensing Bill so as to get it back to another place before Christmas. In such a case there would not be the necessity to meet again quite as soon as the other House, and the recess, therefore, would be for about three weeks.

*House adjourned at 10.16 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 15th December, 1910.

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

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Attorney General: 1, Report by the Chief Electoral Officer on the principal electoral systems in self-governing countries. (Ordered to be printed.)

By the Minister for Works: 1, Plan of the route of the proposed Katanning-Nampup Railway.

By the Minister for Lands: 1, Papers re abandonment of lands by Mr. G. W. D. Breadon.

#### QUESTION—LANDS RESUMPTION, DONNYBROOK-PRESTON RAILWAY.

Mr. SWAN (for Mr. A. A. Wilson) asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has the land in connection with the construction of the Donnybrook-Preston Railway been resumed from the settlers? 2, Has compensation been paid for the land so resumed? 3, Is it the intention of the Works Department to securely fence the land so resumed? 4, When the Works Department constructs a railway that divides into sections settlers' farms that had previously been securely fenced, whose duty is it to fence off and "catle pit," if required, the said railway?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, No. The resumption has been delayed owing to a re-survey of the whole line having been necessary. 2, Compensation will be paid after resumption when claims have been considered.

3, It is not intended to fence the land resumed for country railways. 4, It is the custom of the Public Works Department when constructing a railway through fenced land belonging to settlers to make adequate provision for the security of such land.

#### QUESTION—RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSINGS.

Mr. HARDWICK asked the Minister for Railways: 1. Is the Government aware that another death has taken place at the level railway crossing in Claisebrook Road, East Perth? 2, Is it the intention of the Government to take immediate action to minimise the risk of loss of life at all crossings in East Perth? 3, If not, why not.

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Yes. 2, There are at present gates at this crossing worked from the signal box, but in the alterations proposed between Perth and East Perth, provision is made for bridges at the intermediate level crossings. 3, See answer to No. 2.

#### BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1. Permanent Reserves Rededication (No. 2) (Introduced by the Minister for Lands.)

2. Naraling to Yuna Area Railway. (Introduced by the Minister for Works.)

#### MOTION—GOVERNMENT BUSINESS, PRECEDENCE.

The PREMIER (Hon. Frank Wilson) moved—

*That for the remainder of the session Government business shall take precedence of all motions and Orders of the Day.*

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): It was due to the House that the Premier should intimate what business on the Notice Paper he proposed should be put through before the session closed. It was unusual to move a motion of this kind without an explanation from the leader of the House, who

should, at the same time, intimate when he proposed to close the session. Not before, to his knowledge, had any Premier moved a motion such as this, which meant that no further private members' business should be discussed, without giving an intimation of what he proposed to do. Judging by the Notice Paper we were just commencing the session, for the amount of work on the Notice Paper as compared with that accomplished during the session was quite sufficient for a session in itself. We had not yet proceeded far with the Revenue Estimates, we had not received the Loan Estimates, there were many important Bills which the House had not yet seen, and no fewer than 10 railway Bills which had not yet been read a second time, while the University Bill, the Hospitals Bill, and the Loans Conversion Bill were likely to take up a considerable time; yet we were faced with a motion of this kind. It was only due to members that the leader of the House should state definitely what he proposed to do. Moreover, the Premier frequently talked a great deal about the desirability of extending courtesies from one side of the House to the other. It would be just as well if the Premier were to put that theory into operation. Not many weeks ago the Premier had said that before presenting this motion he would have no hesitation in consulting with the leader of the Opposition as to what business on the Notice Paper should be dealt with before the session closed.

The Premier: No; I did not say that.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Premier had distinctly said that at a later date he would move that Government business should take precedence, and that then he would not hesitate to consult with the leader of the Opposition as to what business should be proceeded with before the session closed. Notwithstanding this the Premier had not said a word to him about it. The motion amounted to nothing short of a want of courtesy. After all, the Premier represented a majority, which, according to the division lists, amounted to one only; therefore it was due to the large minority that they should be consulted on matters of this kind.

The PREMIER (in reply): The leader of the Opposition could take the assurance that there had been no want of courtesy at all.

Mr. Walker: Is this in reply?

The PREMIER: It was in reply to the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Holman: Not in reply to the debate—you do not wish to close the debate?

The PREMIER: There was no intention to close the debate. He wanted the leader of the Opposition and his colleagues to believe there was no desire whatever on his part to be discourteous. He knew the hon. member often made statements to the effect that he (the Premier) was discourteous. He could assure the leader of the Opposition it was unintentional on his part. He had always been ready and willing to discuss business with the leader of the Opposition, but up to the present it had been absolutely impossible. Up to the present it was absolutely impossible to enter into a discussion with the leader of the Opposition; the time was not ripe for it; but it was probably ripe now, or would be next week, and he would be very pleased to meet the hon. member next week to discuss the matter. The very fact that so many Bills were on the Notice Paper, all of which ought to be passed, certainly excused the motion now proposed. It was moved with the intention of trying to get through the business as early as possible. He would admit at once it was impossible to get through before Christmas, and he hoped members would agree to adjourn from next Thursday until the 4th January, and then get to work again when a fortnight should clear up everything. One or two of the Bills proposed would have to go by the board, but the bulk of the measures were formal Bills, particularly the railway Bills. He did not suppose any member wished to oppose any of the railway proposals.

Mr. Gordon: There will be a good deal to be said on them.

The PREMIER: But all could be said in a few hours; it would not require weeks to do it. Hon. members opposite would agree that it was necessary to get the measures through. He would be only

too happy to meet the leader of the Opposition, but it was impossible to do so up to the present. There were two or three more measures to be introduced as the hon. member knew, for instance the Payment of Members Bill.

Mr. Scaddan: That will not take long. I will guarantee you a statutory majority on that.

The PREMIER: It was an important measure that would require due consideration. There were some members at any rate on the Government side who wished to vent their opinions upon it.

Mr. Walker: To stonewall it?

The PREMIER: No, not stonewall it, but discuss it at some length. At any rate it was important. Members should not oppose this motion. He would be happy to meet the leader of the Opposition and perhaps one of his colleagues on Tuesday next to go into the question of seeing what measures were to be struck off or put through this session.

Mr. JACOBY: Was there a possibility of dealing with the Roads Bill this session? It was a measure of considerable importance to roads boards, but had been held up for three years, with the result that the development of districts was very seriously affected owing to the want of necessary legal authority in regard to borrowing powers.

The PREMIER: If it could possibly be done he was exceedingly anxious to push this Bill through. He would discuss it with the leader of the Opposition. It was mostly a machinery measure bar one or two clauses, and arrangements might be made to treat it as a formal matter with the understanding that it would be brought up for review next session whoever might be in charge of the Government bench at that time.

Question put and passed.

#### BILL—BREAD ACT AMENDMENT.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### BILL—WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

## BILL—TRIBUTERS.

Report of Committee adopted.

## ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1910-11.

*In Committee of Supply.*

Resumed from the 13th December; Mr. Taylor in the Chair.

Lands Department (Hon. J. Mitchell, Minister) :

*Vote—Lands and Surveys, £80,789 :*

Mr. PRICE: Silence on such an occasion as this might be misconstrued and taken as an indication that one was satisfied with the administration of the Lands Department; but many of the charges of maladministration made against the department quite recently in the House remained practically unanswered, though there had been attempts on the part of the Minister to explain them away. It was regrettable the Government had not seen fit to allow some competent tribunal to inquire into those charges of maladministration made against the department during the want of confidence debate, and in case the Minister might imagine that everything which could be said was said on that occasion, he would refer to other matters. He regretted the member for Boulder had not gone on with his motion of the previous day, asking that all papers relating to blocks 6470 and 6471, granted to Mr. John Wilkie, be laid on the Table. Had that motion been proceeded with it would have been found that officials in the Lands Department had been guilty of instructing would-be land owners how to avoid the law. This was the letter sent by the under secretary to Mr. John Wilkie, wherein Mr. Wilkie was told what steps he could take to deliberately break the law and thereby secure land to which he was not legally entitled—

The Minister's attention has been called to the fact that you hold a greater area of land under the Land Act than is prescribed by Section 23 of the Land Act Amendment Act, 1906, and on getting out a schedule of your holdings I find this is so. You were not entitled to acquire blocks 6470/56 and 6471/56 in April last, and the declaration on these applications, which states

that you are duly qualified to hold the land is incorrect.

Then came the main point which indicated how officers in the Lands Department were working hand in glove with the land monopolists outside. It was to be hoped the Minister would pay a little attention—

The Minister for Lands: I can hear you all right.

Mr. PRICE: Here was the point where a responsible officer, no less an officer than the Under Secretary for Lands, instructed a would-be land monopolist how to evade the law and illegally hold or apply for land. The third paragraph of the letter read—

As these lands have been illegally acquired, a transfer of them cannot be allowed, and the only way out of the difficulty will be for you to surrender the blocks to the Crown, after which the land will be thrown open for reselection; or—

The Minister for Lands: To whom is that letter addressed?

Mr. PRICE: When reading a letter of a most incriminating character against the Under Secretary for Lands, and which the Minister should take notice of, one was asked to whom the letter referred.

The Minister for Lands: No; to whom is it addressed?

Mr. PRICE: It was addressed to Mr. John Wilkie, and was sent by the Under Secretary for Lands on the 19th August, 1908. First of all, Mr. Wilkie was told he must surrender the blocks, or—

transfer so many of your other holdings as will reduce your total area under the Land Act to the prescribed limit. I enclose herewith for your information a schedule giving particulars of your holdings.

Surely the Minister would not attempt to say that things were what they should be in his department when the under secretary wrote like this, first of all telling a man he had made an incorrect statement, then that he had illegally acquired certain lands, and then that he must surrender them to the Crown, or do certain other things whereby he would be enabled to circumvent the provisions of the Land

Act. Action on the part of the Under Secretary for Lands was only taken when that officer had been goaded for months by a land agent who desired to carry out the provisions of the Act in their entirety. As a matter of fact the first time the attention of the under secretary was drawn to this deliberate breach of the Land Act was on the 28th May, and from that date to August we find the under secretary endeavouring to bluff, if the term may be used, the land agent into admitting that Mr. Wilkie's application was a legal one, or that at the most he should allow it to pass without comment; but when after three months' continued writing between the under secretary and the land agent the under secretary found the land agent determined to abide by the provisions of the Act, and then as a last resource he turned round and wrote to Mr. Wilkie in the terms of the letter which had been read to the Committee. This was not until the 1st September after the under secretary's attention had been drawn to it in May. The under secretary admitted that the land agent was correct, and that Mr. Wilkie could not hold the land. Cases such as that should surely impress upon the Minister the need for a closer scrutiny of the conduct of officers in his department.

The Minister for Lands: What is the date of the letter?

Mr. PRICE: The 19th August, 1908. Only quite recently a number of holders of land in the Denmark area received a notice to the effect that their land was liable to forfeiture, and it might be stated that the action the Minister took as soon as the matter was brought under his notice was appreciated. In referring to these matters there was no desire to condemn the Minister personally so much as the officers of the department. Incidentally, however, the Minister was to blame for not insisting in more attention being paid to the business of the department by the officers. As the Minister was aware, recently a large number of holders of land at Denmark were served with notices that their land was liable to forfeiture and the notice of forfeiture was sent out because of the laxity of an officer in

the department who had failed to attend to a *Government Gazette* notice which had been issued in connection with these holdings. The Minister knew that well. We could easily realise the trouble and worry which would be caused to these people on receiving a notice that their holdings were liable to forfeiture. If this kind of thing went on through the carelessness of a subordinate officer the Minister should take some action against that officer. It was not known whether the Minister did so in connection with this notice of intention to forfeit, but if he did not the Minister was lacking in his duty. If a man was so neglectful as to allow notices of that kind to go out he should certainly be punished, and if the head of the department, to whom members had to look, failed to carry out his duties he must not expect to escape condemnation. There was no intention on his part to take up a great deal of time on this matter. He had on three different occasions this session spoken at some length in connection with the administration of the Lands Department and on the present occasion he only rose to point out to the Minister that even yet there was room for very great improvement. He desired also to take the opportunity of protesting against the placing of Mr. Rowley in a position in that department which should be filled by some other officer. Why had Mr. Rowley been selected to reorganise the Lands Department? It was not possible for one moment to believe that there were in that department assistant under secretaries who were not infinitely better qualified than Mr. Rowley to carry out the duties which had been entrusted to that officer. Like the member for Guildford, he had a shrewd suspicion that the object was to pave the way for that officer to secure the under secretaryship when it became vacant. The Minister should assure the House that nothing of the kind was contemplated because if it was intended to carry out such an idea it would certainly not be calculated to inspire the assistant under secretaries or heads of the branches with confidence or inspire them with the idea that eventually they might reach the highest office in that department. There were certain items

which he would speak upon when they were reached, but at the present time there was no desire to say more upon the general discussion except to impress upon the Minister the necessity for taking some drastic steps towards ensuring better administration in the department. The Minister in that connection appeared to be imbued with the idea that as long as he himself was enthusiastic all around him were possessed of the same spirit. There the Minister made a grievous error. Many of the officers were by no means as enthusiastic as the Minister and the result was that there were cases such as he had referred to, namely Mr. Wilkie's, and what happened two years ago would happen to-day, and there was no reason to assume it was not happening to-day, and what happened in connection with the holders of the Denmark land might be happening in connection with land held in other parts of the State. He hoped that if the Government were not prepared to have a full inquiry into the administration of the Lands Department that there would be an assurance from the Minister that the complaints that had been made would be attended to and as far as possible rectified at the earliest possible moment.

**THE MINISTER FOR LANDS** (in reply): If no other member wished to speak he would say a few words in reply to some of the criticisms which had been passed by members. The Lands Department was a very busy one and there was a multiplicity of small things to attend to in connection with it. There was something like 46,000 leases which required attention and among other matters there were the demands that had to be made each half year on account of rent, and it should not be forgotten that a number of the lessees often got into trouble because they were unable to meet their rental payments, and when it was remembered that it was the duty of the Department to treat its customers with every consideration members would agree that in the multiplicity of transactions connected with the enormous volume of work there must be some mistakes made. Fortunately these mis-

takes were not of a serious character and he was only too glad to inquire into them in order that they might be rectified with the least possible delay. Hon. members would agree that whenever complaints had come before him they had been dealt with promptly. No more than that could be done. It should be remembered also that as many as 2,000 files were moving in one day in the department, and from that it would be gathered that the officers were fairly heavily worked and that in this respect there was room for mistakes to occur. That these mistakes did occur he did not deny for one moment.

**Mr. O'Loughlin:** Is the heavy work the cause of the mistakes?

**The MINISTER FOR LANDS:** The impression he had was that a man did better work when he was going at full pressure. However, these mistakes occurred and the opportunity was provided for them to occur by the enormous number of transactions that took place in the Lands office daily. He repeated that when these complaints were brought under his notice every endeavour was made to rectify them. There was nothing to hide in connection with the administration of the affairs of the department. He had always been ready to give hon. members all the information they desired in connection with any transaction with which he (the Minister) was associated. He and his officers were there for the purpose of serving the public. There was no other department in the State that dealt with so many people. Apart from the Railway Department, the Lands Department dealt with more people than all the other departments put together. Under the system of free selection which still obtained in a great portion of the State delays were unavoidable. This was due to the difficulty of obtaining the services of surveyors and for other reasons. The member for Guildford referred to several matters during the course of his remarks and among them the suspension of Mr. Cooper. Mr. Cooper was suspended for conduct unbecoming an officer. The Under Secretary for Lands went into the matter and fined Mr.

Cooper and reinstated him. Mr. Clifton forgot that the evidence should have been given on oath and Mr. Cooper appealed to the Public Service Commissioner who after going into the matter found that Mr. Cooper was guiltless and that Mr. Bertoli was at fault. Mr. Bertoli was then suspended and his case was heard before the Public Service Commissioner. Both suspensions were made by the permanent head as required by the Public Service Act. The finding of the Commissioner was duly approved and Mr. Bertoli resigned his position. He (the Minister) was sorry to lose the services of Mr. Bertoli who was an excellent officer. There was no doubt that Mr. Bertoli did his work well and he gave satisfaction to him (the Minister) and to the permanent head and to the others above him in the office. He had no notion why the member for Guildford had said in connection with this case that the Minister desired to shelter himself behind his officers. He had never done so and hoped he never would. The hon. member knew that charge to be absolutely groundless. He (the Minister) was perfectly willing to face the responsibility of his actions, and there were enough of them to allow for something to go wrong. Since he had been Minister in charge of the department, and honorary minister, he had entered enthusiastically into his work. This was found necessary for the development of the country and it would be strange indeed if all the schemes which he had submitted had been carried through successfully. Very few of them, however, had proved altogether unsuccessful. There was no desire on his part to say that he was infallible and that neither he nor his officers ever made mistakes. Mistakes were made because they were always doing something.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The *West Australian* says that the more mistakes that are made the greater the sign of progress.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: A greater writer than the writer in the *West Australian* stated that in connection with the South African war. In regard to the transfers from Grenike

and others, referred to by the member for Guildford, the land in question under the classification contained 985 acres of first-class land, 1,550 second class land, and 14,565 acres of sand plain. The prices ranged from 4s. up to 10s. per acre. The blocks had been applied for from October 1908 to April 1909; and the surveys had been made from April to June 1909, but two of the blocks were not yet surveyed. The total amount of money paid to the Crown was £273 16s. 4d., and the correspondence showed that three miles of fencing had been erected at a cost of about £75. The total consideration had been £500, which included the whole of the expenses in connection with the selection of that land. The land had been applied for prior to survey, and therefore had had to be classified before the applicants could decide whether they could continue to hold it. Owing to the delay in classification and survey several of the parties had dropped out of the agreement to work the property as a whole. Under the discretionary power conferred upon him by Section 142 of the Act, he had approved of the transfer being registered owing to the special reasons advanced, viz., the delay in connection with the surveys and classification, and the fact that the partnership which had been organised to work the land, had, in consequence of the delays, broken down.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Were they ever serious?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There was reason to believe that they were. The case had been put to him, and under the powers conferred by the Act he considered that the delay was a good reason for the registration of the transfers. Until quite recently no objection whatever had been offered to transfers being effected. When the member for Guildford was a member of a Ministry a man could transfer his land without any questions being asked, but at that time there had been no very great desire to acquire land in Western Australia, and every effort had been put forth to get people to take up land under any conditions. Gradually the conditions had been hardening, until at the present time it was insisted that the im-

provements should be made except in cases of sickness or when other valid excuses were advanced. He wanted to point out that the conditions had changed vastly of recent years because the demand for land had only recently arisen. The objection to the granting of transfers was that we wished to prevent speculators rooking genuine selectors.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Have you prevented it in the past?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: As far as possible. In this case the consideration had been just sufficient to cover the costs.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Oh, nonsense.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It was not to be believed that a man like Mr. Lohrmann, who had an interest in the partnership, would make an incorrect statement, and it was from him that the information had come. Whilst the transfer had been allowed to go through, perhaps if it were to come before him now he would deal with it a little differently.

Mr. Johnson: But that was done recently.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The transfers had been dealt with in May last.

Mr. Johnson: That is quite recent.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member should remember that at the time when he was a Minister transfers were allowed to go through without question. He had considered that a special case had been made out in connection with this transfer, and he had agreed to it.

(Mr. Foulkes took the Chair.)

Mr. Johnson: Was not the land forfeitable at the time?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No.

Mr. Johnson: Yes; they had to pay up back rents.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There might be rents due and still the land would not be forfeitable. There was also the vexed question as to the appointment of Mr. Rowley. Of the three assistants who had been appointed to the under secretary, Mr. Morris was the only one now remaining in the office. Of course, there were two others temporarily occupying the position formerly held by the late Mr. Wigglesworth and by Mr. Farmer, but they were not senior officers. The

work of the officers was increasing very rapidly day by day, and there was something like 6,000 more files in the office than on this day last year. It was his desire to have the work kept up to date, and he had felt with the many alterations made to the system during the last 17 months it was desirable to have a senior officer exercising a fairly free leg about the department, for a time at least. Mr. Morris would have been selected for that work.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Why was he not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Morris was the only remaining assistant to the under secretary to control the work of the other two assistant under secretaries and, in consequence, he had not been available for this special work. Only about a month ago he had consulted Mr. Morris, who was a valued officer of the department, as to whether he could go through the whole of that work which Mr. Rowley was now doing, and he had replied that it would be impossible to leave his present room because of the work he had to undertake as the senior of the three assistant under secretaries now in the office. At the suggestion of the under secretary and Mr. Morris, Mr. Rowley had been instructed to undertake the work. The Committee should clearly understand that if the under secretary were to go away Mr. Morris, being the senior assistant in the department, would take up the position of acting under secretary. There was no friction between Mr. Morris and Mr. Rowley because of the work the latter was doing. Mr. Rowley's instructions were to see that the officers, those engaged downstairs particularly, brought their work up to date and kept it up to date, and that they attended to the public and to their duties. He was also asked to report as to any improvements which he might think could be made. If in the course of the day he came across any idea that would work for the benefit of the department he would immediately confer with the under secretary and, if possible, put it into operation. It was not a question of the organisation, which the under secretary said was satisfactory, but it was his desire that the work should be carried out thoroughly, well, and expeditiously.



Mr. Rowley was there to assist the under secretary, because, unfortunately one of the assistant secretaries had died and the other, Mr. Farmer, was absent.

Mr. Johnson: Is Farmer on perpetual leave?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; he was on long service leave under the Act.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Is he coming back?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Farmer was in Perth at the present time, and his leave would expire some time early in the next year. Something had been said about the selection of land by Mr. Duncan Paterson and others. He would remind the Committee that any man in the State could hold 2,000 acres and his wife 1,000 acres, so that man and wife between them could hold 3,000 acres. The member for Guildford had said that he (the Minister) ought to know exactly the position of each applicant and just what he intended. He very seldom saw any application unless it came before him for some decision. Therefore, how could he know of all the thousands of applications made each year to the Lands Department? This area referred to was situated north of Nugadong and east of Marchagee siding on the Midland Railway. It was only in cases of wives of applicants that the relationship was shown. In this case D. W. Paterson, Louise V. Paterson (wife of D. W. Paterson), and S. R. John (wife of G. G. John), amongst many others had applied for land in that locality, but their applications were not connected in any way by agreement so far as the department knew. The persons mentioned applied for 6,000 acres altogether, but the member for Guildford would be pleased to know that the applications were withdrawn on the 5th of this month, and that the land would be classified and thrown open for selection in the usual way. He understood that Mr. Paterson had bought a property and did not now desire to take up Government land, and for that reason had withdrawn his application. It was, of course, the duty of the department to see that the conditions were complied with but he did not think that there was any power to refuse applications. The law of the land said that the department must

receive applications by men eligible to hold. It was absurd to say that he should know what applicants had in their mind, and be able to discriminate between the half a dozen who were forming a syndicate and those who were ordinary applicants.

Mr. Collier: But you have assisted men to hold land illegally.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Who?

Mr. Collier: Wilkie, for one.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That case had occurred in 1908, which was before he had taken control of the department.

Mr. Collier: Only last year it was fixed up, and there are many others of a similar nature.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That case would be referred to presently. The member for Guildford had said that agricultural members of the House did not interest themselves in matters of concern to our settlers. He wanted to say that he believed the agricultural members did concern themselves very considerably in all the work that had been undertaken lately for the advancement of agriculture in Western Australia, and they were doing what they could for the welfare of the individual settler. The members on the Government side of the House, and members like the member for Albany, representing agricultural constituencies, at all times watched the interests of the people they represented. It was true they had not so much to say as the member for Guildford, but these members had done their duty by the people who sent them here, and were helpful in the work of the Agricultural Department.

Mr. Johnson: We would not know it if you did not tell us from their utterances in the House.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member paid a visit to his (the Minister's) office any day he would find some agricultural member there attending to the business of the district which he represented. The member for Guildford also said something about a scheme to defeat the just claims of officers. He (the Minister) did not know what the hon. member meant, but he (the Minister) had never lost an opportunity of advancing any offi-

cer who had done his duty by the country, and there had been no officer who had not been considered so far as he (the Minister) was able. Members knew that the department was operated under the Public Service Act, and the Minister had limited powers, but so far as his powers went he endeavoured to advance the interests of officers serving under him, particularly those who were doing their duty.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are there some who are not doing their duty then?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There were naturally some who did not do their duty so well as others. The member for Swan had referred to settlement in dry areas. Unfortunately in Western Australia the richer land was away from the coast. The wheat growing land was within the belt of between 20 inches down to 10 inches, and of course wheat growing could not be carried on favourably in a drier belt. Where the trustees of the Agricultural Bank considered farming could be safely carried on, and the area was within the 10-inch belt, the department never leased more than 2,000 acres to a settler. The Agricultural Bank, as members knew, under the scheme the department was at present working, set against the blocks the amount which the bank was willing to advance. There were a few blocks which the bank would not make any advance against where it was considered farming would be unsafe. These blocks were taken up with the full knowledge that the trustees of the bank would not advance any money against them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: In some cases we should protect people against themselves.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was done. If in one district there was some land against which an advance was marked, and there was other land against which no advance would be made by trustees of the bank, then that was sufficient indication that it would be unsafe to go into those far Eastern areas.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: Can you get an exchange if you find the land is unsuitable?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The department never refuse to exchange a

block or improve the position of a settler if it could be legally done. For the past seven years there has been a farm carried on at Nangeenan by the Government, and it had paid well, which showed that farming could be successfully carried on in that area. He did not think anyone could get a bank advance on land where the rainfall was as low as 10 inches; but in Nangeenan the Government had worked a farm, and worked it successfully. In the early years when there were only 130 acres cleared the profit was nil; it could not be otherwise under State control.

Mr. Price: Why not launch out into the timber industry if you can make anything pay?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Crops had grown well at the Nangeenan farm, and therefore it was thought safe to settle people within that area. The land was rich, although the rainfall was a little light. He would like to quote the words of a South Australian farmer whom he met at Kellerberrin. This farmer said to him, "I want to go further east; I am content with the rainfall if you can give me good land."

Mr. Jacoby: How long has he been there?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Not long; he had had a son here for some considerable time. He (the Minister) was sorry the country was not blessed with a rainfall of 20 inches. If that were so we should have the finest wheat land on God's earth. We were not blessed with a large rainfall, and he could not make the conditions different. In the trustees of the bank, the department had three expert farmers and agriculturists of no mean experience to guide them, and there was the result of the farm also to act as a guide.

*(Mr. Taylor resumed the Chair.)*

Mr. Jacoby: You have the South Australian experience too?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: South Australia was not Western Australia with an assured rainfall. The great thing in Western Australia was that we got the rain year by year with great regularity.

We did not get periods of drought as were experienced elsewhere. The only trouble experienced at Nangeenan was from frost. It would be an easy matter for him to settle people nearer in if we had the same quality of land. The land was better for wheat growing in the 12-inch rainfall belt than in the 20-inch rainfall belt with poorer land.

Mr. Jacoby: Has Professor Lowrie reported on that?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Not that he was aware of, but the department had been running a farm at Nangeenan, and he had seen the crops growing there.

Mr. Jacoby: The season was a particularly good one.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: That was to be admitted, but for years we had had the experience of the Nangeenan farm. Mr. Growden, a South Australian successful farmer, had been farming there for years, and was perfectly satisfied, and farming had been carried on in this district for years, but, if members could show him where he could settle people on equally good land with a better rainfall he would be pleased.

Mr. Foulkes: Sufficient land was not ready for settlers.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the member would turn up the Surveyor General's report he would see that during the last 12 months the department threw open something like 1,600,000 acres, which were surveyed before selection, as against 350,000 acres for the best year before that. The department were keeping pace so far as the survey lines were concerned, although the plans came in a little irregularly.

Mr. Foulkes: But you are not keeping up to the demand.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The department was, he thought, keeping up to the demand. However we were doing more to meet the demand than had ever been done before, or was ever suggested should be done. The method the department was applying, that of survey before selection, was a good one. The land was not being as keenly applied for to-day as it was some three or four months ago,

because the hundreds of people who came from the goldfields to get land had obtained it. Let him give an instance. There might be 40 applicants for one block, and it went without saying that each of these applicants would apply for a block until they were all satisfied, and it would be necessary for him to throw open 40 subdivisions to satisfy these 40 people. It was open for all to apply for any block in a subdivision, and it happened that numerous applications were made for the one block. He could not do more than give a block to one applicant. There had been no time during the past six months when the department had not had a large area of surveyed land for settlement but the selectors, as was the case with Clark and party, fixed their eye on a spot, and they had to take their chance of getting it. Yet for the first 15 months of his (the Minister's) control of the Lands Department, he settled two million acres and surveyed three million acres, therefore the department surveyed more land than they were selling. The member for Swan had said something about the jarrah in the Darling Ranges. The member was not of course referring to first-class jarrah country. If we could plant orchards and put in a number of fruit-trees instead of one jarrah tree it was a fair exchange, and we would not want reafforestation there. We had not refused to grant land there when the whole area was proposed to be put under apples after the jarrah had been cut away. It was the duty of the Conservator of Forests to report on all timber country applied for. The question of clearing the land in the Darling Ranges and settling people there was now receiving attention, and he (the Minister) would be pleased indeed if we could convert the whole front of the hills into thriving settlements of orchardists, and he hoped to do something towards that in the coming year. In regard to the Wilkie papers referred to by the member for Albany, he had no objection to producing them if hon. members cared to have them. According to the member for Albany the under secretary had called Mr. Wilkie's attention to the fact that he held land beyond the statutory area and, as had been the

custom for years past, Mr. Wilkie was advised that he could transfer or sell the surplus holding. With regard to the notices sent to the Denmark settlers it was true they had been sent out in error, but these settlers had not experienced any serious inconvenience in consequence, for the member for Albany had called his attention to the matter and he had immediately set their minds at rest. Notwithstanding that the member for Albany had declared that the charges of maladministration against the department had not been answered, he (the Minister) contended that each and every of the charges made had been fully answered. In so large a department errors were unavoidable and he would ever be glad to know of them from hon. members in order that they might be set straight without delay.

This concluded the general debate on the Lands Estimates; items were discussed as follow:—

Lands, Salaries £38,768.

Item, Clerks, Land Selection Branch, £5,600.

Mr. TROY: During the debate on the no-confidence motion he had drawn attention to the case of Mr. Myers, Dalwallinu, who years ago had taken up land but had failed to comply with the conditions. Numerous applications for forfeiture had been entered. Would the Minister tell the Committee what had been done?

The Minister for Lands: The land has been forfeited.

Item, Land Agents, £1,502.

Mr. FOULKES: Members would agree that the land agents of the State had done their best to promote land settlement. The difficulty was that their efforts were largely nullified by the fact that the land was not available. The land agents outside the State, in London particularly, were pointing out to prospective emigrants that there was any quantity of land in Western Australia available for settlement; yet when these immigrants came to apply here in Perth they had to wait three, four, or six months before they could get land. The Minister had told us that unfortunately a great number of these people applied for the same blocks. He (Mr. Foulkes) could understand the

difficulty under those circumstances, but that was not invariably the case by any means. We had had twenty blocks thrown open, of which 18 blocks had been applied for in the first instance. Indeed that was more nearly the normal condition of things. So it would be seen that unwittingly the Minister was misleading the Committee when he talked of the difficulty of persuading people to apply for different blocks. In and out of the House the Minister was continually reiterating his defence that an enormous quantity of land had been thrown open for selection; but the Minister shut his eyes to the fact that nevertheless the demand was very much greater than the supply. It was to be feared we were missing the market. The Minister did not realise that now was the time to take advantage of the widespread demand for land. The Minister ought to employ a much greater number of surveyors. It did not matter how many million acres had been thrown open last year. What we wanted to know was how many were being thrown open this week and how many it was proposed to throw open next week. Having found that he could not get surveyors in the Eastern States the Minister had sat down and folded his hands.

The Minister for Lands: Where would you get them?

Mr. FOULKES: The Minister should turn his attention to India or South Africa where he would find, perhaps, as many surveyors as he would require. The whole future of the State depended upon the settlement of our land, yet the Minister was continuing to tell members over and over again how many million acres had been thrown open in the past. If the difficulty in the way of throwing open further large areas of land consisted of the lack of surveyors, why did the Minister not provide these surveyors even if he had to go round the world for them? Nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of the rapid opening up of the land while the people still wanted it. The Minister should see to it that the surveyors required were provided.

The Minister for Lands: I have tried for them all over Australia.

Mr. FOULKES: Well why should the Minister stop at that? We induced immigrants to come here only to find that they had to wait three, four, and six months before getting land, the natural result of which was that so bitter was their disappointment that they voiced their resentment in the English papers.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was not in order in discussing that aspect now.

Mr. FOULKES: In that case he would take a later opportunity. He was very much disappointed that more active steps were not taken to throw open the land.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The area selected under conditional purchase during 1909 was 848,000 acres, whereas during the 11 months of this year 1,574,000 acres was selected. Certainly there was an exceptional demand for land, and when he first went to the Lands Department he endeavoured to get surveyors from the East, but we were now surveying more than we were selling. There were 107 million acres in the South-West, including the Eucla division, and we had sold 18 million acres and reserved 17 million acres for subdivision, so that there were 70 million acres still open for free selection. There were 800,000 acres surveyed and now available not sold, and there were at least 300 blocks below Wilgarrup, magnificent land suitable for growing potatoes and apples, and for intense cultivation. There was nothing better offering in Australia for that class of agriculture. These blocks were available, but the demand for land was not as keen as it was three or four months ago before the goldfields people were satisfied. That demand came largely from our own people because of the circular plans the department sent out to the various centres. Such an unusual demand could not continue. There were 3,000 people settled last year, and at that rate we would very soon settle all the land in the country. He would be pleased to engage more surveyors and to cut up every acre to-morrow and settle it if he could. The hon. member need not have any fear about every acre of land in Western Australia being applied for. So long as Western

Australia offered land at the present price and so long as she had land of the quality of that now being cut up, there would be no easing off of applicants.

Mr. Gill: What is wrong with that 800,000 acres; why do not people take it up?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There were blocks available at Nampup for weeks past, magnificent country with a good rainfall, and bank advances against the blocks, but people did not watch the plans after applications were closed, and they were very often disappointed. Altogether we alienated 1,630,000 acres in 1909, and 1,946,000 acres, or an increase of 315,000, during the 11 months of this year. So it was seen that the department was meeting the demand.

Hon. Sir N. J. MOORE: It was not so simple a matter as the member for Claremont imagined to obtain duly qualified surveyors. The land surveyor in the old country was different from the land surveyor in Australia. The knowledge the one possessed was merely the knowledge possessed by a land agent here. A surveyor from the old country coming here would first need to obtain local experience for 12 months, and then pass an examination. If the Minister introduced a number of surveyors from England it would be necessary for them to qualify, but in Australia the various States reciprocated. A movement was also on foot between the various dominions of the Empire to arrange reciprocal licenses. When that was brought about there would be little difficulty in transferring from one part of the dominions to another. He would like to take this opportunity of bringing a grievance before the Minister. He had recently had more time to ascertain the hardships under which surveyors were now working. Though the wages of surveying hands had been increased and though the cost of living was raised, still the same fee of £2 13s. 4d. per mile was paid for surveys as was received 20 years ago. A surveyor's lot was particularly hard. He worked all day in the field and at night worked on his plans or took observations; and in addition to the ordinary work he

was engaged in special work in classifying. All the classifying of the new subdivisions was done by these surveyors at a nominal fee. The Minister might give consideration to the question of giving an increase. Bank valuations were made on the classifications of these surveyors, and surveyors received about 15s. for classifying a thousand acre block. It was in the interests of the department, and of the public generally that the classification should be a careful one, and it could not be expected that a man would give a large amount of time to it when he only received 15s. for 1,000 acres.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Certainly the surveyors had a very bad time, but some of them managed to do very well. They were earning more money now because they were engaged in surveying large areas. The classification fees were recently increased.

Item, Officer in charge of Melbourne Agency, £450.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We were not receiving much good from this agency; and it should be abolished. Many local applicants for land were unable to get satisfaction from the land board, and we should attend to their requirements before inducing settlers to come from Victoria. One man with a family of 10 had been waiting for 12 months for certain land to be thrown open. In another case an engine-driver on one of the timber mills, with farming implements, £500 in cash, and large experience as an agriculturist, had applied five times to the land board without success. Scores of instances could be given. Certainly many applicants put in for one block; but during the past four or five months half a dozen applicants applied for blocks remote from the railways, thinking they would get a better chance, and had to apply three or four times before meeting with any success. There were 50 people he could name in his electorate anxious to get on the land. While we were unable to supply these people why should we spend money further afield trying to get people to come here? The Melbourne agency might have done a little good in the past, but it would not

be needed in the future. There was no advantage from an Australian point of view in bringing people from one part of Australia to another, especially now the Eastern States were showing a tendency to make land available. We should give greater facilities towards making the land available here.

The Minister for Lands: They are greater than they ever were.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Then it was strange scores of people were denied the right to go on the land. It was useless, saying we had 800,000 acres subdivided but still unsold. Would farming men be willing to take up some of the blocks?

The Minister for Lands: We can only cut up in bulk.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It was useless showing misleading figures. A lot of the land was not of good quality, and people would not take it up to make homes on it, because they could not see a living on it. Yet we advertised we had this land available, giving the impression that it was magnificent land.

The Minister for Lands: Ask the member for Brown Hill what he thinks about the mallee country.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN was talking more of the timber country in the South-West, land which would break a man's heart, although in 20 or 30 years time it might be of some use to his children. It was useless advertising our having millions of acres for sale when we could not give land to our own people who were applying for it.

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

Mr. GILL: It was understood that there was to be a change in the management of this agency in consequence of Mr. Gilbert having been transferred, and it was understood either from an answer given by the Minister to a question asked in the House, or it had appeared in the *Sunday Times*, that Mr. Farmer was the most suitable man for that position. There were several in the Lands Department who would be more capable of filling it more satisfactorily.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The question had not yet been settled. The

agency had proved to be very useful indeed, and very good work had been done for the State. He desired to acknowledge the good work which had been done by Mr. Gilbert.

Item, Surveyor General, £700.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Minister might give some information with regard to the work which had been carried out in the Denmark area as reported by Mr. McNab. This officer referred to the purchase of a team of bullocks and two traction engines which were required for clearing work. The purchase of the bullocks was made at the beginning of the wet season, and several months elapsed before they could be worked. After fine weather set in, the report went on to say, the results were highly satisfactory, and justified the purchase. It showed bad management, or lack of foresight, to purchase the bullocks at that time of the year when it was not possible to do any work with them. Anyone with a knowledge of the Denmark country would not have made a purchase of that kind at such a time of the year. Was it on Mr. McNab's recommendation that the bullocks were purchased? Then the Surveyor General in his report referred to some 14 miles of fencing which had been carried out at a cost of £752 10s., or at the rate of £53 10s. per mile, which did not include head office expenses. He was amazed at the excessive cost of this fence, especially in a place like Denmark, where the timber was growing practically along the route of the fence. The matter needed some explanation. Another extraordinary development in connection with the improvements to this estate was the fact that a quantity of grass seed was purchased some time ago, and was not used. Here again someone had been guilty of a big blunder because an officer who was in receipt of £8 a week was sent to New Zealand to purchase this seed, and according to the evidence of the member for Albany the seed had practically been rotting at the railway station down there ever since, and that which had been sown had not given good results. Then, with regard to the goats which were sent down, it was

reported that a number of them had died because of the extremely trying conditions of last winter. Those that were remaining, however, appeared to be doing well, and it was said that during the last few months they had proved a useful factor in eradicating the scrub, and that in the end it would be shown that their purchase was justified. He had been informed that the Minister had purchased no fewer than 750 goats with the laudable desire of placing them on the Denmark area where they would be useful in the clearing process; that process, however, seemed to be a far fetched one. The goats were put into paddocks specially prepared, and it was understood that at the present time only 150 remained, and that the others had died from starvation. Would the Minister explain whether that was correct?

The CHAIRMAN: Was the hon. member discussing the item "Surveyor General?"

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: That particular item was being discussed by him, and as in the Surveyor General's report there was some reference to these matters which he had mentioned, he thought that that would be the proper opportunity to discuss the matters.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member would have been in order in referring to these matters in the general discussion.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Only the other day he spoke at considerable length on matters which he thought were of some importance, and he brought some of the journals down on his head for taking up no less than 18 pages of *Hansard*, and now it was found that the Minister dismissed the remarks in those 18 pages of *Hansard* by a reply which did not occupy more than two and a half minutes.

The Minister for Lands: Oh, no.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Where was the utility in discussing generally important subjects if the Minister dismissed them with such very brief replies? He thought he was in order in asking for the information he wanted under the item "Surveyor General."

The CHAIRMAN: It was difficult to see how the hon. member could connect the item "Surveyor General, £700," with the various matters that he had referred to.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There was an officer under the Surveyor General named McNab who had submitted a report to the Surveyor General on these matters which had been referred to, and he thought that he would be in order in making extracts from that officer's report for the purpose of eliciting some information from the Minister. Would the Minister explain whether it was a fact that of the 750 goats which were purchased for Denmark, only 150 were alive to-day, and that carcasses were lying over the various blocks at Denmark and were a menace to public health there? What explanation had the Minister to offer for the loss of the goats and was the loss due to starvation, or to the wet weather experienced there? If it was due to the weather, lack of foresight was shown on the part of the officer who was supervising the matter in not providing shelter for the goats. A goat was about the least hardy of all animals, and particularly in a country where the rainfall was 50 inches per annum.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: With regard to the bullocks purchased for Denmark, the hon. member would know that it was difficult to secure good bullocks at any time.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Why take them to Denmark and keep them there all the winter?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The bullocks had to be bought whenever the opportunity offered, and they were used in the winter in connection with the preparation of the pine plantations at Ludlow. They had to be bought in readiness for the summer. It was not always possible to pick up bullock teams whenever one wanted them.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Why take them to Denmark where there was no feed?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There was feed there. The fencing, which was vermin proof, was not really expensive, and the member for Gascoyne could tell the Committee that in his province they were putting up rabbit-proof fencing at nearer £100 per mile than £50 per mile.

This fencing passed through heavily-timbered country and in the erection of the fourteen miles the supervisor had had to clear seventeen acres.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Are you fencing it to keep the rabbits out?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The fencing was for the purpose of keeping the vermin out, and it could be regarded as a cheap job. Regarding the grass seeds they had cost something like £2,000 and up to date £1,500 worth had been sold. Some of the seeds had not given the result which had been anticipated because of the fact that they had been sowed too late, but on other areas the grass was doing well and was now established. The Denmark country was suitable for dairying and stock breeding and would carry English grass. In regard to the goats, Mr. Paterson and Professor Lowrie had advised that they should be purchased and sent to Denmark in order to keep down the scrub, which grew very rapidly. The goats had done excellent work.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: How many have you now?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: There were 400 left out of 750.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: What became of the other 350? Starved?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They had not been starved, but had, be believed, died from cold.

Mr. GILL: Was this fourteen miles of fencing specially put there for yarding in the goats?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The fencing had been put there as a vermin proof fence.

Mr. GILL: Were they kept inside it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course they had been kept inside the fence when they had been put inside it.

Mr. GILL: It had been stated in the public Press that the goats not only ate the scrub, but also the grass, the pot plants of settlers, and the fruit trees, with the result that the Minister had had to erect a fence at considerable expense so as to keep the goats within a prescribed area. Was that the fence alluded to in the Surveyor General's report that had cost £53 per mile, and was the object of



erecting it to prevent the goats from destroying the property of the settlers?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The fence had been erected in the course of improving the estate and not for the purpose of yarding the goats. If private property had been destroyed he had not heard of it.

Item, Temporary surveyors, supervisors, time-keepers, and officers not otherwise provided for—£3,000.

Mr. HOLMAN: Almost the whole of the large items in the Lands Department vote were for temporary employees. How many temporary employees were there in the Department, and was it a fact that by the employment of temporary men the Minister was getting men to work for lower wages than they ought to receive? Some men receiving 10s. per day in the Lands Department were doing work for which men on the permanent staff were getting £180 per annum. The sooner the Minister increased the wages of the temporary staff the better it would be for those men, of whom, he believed, there were nearly two hundred in the Lands Department.

The Minister for Lands: I do not think that there are that many unless you include all the field officers.

Mr. HOLMAN: The Minister would be wise to reorganise the department, and endeavour to treat the temporary men more generously than in the past. He believed that an increase of pay for the temporary men had been approved, and that the Minister admitted that they should receive a little more. If work was worth £180 to the man on the permanent staff it should be worth a little more to the man employed temporarily.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Public Service Commissioner was advertising ten positions which were now temporarily filled as permanent positions at £180 per year. Agreeing that 10s. per day was insufficient he had some time ago instructed one of his officers to see the Public Service Commissioner in regard to increases. He believed that that had been done, and that an increase would be given to the men temporarily employed, because he thought that when

the country was prospering these men should share in the prosperity.

Mr. HOLMAN: According to the report of the Public Service Commissioner for 1909 many temporary men in the Works Department were receiving 12s. and 13s. per day, and if that wage could be paid in other departments it could be paid in the Lands Department. Would the Minister state now that he intended to place men on the permanent staff after twelve months' service, and give an increase to those temporarily employed?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: When the permanent appointments were made some of the temporary men would be transferred to the permanent staff. In any case he had instructed that the salaries should be increased. The approval of the Public Service Commissioner had to be obtained, he understood, and probably the endeavour to get an increase in salaries had resulted in these ten positions being advertised.

Item, Melbourne Agency, £1,000.

Mr. ANGWIN: The exhibits in the Melbourne Agency were stated to be very bad samples of the products of Western Australia. They were not changed as often as they should be, and in that way they were detrimental rather than beneficial to the State. These exhibits should be of the best quality so as to properly advertise the resources of the State, but only that day he had heard of a weevily sample of wheat being displayed in the Agency. Would the Minister take good care that only sound products were exhibited?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Some months ago he ordered that the agent in Melbourne should write to the officer of the Agricultural Department for any additional exhibits he required, and if the exhibits were not in order the officer at this end was not at fault.

Mr. TROY: There was a footnote that £250 per annum of this expenditure was recouped by the Midland Railway Company. Did the Melbourne agent recruit for the Midland Company as well as for the State? Last year a number of settlers came over with considerable capital and took up more land, he believed, from the Midland Company than from the

State, therefore, the Midland Company should pay a larger share of this vote. One gentleman who came across purchased property to the amount of £10,000 or £12,000 from the Midland Company, and expended a larger amount than any settler who came over and took up land from the State. The Midland Company should at least pay one-half of the amount provided by Parliament. What proportion of the special benefits was received by the Crown and by the Midland Company?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Midland company were allowed to exhibit plans and other information in the Melbourne agency for £250 per annum. He did not know how many persons came over to take up land from the Midland Company, but the benefit to the company was not so great as the benefit to Western Australia. The Midland Company had a limited area of land to sell and the use of the agency to them was very limited; the £250 helped to defray the cost of the agency. People who came to settle on the Midland Company's lands became Western Australian settlers.

Item, Freight and fares advanced to new settlers, £150.

Mr. TROY: Was this money advanced to pay the passage of people from the Eastern States, or was it for freights and fares for people resident in Western Australia, who had taken up land?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The department advanced to settlers in order that they might be assisted in paying freight on their goods from their homes to their holdings. Under the system in force a settler might get a 6-ton truck from the Commissioner of Railways for £6. It often happened that a settler had not much money and the department loaned him £6 for 12 months. The vote was largely used for that purpose. The department also paid the fares of selectors to their holdings.

Item, Grant to Land Surveyors' Licensing Board, £75.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Some information as to the work of this board was required. There was a considerable amount of discussion hinging around the appointment of surveyors and the difficulty of obtain-

ing qualified men. This board examined, he believed, different candidates for the position of surveyor. How many applicants had gone up for examination and how many passes had been secured by those applying in Western Australia?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The information could not be supplied, but five West Australians passed and became surveyors a few weeks ago. The work of the board was important. It meant that a surveyor could not transgress and remain licensed. Under the old system a surveyor might be disqualified by the Titles Department and go on surveying for the Lands Department. That was impossible now.

Item, Surveys generally, £15,000.

Mr. GILL: How was it there was a reduction in this vote, a decrease of £3,820, seeing we were extending our surveys so generally throughout the State. Were the Government curtailing this expenditure or did they intend to curtail it in future? It was to be hoped such was not the case.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The surveys were now paid for almost altogether from loan funds. Members would remember that last year we amended the Land Act, giving permission to the Minister to carry out surveys from loan funds. The money spent from loan being paid from the sale of the land, and extending over 20 years. Under this system the whole amount expended on surveys was recouped. Because of this the vote from revenue had decreased.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—*Woods and Forests*, £9,206:

Item, Conservator of Forests (six months), £375.

Mr. JACOBY: Were the Government taking steps to appoint a conservator of forests, what sum was the Government offering, and was it intended to fill the position this year?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The Government were offering £750, and the position, he believed, was now advertised. He hoped the position would be filled in a few months. He realised the importance of the position and his desire would

be to get a capable man to control the woods and forests.

Mr. Price: Are you advertising outside the State?

The Minister for Lands: Yes.

Item, Caretakers: Ludlow, £150; Point Walter, £100 (one month), £159.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The amount for the caretaker at Point Walter was disappearing from the Estimates. Had the services of the caretaker at Point Walter been dispensed with; what were the duties of this officer last year, and had any work been done at this place? Point Walter offered a splendid opportunity to the Government if they set themselves the task of making a beauty spot for the citizens of Perth. It was one of the finest sites on the river, but up to the present practically nothing had been done, and now the caretaker was being removed. What was the reason of the removal?

Mr. ANGWIN: It would be advisable for the Minister to subsidise the local authority in the district to look after this reserve. The Government in the past had neglected the conveniences at this resort. During the past 12 or 18 months the Minister had taken more interest in the reserve than previously; steps had been taken to put the fence in order, and it was intended, he believed, to plant more trees there and make it convenient for the people who went there picnicing and camping. If the local authority were placed in charge they would make arrangements for campers and see that the reserve was not interfered with. They would also see that the place was kept in proper order, as it should be. This was one of the beauty spots on the river, and the Melville roads board, the local authority referred to, had asked the Minister to place this reserve under their control. If the local authority did not look after the place properly the Government could reserve the right to re-take possession. The local authority would see the place made beautiful. It had been rumoured for some time that there was a possibility of the reserve being handed over to the board that controlled the King's Park. If that was done the small amount voted for the reserve, instead of being spent on

Point Walter would be spent in King's Park. This would be detrimental to the reserve, and there would be great opposition to it from the district.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The officer referred to was to be paid one month from this item, after which he would be transferred. The control of the reserve should be in the hands of some authority, perhaps the King's Park board. It had not been very well looked after in the past, and the only reason for delay in handing it over was that the fence and trees might be put in order before asking some other authority to take charge of it.

Item, Inspectors and labourers occasionally employed, £4,000.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The great increase represented in the amount was due to the fact that a large number of additional inspectors had been appointed. He desired to draw attention to the fact that these inspectors, and the labourers occasionally employed were subjected to a great deal of expense while travelling, and that the travelling allowances apportioned to them were by no means sufficient. He trusted the Minister would look into the matter.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Certainly he would have this question investigated. He did not know what amount was paid by way of travelling allowances, but manifestly it ought to be adequate to cover expenses.

Mr. HOLMAN: An inspector received 15s. a day and had to pay his own travelling expenses, which represented at least 6s. or 7s. per day. It was a miserable amount to pay a man who, it was to be remembered, did not get in full time by any means.

Mr. George: Does he pay his railway fare?

Mr. HOLMAN: No, his railway fare was paid for him, but while travelling a man was under relatively heavy expenses, and would not have much left out of 15s. The Minister ought to see that a considerable advance was made in the wages paid to these men. Another thing the Minister should see to was that none but practical men with a thorough knowledge of the trade

were appointed to these positions. In many instances there was a tendency to appoint these inspectors simply because some little influence was brought to bear. A man sent out to perform responsible duties in passing timber should be thoroughly qualified, and should be in receipt of a salary sufficient to make him independent of anyone who might come along with a suggestion of outside profit.

Mr. GEORGE: The real trouble in regard to inspectors was that no clear specification was laid down which would be a guide to each inspector as to what was good timber. With regard to jarrah, there were very few practical men who were agreed upon the same points. For instance, one man might take a sleeper that another would refuse to pass. It was a difficult matter to get men who understood the timber sufficiently well to take, not the good-looking but the good-wearing stuff. He knew many of these inspectors, and realised that they were liable to be called upon at any time for a few days' work and had, therefore, to hold themselves in readiness to go out into the bush at 15s. a day. When a man was away for a few days only he had to put up at an hotel and pay from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. for his meals and his bed; and this had to be paid out of the 15s. a day. In his opinion the work performed by these inspectors was worth 15s. a day in itself. When a man had to pay 6s. or 7s. for his keep there would be very little left out of 15s. for the upkeep of his home. The Minister would find it profitable to pay these men 15s. a day for the work they were doing, with a fair sum in addition for expenses. There were very few timber inspectors who could get in anything like a fair amount of time during the year. He knew of one man who had been sent away down into the Preston district for three days inspecting, and that man had not had any inspectorial work for some months prior to that. Fifteen shillings would not be too much to pay these men for their skill and experience alone.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If these inspectors were being paid 15s. a day, without travelling allowances, clearly it was not sufficient. He would see the inspecting forest ranger, and ask him to make proper provision for the adequate remuneration of these officers, who, admittedly, were doing work of a very responsible nature indeed. The duties of these inspectors were confined almost entirely to the passing of sleepers for foreign countries.

Item, Maintenance nursery and pine, wattle and sandalwood plantations, £300.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: would the Minister give the Committee some information in regard to this item. It was a very small amount and it showed but a very slight increase. He would like the Minister in replying to go a little more exhaustively into the question of the granting of 170,000 acres of pine forest in the North-West, estimated to yield a large amount of timber, and also explain whether the cost was being reduced in regard to Ludlow, and as to what was being done in regard to wattle planting. Only recently he had pointed out to the Minister that in Natal, where they had imported seeds from Australia, they had an industry yielding over £100,000 per annum. He believed if we were going to give the question any attention at all we should vote a larger sum than appeared on the Estimates.

Mr. TROY: The item was very small, particularly when we took into consideration the fact that in other countries considerable revenue was returned by afforestation. In the low countries and in France millions of pounds were thus contributed towards the annual revenue. He would like to see not £300 but £3,000 expended in the planting of pine forests wherever in the State the rainfall was sufficient. It was estimated that in 20 years' time a pine forest was worth £200 per acre and it was to be remembered we had millions of acres which could be devoted to the purpose. As for sandalwood plantations, he knew of none existing in the State. All the sandalwood we had was that provided by Nature before the arrival of the white man.

So far as he knew no effort was being made to grow sandalwood ; rather was every effort being put forward to denude the country of sandalwood, for thousands of tons of sandalwood was taken away every year, while no attempt was made to renew the supply. It might be difficult to grow sandalwood, particularly as it existed in more or less inhospitable portions of the State, but some effort should be made to conserve it. It was a standby on the goldfields years ago and it was a standby in agricultural localities before the agricultural industry became the prosperous industry it was to-day, and many made a living by cutting it and exporting it. There was very little of it existing in these localities to-day and in a few years there would be very little of it on the goldfields. However, effort should be made to conserve it. The new Conservator of Forests might make some effort whereby the growth of sandalwood might be encouraged.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS : The item of £300 was merely for keeping in order the pine plantations. The cost of this was very low, because after the first couple of years there was practically no work needed. We anticipated that the plantation at Hamel would be worth at least £200 an acre at the end of 20 years. The latest cost of clearing land at Ludlow was £7 17s. 6d. per acre by means of the traction engine, and that included ploughing. It was intended to clear 200 acres each year for the purpose. The chief nurseryman had been instructed to visit Albany to select a suitable site there for a plantation. No doubt we would get excellent assistance by inviting Mr. Gill from South Australia, but until a Conservator of Forests was appointed it was not intended to do more in reference to pine plantations. The Kimberley pine was not the same as the *Pinus-Insignis*, and it could not be converted to economical use for fruit cases.

Mr. Gill : What are the leaseholders doing with it ?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS : They will probably export it. It is a hard wood, much heavier than the *Pinus Insignis*. The hon. member could rest

perfectly satisfied that the £300 was sufficient for keeping the pine plantations in order at Hamel and Ludlow. Wattles grew very readily in Western Australia, and if the farmers would care to carry on wattle growing he would endeavour to provide them with seeds or young trees.

Mr. HOLMAN : Was the Minister satisfied that the work of clearing at Ludlow was properly done ? Were the trees merely torn down and the roots left in the ground ? If so, the roots would become breeding places for white ants, and the pines would get short shrift. If the system was cheap and dirty, the sooner we had it rectified the better.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS : The trees at Hamel were cut down and the stumps stood there to-day and no harm was done to the pines growing alongside. Mr. Macfarlane was an expert, and if he considered that the clearing at Ludlow was unsatisfactory he would have complained. Certainly the roots were left in ; they would need to be left in if the work was done by hand ; but the white ants did not attack the growing pine trees as readily as the hon. member imagined. It was understood the clearing was satisfactorily done. At any rate, the work was satisfactory in the opinion of Mr. Macfarlane.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

#### BILL—FREMANTLE FREEMASONS' LODGE No. 2 DISPOSITION.

Returned from the Legislative Council with amendments.

#### BILL—LAND AND INCOME TAX.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

#### BILL—REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.

*Second Reading.*

Debate resumed from the 7th December.

Mr. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe) : I presume that the duty evolves upon me at the

outset of congratulating the Attorney General for at least the plausible manner in which he introduced this Bill, but I am sorry to say I cannot congratulate him upon the logic he should have used when introducing a measure of this description. He forgot all about logic and kept as close as possible to making it appear that the Bill was all right from a plausible standpoint and not from a logical standpoint. If there be need for redistribution at all there can be only one reason, and that is that the present Parliament is not truly representative of the aspirations of the people of the country. If it is, I hold that there is no need for a readjustment of the electoral boundaries, except that need is one which, I assume, on this occasion has been accepted as the paramount thing on the part of the present Government, that is of retaining office for a further term irrespective of the will of the people of the country. I hope to be able to show before I conclude my remarks that this is not only the paramount reason on the part of the Government for introducing this measure but that, judging from the figures of the Attorney General, it could have been the only reason for introducing it. It is true that there are anomalies existing under the present arrangements of our electoral boundaries. No one who will term himself a democrat—I regret there are many in this House who cannot be termed that truthfully—can for a moment insist that anomalies do not exist, when we have an electorate such as North Perth with something approaching 8,000 electors returning one member and another electorate such as Roebourne with 700 electors returning a member.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Five hundred.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am giving the full benefit of the numbers that were on the roll some time back. Probably the decrease may be made up, as it may be made up in some other electorates in the future. But even accepting 700 as the number of electors in Roebourne, I hold it is not a representative Assembly when such anomalies as this are in existence. The Attorney General

was anxious to make not only the members of the Chamber—after all he was not very much concerned about our opinions in the matter, but he was more concerned about how the Press of the State and through the Press the public of the State would accept the Bill—he was very anxious to lead the public to believe that the Bill would adjust these anomalies that are at present in existence and also make a fairer representation of the views of the country in this Chamber. I hold that the Attorney General, if he honestly set out with that object, has failed miserably in accomplishing it. The anomalies that exist at the present time in this Bill as introduced are brought about I believe in a large measure because the Attorney General has had continually before him the words “community of interest.” He has been blinded to what is true representation of the aspirations of the people by these words “community of interest.”

Mr. JOHNSON: And “retention of office.”

Mr. SCADDAN: That of course comes into the same words. “Community of interest” and “retention of office” are synonymous terms at the present time. But I want to ask the Attorney General and other members of the Chamber who hold that this Bill is a just measure and one that will do what I contend should only be considered when amending the electoral boundaries of our electorates, that is to give better representation to the aspirations of the people in this Chamber—I want to ask those hon. members what they mean by “community of interest.” The Attorney General will probably explain that any individual who is earning a livelihood, either by being an employer or an employee in the mining industry, has the same community of interest, I hold, and probably I am not in agreement with quite a number of members in the Chamber, that community of interest after all is just this. A man may be employed in the agricultural industry working for wages, and another employed in the mining industry working for wages, but their

interests as wage earners are exactly the same. There is no community of interest other than that of the man who is working for wages and the man who is employing labour, in other terms, the owner of capital and the man who produces that capital, the wage earner. I know that for the purpose of getting over the barefaced attempt on the part of the Government to get this Parliament to agree to the gerrymandering of one or two electoral boundaries, in order to retain seats particularly for Ministers, and may I say particularly the seat that the Premier at present holds, the Attorney General very plausibly set up community of interests between the man employed at Karridale near Cape Leeuwin, and the man employed as a storekeeper in Collie, or as a miner in the Collie mines. I am prepared to admit that there is community of interests existing between those men in so far as they are wage earners, and that it exists just over the border in the present Sussex electorate. You do not get over the difficulty by making an imaginary line, and assuming that a man on one side is interested in one thing as a wage earner, while the man on the other side, also a wage earner, is interested in a totally different thing. A community of interests as outlined in this measure, and as outlined by the Attorney General when introducing it, can only be held to be in operation when it means that a member shall come here to represent roads and bridges in their electorates, and not the aspirations of our great community. In that regard I want to say that after all a member is here in the first instance to make legislation, and that legislation not only affects the interests of those he represents in his constituency, that community of interests so much spoken of, but every other individual in the State has to abide by the legislation passed. I may instance the case of the member for Roebourne, and I would like to say I am not taking it in a personal sense—the member for Roebourne, as a representative of 700 electors, has exactly the same power in deciding questions affecting the interests of the men employed in the mining industry in my electorate as I have myself, and I represent at present. I say “at present”

advisedly, something over 2,000 men who have community of interests, perhaps as no other electorate in the State, and they are men employed as miners almost purely and simply. Yet the member for Roebourne, by the fact that he is returned by 700, can nullify the desire of the 2,000 electors in my electorate by putting in his vote against legislation affecting their welfare. I contend we are here in the first instance to give effect to the desires and aspirations of the people of the community as a whole and not as a section, and may I be permitted to refer to the remarks of that great statesman Edmund Burke in order to show what I think is a true statesman and a true representative of the people. Burke says—

Parliament is no congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests, which interests each must maintain as an agent and advocate against other agents and advocates; but Parliament is a deliberative assembly of our nation, with one interest, that of the whole, where not local purposes, not local prejudices ought to guide, but the general good, resulting from the general reason of the whole. You choose a member indeed—

And Burke was speaking of his constituents at this time,

but when you have chosen him he is not a member for Bristol but a member of Parliament.

Unfortunately very often we find with the electors under our present electoral system that they elect a member for Bristol for the particular part of the State which he, for the time being, represents, and the interests of the whole are overlooked, and the interests only of the community he represents are kept paramount in his mind. If I wanted to give evidence of that I could give it in numerous instances where we discuss matters in this Assembly of vital importance to the welfare of the people of the State, and while there are not on those occasions more than five or six members sitting on the ministerial side, we find that when a division is taken, not once but hundreds of times, those members come in to vote and do not know what the voting is about; they look around the Chamber, and they find the Government

sitting on one side and the Opposition sitting on the other; that is sufficient for them, and they vote with the Government. It is true that no Government can continue without a loyal following, but I want to know whether any member is only concerned about the interests of the few in the community that he represents, or whether he is here to give a decision, after considering the pros and cons of the case, for the benefit of the whole. I ask that, after considering those pros and cons, whether he is to decide in his own mind, and at his own discretion and will, what is in the best interests of the whole community, or whether he is to be guided by the six gentlemen on the Ministerial bench. It is true we have party Government in Australia, where parties are so divided that they are sitting immediately in opposition to each other, and unless you are attached to one party or the other you have little hope of bringing about reforms; but it is not on matters of great reform that this kind of thing takes place, it is on matters that are really details of those principles, which will make it beneficial, or otherwise, to hon. members who have no concern about the general welfare, and who only desire to look after the interests of those few to whom they have to look to be returned again, and it is for these that they neglect the interests of the general community. While this goes on I hold that we shall never get effective legislation. When I say effective legislation I mean legislation which will be in keeping with the aspirations of the people, as it should be when legislation of any kind is passed through Parliament and enacted. The Government with their Redistribution of Seats Bill have been looking further than the borders of Western Australia; they have recognised, as has the Press of the State and everyone else, that there is a growing force in Australia which will eventually control the destinies of the Commonwealth, and that that force is the party which in this State is sitting in Opposition and that being the case the Government, has not considered the interests of the people—and I want to say here, that the Premier went so far as to declare the other day that this Bill was not a matter

for the consideration of the people of the State, and he asked what had the people of the State to do with it, and added "It affects us." I want to know whether we would be here were it not for the wishes of the people. I hold that the question of whether an electorate shall be merged into another is not a matter affecting me personally, but it is a matter of vital importance to my constituents, and not only is it a matter of importance to those electors, but the manner of arranging the boundaries of other electorates concerns my electorate as well. The will of the majority in the country should be truly expressed in an Assembly such as this. In the proposals which we have in this Bill the attempt is made, and if it were put into operation would nullify the wish of the majority in order that the minority might maintain their position on the Treasury Benches. If I were to say that I can justly claim that this Bill is a gerrymandering Bill, I would need go no further than the Press of this State to prove what I said to be absolutely correct. Before this Bill was introduced we knew by the actions of the Government from time to time that their desire was not to get a true expression of the public will but to return with a majority to the House, and they went so far as to present to their own followers an outline of this measure for their concurrence, and it is rumoured, and I believe correctly, to obtain from them a pledge that they would support that Bill before it was sent out to be printed. I contend we can only come to the one conclusion and that is that the Government were desirous of gerrymandering these boundaries to bring about the effect I have stated. The *West Australian* itself had something to say on this measure, and I believe the gentlemen opposite assert, and perhaps correctly, that the *West Australian* is a prominent newspaper in the State and can be taken as desiring to lead public opinion, and that being the case I want to draw attention to the attitude of this newspaper, which, in season and out of season, whether the Government have been right or wrong, and more often they have been wrong, has supported the Government, and has tried on every occasion to hurl ridicule on



the policy of the party on this side of the House. What did the *West Australian* say of the gentleman who introduced the Bill and who poses not only in this Assembly but in the country as a statesman, a democratic statesman, the Attorney General? Why, I believe that the Attorney General on one occasion distinctly declared that a certain Redistribution of Seats Bill, if passed by the Chamber, would be asking Parliament to agree to the representation of acres and ignorance.

The Attorney General: The member for Beverley said that.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am dealing with the Attorney General, and the fact remains that that gentleman distinctly said that the proposal would be asking the House to agree to the representation of acres and ignorance.

The Attorney General: I did not say that; it was the member for Beverley who said it.

Mr. SCADDAN: It is in *Hansard*.

The Attorney General: Well quote it.

Mr. SCADDAN: As the hon. member has had the opportunity of denying it long since, I do not propose to worry about quoting it; if it is not correct the Attorney General can take the opportunity of disputing it on some other occasion. I shall have sufficient to quote before the matter is over to keep him going for a day or two. What did the *West Australian* say, and I may here declare that the only mistake the Government made was that while they pledged the members supporting the Government to the Bill, they forgot to show it to the *West Australian* proprietor, with the result that it has not been accepted by that newspaper. That is the position. The result is that the newspaper has been able to find some anomalies in the Bill, which has been brought down with the intention, according to the Attorney General, of removing anomalies. The *West Australian* said—

Indeed the fatal defect of the scheme is its lack of any common or uniting principle. It will appear to many critics that Ministers, especially the Attorney General, seem incapable of getting away from the antiquated and illogical notion that a Parliament should be chiefly con-

cerned with acres and sheep rather than men and brains.

Mr. Bolton: Especially the Attorney General.

Mr. SCADDAN: That is the *West Australian*, and those words are the most outspoken criticism of the Government I have seen in its columns for many years.

Mr. George: You ought to frame that.

Mr. Draper: What is the reference in *Hansard*?

Mr. SCADDAN: The member for West Perth will have the same opportunity as I have of speaking, and it will be interesting to hear what his opinions are, and how far that hon. gentleman's views are in keeping with his statement that he is a democratic representative of the people.

Mr. Draper: What about *Hansard*?

Mr. SCADDAN: I am referring to a greater authority than *Hansard*, the *West Australian*. This paper has in a large measure damned the Government by faint praise. It states "but there is very little evidence of what may properly be called gerrymandering, after all." I want to ask why there should be any evidence of gerrymandering after all?

Mr. George: Hear, hear.

Mr. SCADDAN: Why should there be any evidence of gerrymandering on a map of this kind, unless it is for the purpose of nullifying the wishes of the people and retaining in possession of the Treasury bench those gentlemen who at present occupy it? Dealing with the question of gerrymandering the Attorney General stated, when I interjected that it was bare-faced gerrymandering so far as the rearrangement of the Sussex and Collie boundaries was concerned, that I would have the opportunity of showing how it was so. I am going to do that. With the present electoral boundaries of Sussex the Premier, outside the fact that he was once defeated in Perth, had the fight of his life to keep his seat last election against a gentleman comparatively unknown in his electorate, and the idea uppermost in

his mind must have been that that gentleman, having fought one election, would be better known the next time, and that it was therefore about time for him (the Premier) to get out; but, being ashamed as Premier to run away from the electorate he represented, he did the next best thing. And, let me say, it has been rumoured very freely in different parts of the State, that the Premier did not intend to again contest the Sussex electorate, but that it was his idea to stand for another electorate; I am not going to mention the name of it in case the member for Katanning should blush. The circumstances being such as I have indicated, the Premier did the next best thing. I admit that it would undoubtedly be a sign of weakness, which the Premier most readily recognised, and knew that the people would recognise, if he as Premier were not game to contest that constituency which he represented when he became Premier. In order to get out of the difficulty in which he found himself he, apparently in co-operation with his colleague the Attorney General, kindly prepared, not a little gerrymandering, but a rearrangement of boundaries so as to bring about "community of interests in Collie." Of course I am trying to be as fair as possible to the Attorney General, but that is the position. While taking out of Collie electorate a certain number of the former electors represented in and around Donnybrook, he also included in Collie some of the Sussex electors, who had shown at the last election that they had no approval for the Premier or the policy he represented, and who would probably be able to do the same thing if he again faced them. In order to show just what did happen, I am going to refer to the places and the results at the last election in these two electorates, and show how the Attorney General and the Government have nicely arranged that those votes shall not in future be recorded against the Premier. The rearrangement of the boundaries as proposed will mean that the Flinders Bay polling booth, at which the Premier obtained five votes, and his opponent 25,

will be transferred—in order to obtain "community of interests," let me again point out—into the Collie electorate. Jarrahdene, where the Premier obtained eight votes, and his opponent 46, by a similar process is being transferred into the Collie electorate. Jarrahwood, where the Premier again received eight votes and his opponent 41, will also be transferred into the Collie electorate. Karri-dale, where the Premier obtained 24 votes and his opponent 89, will likewise be handed over to Collie; and at Kirrup, where he did have a single supporter, probably the gentleman he sent there to scrutinies, he obtained one vote and his opponent 25. That also is being transferred into the Collie electorate. Margaret River, where 15 votes were polled in his favour, and 57 against him, is another place that is to be shifted, and altogether by a very just arrangement of the electoral boundaries of the Sussex and Collie electorates the Premier has transferred from his electorate no less than 61 of his former supporters. But in doing that, he was careful to hand over no less than 282 of his opponent's.

Mr. Gill: Of course, that is not gerrymandering.

Mr. SCADDAN: No, that is generosity. It is not everybody who hands over more than he is going to receive. But while he was careful to do that, he was also careful to take in that portion of the Collie electorate, where previously the Ministerial candidate had obtained a majority over the representative in this Chamber at the present time. I understand that he is taking into Sussex, Brookhampton, where Mr. Ewing obtained 62 votes, and Mr. A. A. Wilson, the present representative, 3. He is also taking in Donnybrook, where Mr. Ewing polled 199 votes and Mr. Wilson 71; and Preston, where Mr. Ewing received 57 votes and Mr. Wilson 28; or a total cast in favour of the Ministerial candidate of 318 votes as against 102 in favour of the Labour candidate. Taking these two together, he has transferred 61 of his own supporters to the Collie electorate, and has got in return 102 supporters of Mr. A. A. Wilson. He is on the losing

side there, but he is also transferring, as I pointed out before, 282 opponents from the Sussex electorate as at present arranged, and taking in these 318 Ministerial supporters at the previous election.

Mr. George: There is not very much difference.

Mr. SCADDAN: No, not very much, of course; but it means a difference of 600 votes in favour of the Ministerial party as against the loss of 163 votes, but of course it is all done for the purpose of bringing about community of interests.

The Premier: What does Collie say about it?

Mr. SCADDAN: I will tell the Premier what Collie says about it. Here is what one gentleman had to say: "Heaven save us from our friends is the bitter cry of Collie Government supporters, now reduced to a few simple credulous souls." Let me tell the Premier that they say something else too, and I might as well inform him of that as well: "I agree with you that the Redistribution of Seats Bill is a most atrocious piece of gerrymandering."

The Premier: Is that in reply to a letter you wrote?

Mr. SCADDAN: It was not in reply to a letter I wrote, I can assure the Premier of that. This was spontaneous combustion. They say something else which it is just as well the Premier should hear: "Since Sir Newton left the Government they seem to have jettisoned all show of political morality." Perhaps the Premier will now ask what somebody else says about it.

Mr. Jacoby: Anybody can make that assertion.

Mr. SCADDAN: So they can, but not every body has the pluck to say it. It is only a degree of courage in saying these things, and a degree of cunningness in avoiding the saying of things one really means.

Mr. Jacoby: What is the value of mere words?

Mr. SCADDAN: The value of the hon. member's words is not accepted as very great. I desire, when discussing this Bill,

so far as I am personally concerned, to avoid as far as possible dealing with the question as it affects the several constituencies. I prefer to leave it to members on both sides—if it is possible to obtain any expression of opinion from the other side—to discuss the matter for themselves, and endeavour to arrive at what I hope will be a better representation in a future Parliament than this Bill can possibly give us. But I want to refer to another statement of the Attorney General. He said in explaining the high quota given to the Golden Mile constituencies—

It is not by any means impossible that within a few years on the proposed redistribution the quota of the agricultural districts will be higher than that of the mining districts.

Now, the quota given to the goldfields constituencies is roughly 2,867 per member.

The Attorney General: You are including the Golden Mile.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am speaking of the goldfields constituencies. The Attorney General is surely not going to quibble at that when there is community of interests all over the goldfields. There is no difference between the miner on the Golden Mile and the miner in the Menzies electorate. The total increase that will be necessary in the 15 agricultural districts "in a few years" to bring about a quota similar to what will exist under this Bill—I do not know exactly what the Attorney General means by "a few years." In the life of a nation a few years is nothing, but a few years in the life of a farmer is a great deal. To my mind a few years ought to mean the life of a Parliament, because each Parliament should be a true expression, so far as is possible, of the will of the people. But we would have to obtain an increase of 15,210 electors, adults over 21 years of age, in the agricultural districts in these few years to bring them up to the present quota on the goldfields. This would mean an increase in the population of the agricultural districts alone of approximately from 35,000 to 40,000 souls, all in "a few years." The Minister for Lands is twitted with being over-optimistic,

but he is outpaced considerably by the Attorney General on this occasion in order to make a plausible argument in regard to the quotas allotted to the goldfields and the agricultural districts respectively.

The Minister for Lands: That will probably take place.

Mr. SCADDAN: Of course, until you get the Bill through. I can understand the anxiety of the Minister for Lands, but will he tell me on what basis he made his calculation of increase in the agricultural districts?

The Minister for Lands: On the basis of the past year.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Minister knows full well that it would take 25 years of the increase of population in the agricultural districts during the last few years to bring up that total increase referred to. And I want to know whether we are obtaining representation for the next Parliament and then going to find an amendment in the Constitution Act Amendment Bill not for extending parliaments for another year but for another twenty-five years in order to get over the difficulty of the Premier having to face his electors to get their expression of opinion of his actions from time to time.

The Minister for Lands: Do you know that half the population have gone to live in the rural districts?

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not know what the Minister for Lands calls agricultural and rural districts, but looking through the electorates I cannot agree with the Attorney General as to the agricultural and pastoral districts.

Mr. Walker: He has made Kanowna an agricultural district.

Mr. SCADDAN: Let me say I almost term it a gerrymandering act of the Attorney General, and I shall be glad to see an agricultural representative in the future returned for Kanowna. Be that as it may, the position, so far as the proposition of the Attorney General is concerned if he hopes to bring about the same quota in agricultural areas in a few years—

The Attorney General: I said other than those on the Golden Mile.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am not prepared to accept "other than those on the Golden

Mile." It is part of the goldfields, and it is a poor return for the advertisement which the Golden Mile has given to this State when the Attorney General makes the quota similar to the electorates in Perth, and when we remember that not many weeks ago the Minister for Lands stated that the mining industry of the State had made agricultural development possible—

The Minister for Lands: And I repeat it.

Mr. SCADDAN: The recognition the goldfields are getting for that is to deprive them of two seats to which they are justly entitled. That is the recognition the goldfields get from the Government.

Mr. George: They are transferred.

Mr. SCADDAN: Let me tell the member for Murray that the mining industry is going to be carried on if 30,000 people do leave the goldfields to go on the land; they will be replaced. It will not affect the quota. The transference of votes from one electorate to another is all moonshine.

The Minister for Lands: It is a solid fact.

Mr. SCADDAN: While we had the other evening the hon. member's colleague making a statement to fit the argument, the previous evening the Attorney General pointed out that the mining industry was going down. He said, much as he must regret it, the mining industry was not as great as it formerly was. There was a loss of population on the goldfields, and yet the next evening the Minister for Mines pointed out in very glowing terms that the mining industry was going ahead and that we should see the population go up enormously within the next few years. I take it the Minister for Mines was absent from Cabinet when the Bill was considered, as were likewise his colleagues in the Legislative Council, Mr. Connolly and Mr. McKenzie. And let me say that some of the birds that fly around the Palace Hotel have stated that Mr. Connolly was the first person who mooted that the goldfields should lose two of their representatives. He may have had reasons for that, because he is imbued with a desire to bring about a community of interests. I want to say that the statement, I have

made from time to time is absolutely correct and is borne out by this Bill, that the Government were out to dish their opponents, the Opposition, and nothing else. I want to show how it will turn out according to the Attorney General's figures, and I now quote from an authority greater than *Hansard*, the *Sunday Times*. I want to show the quota on the figures given by the Attorney General himself making it about 2,720 per electorate on a purely electoral population basis. There are nine seats represented by the Government and nine by the Opposition which have the number of electors above that quota. The margin in the case of Government supporters is 12,320 in these nine electorates, while in the opposition electorates there is about the same number, 12,410. There is not much to quibble about in that from the standpoint of the two parties. I also find, however, that the Government supporters have provided for them no less than 21 seats below the quota totalling a shortage of 19,530 electors, while the members of the Opposition have 11 electorates with a total in those eleven of 5,735 below the quota. Now what does that show, it shows that members on this side are representing in round numbers about 7,000 electors above the quota on a population basis, while the Government supporters under the Redistribution of Seats Bill, taking the seats as at present represented in the House, are about 8,000 on the wrong side of the ledger. They have more representation here than they are entitled to on a population basis by a shortage of 7,000 to 8,000 electors. That is not justice, and not only is it an injustice to their opponents but it is more than that—which I am not concerned about in the slightest degree—it is an injustice to the people whom we are supposed to represent. I believe the Attorney General stated the other evening in his remarks, that there were fifteen goldfields electorates and fifteen agricultural electorates. I have looked carefully through the Bill and I cannot find them. They may be there. The member for Pilbara is supposed to be the representative of a goldfields constituency, and I warrant that if the Attorney General goes through that mem-

ber's roll he will find that it is made-up principally of people following the pastoral industry, and the same thing applies to one or two other electorates. The member for Mt. Magnet represents a large number of people who follow the pastoral occupation, and the same thing applies to the member for Murchison. They are all put down as goldfields constituencies because their quota is fairly high, and the only constituencies put down as pastoral are Gascoyne and Roebourne, and the latter I warrant has more mining people in it than Pilbara has. I warrant that there are more people in Roebourne following the mining industry than there are in Pilbara, but Roebourne is put down as a pastoral industry because its quota is small. The quota is 1,275 and in order to bring down the quota of the goldfields the Government have taken in the Pilbara and another electorate, which brings the quota down to 2,867. There are thirteen members under the redistribution representing 37,290 electors out of 135,000 electors in a House of fifty members, their quota being 2,167. In the agricultural portion of the State there are fifteen members representing 27,800 electors, or 10,000 electors less than the 15 members representing mining constituencies. On the above basis the agricultural industry would only be entitled to ten representatives instead of fifteen as provided under the measure before the House, or if we take the agricultural quota and apply it to the goldfields the goldfields would be entitled to twenty representatives rather than 13. The Attorney General smiles, he is not much concerned I admit. Taking it on a purely population basis the goldfields have as near as it is possible to obtain their just representation in the Chamber on a purely population basis.

Mr. Draper: Are you prepared to adopt a purely population basis?

Mr. SCADDAN: Let me tell the hon. member that there is no one in the community who would go further than I would in giving proper representation to the electoral population of the State, and I am going to indicate later on how a Government that calls itself democratic can bring that about. I would give my undivided support to any Government

that would bring that about. The member for West Perth would not go so far as I would in my desire to obtain representation on a purely population basis, and I will tell the hon. member why I should do so, because the Attorney General and I part company immediately we decide what members shall represent acres and stupidity or brains and humanity. We part company there. I want the House to represent brains and humanity, the Attorney General is anxious that it shall represent, apparently by his own words, acres and ignorance. I want to say that I know the Premier has no personal motive in bringing in a Bill of this kind, but it seems peculiar, and I assert it, that he is gerrymandering one electorate to save his seat, while he will wipe the seat of the leader of the Opposition off the slate. It is want of generosity on the Premier's part. It shows to what extent the Premier and the Government will go in order to dish, as I have said frequently, their opponents. As I said at North Fremantle, and I say here, I am not personally concerned at all because the hon. member will find me here after the next general election whether my electorate is on the map or not, and more than likely it will be at the expense of one of the Premier's own supporters. I want to make a point of this. Whilst the Government have taken four seats from various portions of the State, no less than three of them are represented by members on this side of the House, which, as I have already stated, now represents considerably over their proper quota. Three of the four electorates are represented by members of the Opposition and the fourth is represented by a gentleman who has already announced that he has no intention of seeking Parliamentary honours again, so that it does not affect that gentleman very much. And moreover, let me say that while that is the case they have increased the representation in those districts where they are well represented at present—while the Opposition, from the desire of the Ministry are not likely to increase their members—and by this method the Ministry hope to be able to reduce the members on this side and re-

turn in possession of the Treasury bench at the next general election. Let me say that I have such implicit faith in the justice of the people, in their ability to recognise an injustice when they see it, that I believe they will not support such a piece of barefaced political gerrymandering as contained in this Bill, but will show their disapproval at the next election by ousting those gentlemen at present in occupation of the Treasury bench. I do not know that after all the Ministers have had a mandate from the people to make a rearrangement of the electoral boundaries. If they are looking into the future they have a mandate from the electors to the extent that they are fearful that at the next election the people may say, "There is a redistribution necessary, but you are not the gentlemen we propose to trust to bring it about." Not only have Ministers nicely rearranged the distribution of electoral power by reducing members on this side by three and on their own side by one, and putting in those four additional seats in districts where they are already obtaining their support, but they have also nicely arranged that Ministers themselves should have, in every instance but that of Subiaco, a pocket borough to represent. While endeavouring to excuse his action in reducing the representation of our principal port, Fremantle, the Attorney General the other evening made a rather peculiar statement, one which I am afraid the member for Fremantle and the member for South Fremantle will glory in. The Attorney General said—

If we had reduced the Fremantle representation by one-half,

That is, by two seats, which, apparently, they had in mind—

the quota would be made unduly high, being one member to 5,500 voters or about 900 higher than the numerically largest of the Perth constituencies. We have therefore contented ourselves with depriving Fremantle of only one seat.

I am sure the member for Fremantle and the member for South Fremantle must have gone to the Attorney General and congratulated him on the fact that he had allowed Fremantle to remain on the map at all.

Mr. Jacoby: It would be far worse under your scheme.

Mr. SCADDAN: The member for Swan does not know my scheme yet; if he does and does not voice his opinion in favour of it he is not a democrat. I will tell the member for Swan my scheme directly. As a matter of fact, it is not my scheme, it is as old as I am, but it is a just one, and that is the main consideration. Now, the Fremantle electorates, according to the Attorney General's own figures will contain 11,500 voters. They have at present four members representing these 11,500 electors; and I am pretty certain some of the members representing those constituencies can draw comparisons between the numbers they are at present representing and the numbers that will be represented by some gentlemen in some of the other constituencies if this Bill is passed—comparisons by no means flattering to the Ministers or the members supporting the Government. The Fremantle members represent 11,500, which gives a quota of 3,833 per electorate. The Golden Mile constituencies contain 17,000 electors. They are being deprived of one seat, which will mean that four members will represent 4,250 electors per electorate, whilst the Ministers represent the following:—the Premier will represent, in Sussex, 1,900 electors, the Minister for Mines, in Menzies, 2,300—which he will not represent—the Attorney General, in Greenough, 1,600; the Minister for Lands, in Avon, 2,800; the Honorary Minister (Mr. Male), in Kimberley, 1,600, and the Minister for Works, in Subiaco, 4,450, or a total for six Ministers of 14,650. Six Ministers of the Crown, who are supposed to be representing the opinions of the people of the country will only be representing 14,650 of the electors, while four members from the Golden Mile will be representing 17,000 electors, and three members from Fremantle no fewer than 11,500 electors. The Fremantle members can take this to their souls, that Ministers have been very kind to themselves. If we take out the Subiaco electorate, which carries the high quota of 4,450, it leaves the quota for five Ministers at 2,040 per electorate. Five Ministers of the Crown representing

2,040; or 680 below the quota of 2,720 on a population basis! As I have pointed out, this is the position we find ourselves in under this Bill; and I want to say that the Attorney General might at least have given more consideration to a proper representation on the Ministerial benches as well as the representation on the benches of those supporting him and those in opposition. I think it would carry greater weight in the country if it were recognised that the Ministers were representing constituencies in which we could get a proper expression of opinion of the people instead of mere pocket boroughs.

Mr. Bolton: Two of the electorates have only 1,400 in each.

Mr. SCADDAN: But I am speaking of Ministers themselves, who will represent 2,442 per member, and without Subiaco, 2,040. I do not think I will deal any further with the methods adopted by the Attorney General in introducing this Bill. I am going to allow the other members on this side of the House, who have a better knowledge of each of their own electorates, to deal with the question as it affects those electorates, and I shall leave it also to members sitting on the Ministerial side to deal with their own electorates—if they are allowed. But I want to say I am somewhat disappointed after all with that outspoken leading article, which appeared in the *West Australian*; because I remember vividly when the Federal elections took place last April the *West Australian* repeatedly wrote leading articles complaining of the method of representation in our Federal Parliament, and they urged, not once but time after time, that some other system should be put into operation in order to allow the people to have a proper expression of opinion in the Federal Parliament. I recognise that the positions are not parallel. In the Federal Parliament we have a large Labour majority in both Houses, while in this Parliament we have a small majority of Ministerialists, anti-Labourists, anti-Socialists, anti-something, anti-anything, while in another place we have a no-party House, made up principally of Ministerial supporters. That being the case, one could not expect the *West Australian*

would urge that the Attorney General, instead of bringing down a Bill of this kind, should introduce what they desired to be introduced in respect to the Commonwealth, because it might have the effect of introducing a majority of Labour members into this Chamber, which would be a disaster. But the *West Australian* might have gone so far as to urge that the method adopted in almost every State of the Commonwealth, and in respect to the Commonwealth Parliament itself, should be. And the latest example we have had to assist them in the adjustment of the electoral boundaries was that recently afforded in Queensland, where a Bill was introduced by a Liberal Government. They at least were fair enough; and they, I think, had not the audacity of the present Government to introduce a Bill for the purpose of saving their own political necks and dishing their opponents. I am afraid they were nervous as to how the people of the country might accept it. They introduced a Bill which would remove from the dominant party for the time being the arrangement of the electoral boundaries, so that the people of Queensland might themselves decide as to their own representation in future Parliaments. Instead of that we have here a Bill introduced for the purpose of allowing this House of 50 members to decide what the representation of the people shall be in future. In effect the Premier said, "It is not a matter affecting the people, and they shall have no say in it. We are 26 in number, and we shall decide how the future representation of the people shall be distributed in this Chamber." In Queensland they introduced a Bill entitled "To make provision for the better representation of the people of Queensland in Parliament." I commend that title to the Attorney General in lieu of that of the Bill under notice, which, as a matter of fact, should read "A Bill to make provision for the non-representation and the frustration of the will of the people in this Parliament."

Mr. Holman: For the prostitution of political power.

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not desire to read the Queensland Bill, because the clauses

are largely of a machinery nature, but I want to read the principle as contained in one or two clauses. After the clauses dealing with the appointment of Commissioners the Bill continues—

It shall be the duty of the Commissioners to divide the State of Queensland into electoral districts in the manner provided by this Act. For the purpose of such division a quota of electors shall be ascertained as follows:— The total number of electors whose names appear upon the several electoral rolls of the State for the 31st December, 1910, shall be divided by 72, and the quotient shall be the quota of the electors.

Seventy-two being the number of members—

In making the division consideration shall be given by the Commissioners to (a) community or diversity of interest; (b) means of communication; (c) physical features; (d) the area of proposed districts which do not comprise any part of a city or town; and subject thereto the quota of electors shall be the basis for the division of the State into electoral districts, and the Commissioners may adopt a margin of allowance to be used whenever necessary, but in no case shall such quota be departed from to a greater extent than one-fifth more or one-fifth less.

Now, I want to show how that would operate in Western Australia. According to the Attorney General's figures the number of electors is 135,765. If divided by 50 this would make a quota of 2,715 per electorate. With the margin allowed under the Queensland Bill the highest number of electors could only be 3,258, while the lowest could be 2,172: that is, 543 above the quota and 543 below the quota, or a margin to work on of 1,086. Therefore under the Queensland method a member in this House could be representing 1,086 more electors than another member; and that should, in my opinion, be a sufficient margin of difference between town representation and the country representation. Now I want to show what is the difference in the present Bill. I find the highest of any elec-



torate is 4,600 in North Perth, as against 3,258 in Queensland, that is 1,885 above the quota; and the lowest is Roebourne with 700 voters, whereas in Queensland it would be 2,172; that is, 2,015 below the quota. The difference between the highest and the lowest is no less than 3,900 a fairly tidy electorate in itself; whereas in Queensland it would be the difference between 3,258 and 2,172, or a margin of 1,086, which would be a fairer proposition than the one in the Bill before the Chamber, and one that I think every member of the House could well support. I say it advisedly, although personally I would go further than that in the direction of representation on a population basis. I am now speaking personally in this matter.

Mr. Jacoby: On the electoral population?

Mr. SCADDAN: Yes. We represent those who return us; and those below the age, who are not entitled to vote, have guardians who vote to return members.

Mr. Walker: You speak of the adult population?

Mr. SCADDAN: Certainly, the adult population. The Queensland method would remove from the party which may be in power for the time being the right to say how the future Parliament should be represented; and, as I have stated previously, the question of the representation of future Parliaments is not a matter of concern to the dominant party of this Parliament, or to the 50 members of this Parliament, it is a matter of concern to the people only; because, after all, if we are here for anything, it is to carry out the purpose of the will of the people as expressed at a general election. It would be a fairer proposition than the one we are now considering in this Bill; but I want to attempt, if members will listen to me, to show what I believe to be the only true method of representing the will of the people in a deliberative assembly. I do not want to have hon. members assume that this is a little scheme of my own that I have conceived; because it is not; it is one that has been put into operation and that has proved itself to give justice to all parties irrespective of their opinions on various questions.

and not only to parties, but it has given justice to the people themselves, and wherever it has been in operation it has given entire satisfaction to the people, who, after all, are most vitally concerned. I refer to proportional representation. I believe there are members on both sides of the House who will differ from me on this matter. I am not speaking on it from the standpoint of the party which I have the honour to lead at the present time, but I am speaking on my own behalf; and I hope that the few words I have to say will cause members to think over the matter, to see whether it would not be advisable to take the earliest opportunity of bringing it into operation. But before I point out the advantages of this system, I want to point out some of the disadvantages of the present system. The present system in the first place permits a minority in the country to obtain a majority in Parliament. It means, in other words, a Ministry in control of the affairs of the State with a minority of support in the country. That is not merely an assertion on my part; it has been borne out times without number in various parts of the world.

Mr. Troy: It applies in this State.

Mr. SCADDAN: It may be so.

The Attorney General: And some of your members represent minorities.

Mr. SCADDAN: Some of them represent such small minorities that those minorities are about the size of the whole of the hon. member's electorate. The member for North Perth, who represents a minority, represents a bigger number of electors than the whole of those on the Attorney General's roll; and the member for Albany, who represents a minority, represents as many as the Attorney General has on his roll. However, a minority in the country may obtain a majority in Parliament and thus control the affairs of the State; and certainly that is not democracy. In fact I would like to quote from a report that has to-day been tabled by the Attorney General, and I must thank him for having given me the opportunity of quoting from it. I only regret it was not introduced at an earlier stage. I want to show that if we are democrats—and I believe democracy means govern-

ment of the people for the people by the people, and not by 50 individuals—if we believe in that, we can only obtain it under the system I propose to outline, and we will defeat it in the Bill as introduced at the present time by having single member electorates such as we have in operation in this State. In this report I have mentioned Mr. Stenberg, the Chief Electoral Officer, says—

All schemes devised for the election of representative Assemblies in self-governing countries should, if based upon what is generally known as democratic principles, tend towards securing, in a practical sense, government of the people for the people by the people. At the outset, therefore, it appears appropriate, in order that it may be more readily ascertainable how far each scheme goes towards fulfilling its professed aims, that an endeavour should be made to define in a general way the meaning of the term self-government. With such object in view, I cannot do better than by quoting the words of one who has given deep study to the subject, namely, Lord Courtney, who defines self-government in the following terms, namely:—"Self-government may be aptly described as a government in which every section of society has its voice, in which every want has its expression, in which all the members of the community are practically participant in the resultant action. A fully representative government must maintain the main characteristics of complete self-government. There should be no want felt by any sufficient section of the community, which was not also felt by some one within the representative assembly capable of expressing the same want. If self-government was realised through representative institutions, all sections in proportion to their numbers must be participants in the action of the governing body, which is evolved from the community. Decisions must be taken in accordance with the majority, but minorities should have the opportunity

of giving expression to their views in representative assembly."

We hear from public platforms in Australia the statement that every candidate for Parliament is a democrat and desires to give full expression to democratic views in Parliament; but I want to know how a man may term himself a democrat under the existing electoral system and be prepared to allow it to operate any further, when in many cases it nullifies democracy in the country. I know it will be contended that we get different expressions of opinion from various parts of the State; that, for instance, the member for Guildford representing the labourites in the Guildford electorate can also represent those labourites who have been in a large measure disfranchised in the Sussex electorate, or who are misrepresented by the Premier; I know it has been stated by opponents of proportional representation from time to time as an argument that every section of the community has representation at present; but I hold that this is not the case. I know that in many instances this system I advocate will operate to the disadvantage of the party to which I belong, but I am more concerned for a proper electoral system than I am concerned for one party over another. I am concerned about a proper expression of the will of the people, and putting it into operation by a deliberative assembly. A proper electoral system should make a deliberative assembly a true reflex of the opinions of the people in the country, and we can only obtain that by a different electoral system to that which we have now in operation. No one would say that every person in Australia is a labourite and believes in the Labour policy, because at the last Federal elections the Labour party secured the whole of the representation in the Federal Senate. As a matter of fact, if each party had its proper representation the Labour party in the Senate would have obtained one or two members more than its opponents instead of absolutely annihilating them. Any system which will allow a bare majority to annihilate a big minor-

ity in the country is unjust and one that is not permitting democracy to give a full expression to its opinions.

Mr. George: You do not believe in the Senate election?

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member is taking exactly the same attitude as the *West Australian*. Of course the hon. member does not believe in it. Let me tell the hon. member that when Mr. Kingsmill was returning thanks for being defeated at the Federal elections, he re-echoed and parrot-ried the statement from the *West Australian* leading article that we should have some system of proportional representation for the election of senators. I asked Mr. Kingsmill by way of interjection, whether he was prepared to put it into operation in the State where he was personally concerned, and he told me we had it in operation in Western Australia. That gentleman was advocating proportional representation and yet knew nothing about it. And that is the reason why some of the reforms are kept back, not only electoral reform but other great reforms which would work to the advantage of the country; because we have gentlemen like Mr. Kingsmill attempting to give authoritative opinions on questions of which they know nothing. It was merely a parrot cry on the part of Mr. Kingsmill, taken from the leading article of the *West Australian*.

Mr. George: He was pulling your leg.

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member need not worry. My leg is not so easily got at as his own. I do not want to refer to any "incidents" to prove it; they are not ancient history.

Mr. Jacoby: You are not complimentary.

Mr. SCADDAN: I do not know about complimentary, I am speaking of what is absolutely correct in this matter. I want to say here that what happened in the Senate elections happens, in a large measure, in State elections under our single electorate system; and I contended that no democratic Parliament can permit of a system of this description to remain in operation, when there is ready at hand one that will bring about the

proper expression of democratic opinions in the Chamber. I know it will be said—even the Attorney General did when introducing the Bill—that the time is not yet ripe in Western Australia for representation on a purely population basis. As I said then, we will never have it so long as the Attorney General is in control of affairs of the State, because the old argument has been used from time immemorial by other Tories like the Attorney General, and it will always continue so. The object is this—and I want hon. members to understand it—that the industrial community, the workers, the men who produce the wealth of the community, are congregated in a large measure in the manufacturing portions of the State, in the towns and in the city; and so long as they can keep up big quotas in the towns and cities, as they are doing in this Bill, they will defeat the expression of opinion from the industrial section of our community. They want property to be represented, as is done by the franchise for another place at the present time, and they are only doing in this Chamber what they have in operation in the Council, namely, giving property undue representation in order to defeat the aspirations of the great mass of our community, the wage-earners. That is a truism which cannot be contradicted. It is done not only by the Attorney General but by all those who advocate that the time is not ripe for representation on a purely population basis. If the member for Murray were to leave his electoral district of Claremont and proceed to Roebourne, would he be of more electoral value to the State?

Mr. Osborn: He would be of equal value.

Mr. SCADDAN: Was the elector of Roebourne of more electoral value to the State because he happened to reside at Roebourne than if he resided at Claremont?

Mr. Jacoby: There are disadvantages if he goes up there.

Mr. SCADDAN: I am not speaking about climate now. The question is whether a man would be of more electoral value at Roebourne than he would be at Clare-

mont. You would wish the same laws to be passed whether you resided at Roebourne or at Claremont. I want to know where is the difference in the interests of, say, a constable who might be stationed for the time being at North Perth, and the interests of the same constable if he were stationed at Turkey Creek in the far north? There would be no difference. That man would have exactly the same aspirations, but under our present electoral system he has not got equal electoral power and the result is that we are not doing justice in the matter of proper representation in the House. To illustrate what may happen under our system which is being further continued by the Bill before the Chamber, I need only mention the case where Sir George Reid obtained a majority in Parliament in New South Wales by means of a Bill of this description with a majority of no less than 15,000 votes against him and he carried on the affairs of the State with the full knowledge that the majority in the country were against his policy.

Mr. Bath: The present Government represent a minority.

Mr. SCADDAN: That is true, but they have not a knowledge of it. Outside the question of inequality of political power which proportionate representation would get over, the present system has other defects which proportionate representation would in a large measure remove. One other thing is that the present system causes nearly half the votes cast to be wasted, and I believe that it has the effect of causing the great bulk of the people to lose interest in State politics as compared to the interest they possess in Federal politics. I earnestly believe that the reason why Federal politics in a large measure receive more attention from the people than State politics, which are nearer home, is because every vote cast under the Federal constitution will have an effect on the result of that election. There are men to-day who are living in electorates who are absolutely out of touch with the policy enunciated by their representatives in this Assembly and these people lose interest in politics because the votes in their electorates have no effect. I am speaking now of a fact

of which the Attorney General and his Ministry are continually complaining, that Federal politics receive more attention from the community, and that we are tending towards unification. I hold that the present electoral system is assisting us towards that. Be that as it may, let me say that if we desire to see the people take a keener interest in State politics, we want to give the opportunity to every individual, irrespective of where he may reside, the opportunity of casting an effective vote and at the same time assure the country of having majority representation in Parliament. We are told frequently that when a canvasser goes to the house of an elector and asks that elector whether he proposes to vote, the reply which is forthcoming is, "Oh, my vote will not make any difference." In many cases it will not make any difference and it is just as well that the vote is not cast, but in proportionate representation every vote cast would have an effect, and according to the number of votes cast for any responsible party would mean that that party would obtain their just proportion of members in the Assembly with the result that every elector would feel that his vote had been of some value and this would tend to awaken interest in State politics. We hear so much about the indifference of electors from our opponents, and particularly from the member for Murray, who is organiser of the National League.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The dash-it-all league.

Mr. SCADDAN: We are told that there is a tremendous amount of indifference on the part of the supporters of the Liberal party in the country.

Mr. George: Where did I say that.

Mr. SCADDAN: The hon. member can use these words at the next election. The hon. member has not said anything yet and that is why he has been taken to task by his party. I state emphatically that the present electoral system brings about indifference on the part of the electors. I want to ask hon. members what hope has a supporter of the present Ministry in casting an effective vote in my electorate under existing conditions? There is just this possibility, that at the next elec-

tion the goldfields will probably return a labour member for every goldfields seat, and let me say more than that, that there will be thousands of electors on the goldfields in sympathy with the policy of the present Government without any representation whatever. On the other hand, to show the justice of a system of this kind, there are thousands of electors in the agricultural districts who are not represented in this Parliament but who then would obtain their just representation as well.

Mr. Draper: How can you remedy it?

Mr. SCADDAN: Proportional representation will remedy it. The Attorney General knows one of the defects of the present system and has attempted in his Bill to put that defect into operation to secure the return of his party to the Treasury benches after the next election, and that is by so arranging the boundaries of electorates that the electors supporting any one party, while obtaining a big majority in one electorate, may on the other hand in another electorate by a small majority return a member supporting the Government, while scattered electorates, with the districts favourable to Ministerial members, will return members with a small majority. That is why the Attorney General has made Collic seat a safe Labour seat and the Sussex seat a safe seat for the Premier. As I have pointed out, the present result will depend not on the votes given to each party, but on the manner in which they are distributed. There is another great difficulty in our present electoral system and that is the localisation of politics. This is a difficulty which is brought about by the present system. A member imagines that all he has to do is to curry favour with a majority of his electors within a particular boundary of his electorate to obtain a majority and again be returned to the Assembly, and on matters of national importance he takes little or no interest whatever because they do not affect his electorate particularly. We have members like the member for Swan running after the Government for grants for roads

and bridges and going even to the extent of asking Ministers to take motor trips through his electorate, in order to show where it is necessary to spend loan moneys.

Mr. Jacoby: No system will get you away from it.

Mr. SCADDAN: There is a system which will get you away from it. I can give numerous instances where the localisation of politics has played a great part in the legislation which has been passed and works which have been put into operation, and not only does it bring about that localisation of politics but also a system of log rolling which is even worse. Let me instance a case—and I do not mention it in opposition to the particular work that I intend to refer to—the question of the construction of the Fremantle dock. Log rolling occurred in another place when the Bill was going through that Chamber and the Government deliberately kept back certain Bills which country members knew well that if they opposed the passing of the Bill for the dock, would probably be withheld from Parliament, and these Bills were for the construction of agricultural railways and with those tactics and that system of log rolling, these works were passed by a majority in Parliament, although I believe that there was a majority on that occasion in opposition to the construction of the dock. I am not saying anything in opposition to the work, but I am only showing what happened. Another tendency that the present system has is towards bribery and corruption, in order to return supporters of the Government of the day. I know that it is somewhat stepping on dangerous ground to mention the word "corruption" in this Chamber, but in order to prove my case I am going to mention it as often as is necessary, in spite of all Royal Commissions that may be appointed. A few votes in an electorate may affect a result to the extent that one party may obtain the whole representation in that electorate, or none at all. I cannot instance what I mean better than by referring to the last two elections in the Menzies electorate.

There a very few votes on either side would mean the Government getting either the whole of the representation, or none at all and the defeat of the Minister for Mines; and it is my opinion that the grants given to certain gold mining companies in that electorate, while they may not have been given with the direct intention of bringing about a difference in the manner in which the votes would be cast, absolutely had that result, with the effect that the member for Menzies was able to turn a few votes from one side to the other, and to secure re-election. It is the electoral system itself that brings that about, but under a proper system of proportional representation we would get away from that sort of thing. Let me explain why. Under the system of proportional representation each party would run more than one candidate. The parties would each run several candidates in each of the electorates, a number of the present electorates being grouped, and if a candidate supporting one party were to do something in the nature of bribing the electors, or something which would have the effect of bribing the electors, then the other candidates supporting the same party would at once take the opportunity of decrying the other candidate from the public platform and thus bringing about his defeat. But it would not be necessary to resort to these bribing tactics; it would only be necessary to obtain sufficient voters from that electorate to secure the requisite quota, without a member having to pander, as the Minister for Mines has done repeatedly, in order to secure his return to Parliament. But the worst feature of all is that the present system permits the gerrymandering of electoral boundaries, which after all is done for the purpose of obtaining control of Parliament, irrespective of whether or not the party's policy has the support of the majority in the country. If ever there was an instance of a deliberate attempt at gerrymandering the electorates for the purpose of obtaining a majority at the subsequent election, I say that the Bill as introduced by the Attorney General is about the best,

perhaps I should say worst, instance that I know of. After all, the present system only tends to adjust some anomalies and allow others to exist, and even the Attorney General had to admit that he did not claim that the Bill he was introducing would correct all anomalies. In my opinion while it corrects some anomalies it creates more than it corrects, and that is where we part company on this Bill. The word "gerrymander" I may say, originated from the fact that Governor Eldridge Gerry in the State of Massachusetts in 1811 was responsible for re-arranging the boundaries on somewhat similar lines to those adopted by the Attorney General. One of the electorates was something like the Collie electorate is proposed to be made, and it so much resembled the animal known as the salamander that they added "gerry" to the name and called it "gerrymander." The result of that strategy was that whilst 50,000 republicans returned 29 members, 55,000 democrats returned only 11 members. Simply on a system of gerrymandering the boundaries a majority in the country obtained only a minority of representation in Parliament, and that, of course, defeats the very principle of democracy, which is rule by the majority of the people. The Attorney General asserts that we have to give consideration in a State like Western Australia to the interests of various industries, the mining industry, the agricultural industry, the forestry, and so on. I want to know what makes an industry in the opinion of the Attorney General? Is the fact that we have huge forests, or that capital and labour are applied to these forests that make an industry? If you remove the capital and labour that are applied to the forests what would become of the forestry industry? There would be none. It is only when we have capital and labour that we have an industry, and only capital and labour should obtain representation in the house.

Mr. Butcher: Which leads to the progress and development of the industry.

Mr. SCADDAN: The industry might develop, but under a system of pro-

portional representation we would get away from all these rearrangements of boundaries. As population increased in a particular district we would increase the number of representatives for that district. It is the individual in the industry whose interests are at stake, and whose interests should be considered by Parliament. There is also this very glaring defect in our present system, namely the tendency to exclude men of merit and ability. I can instance a case that occurred in Western Australia less than 50 years ago when a man of pronounced ability was defeated by a man who had no knowledge of political economy, or practical politics either. Under proportional representation the men of ability in all parts of the State and the best men of both parties, while there continued to be two parties, would be returned to Parliament, and the result would be more beneficial to the community than the results at the present time. I know that it is urged that the system is too complicated and too hard to understand, but so far as the voters are concerned it is exactly the same system as we have in operation at the present time. For the voter it is merely a matter of placing the figure 1 against the candidate he most desires, and 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 against the others according to his fancy, and, in the event of one candidate getting more than the quota that is required for his election, there are no votes lost, because the surplus above the quota is transferred in the order of preference to the other candidate, with the result that every elected member gets his quota. In Tasmania they adopt this system and return to Parliament six members from each of five electorates. They obtain the quota by dividing the number of effective votes that are cast by one more than the number of candidates, which would be seven, and adding one to the quotient, and the candidate who obtains that number is elected because not more than six can obtain it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: In one case the Leader of the Opposition headed the poll and the Premier came second.

Mr. SCADDAN: That did happen in one electorate. Not only does this system give proper representation to the State, but it tends to do away with much of the bitterness between candidates on the hustings, and in the House. Each man knows then that he has not to pander to a few votes in order to get returned, and that he has not to term his opponent a scoundrel, but that he only requires to set up his policy and show that it is in the best interests of the country, and he will get people to vote for him who think with him or his party. In this way personal bitterness is largely removed. I want to show how the system worked out in Tasmania. After all a representative Assembly should ensure to each party in Parliament a number of members exactly in accordance with the number of votes obtained by that party in the country as a whole. I find in a return published by the Committee appointed to report on the effect of the system there the following results. In the Bass electorate according to the number of votes that were cast for either party, the Labour party were entitled to 2·17 members and obtained two members, their opponents of course obtaining four. In Darwin the number of votes cast for other than Labour candidates was 3,912, and on that proportion they were entitled to 3·51 members, and they obtained four, the nearest complete number. At Denison they were entitled to 1·70 members and obtained two; at Franklin they were entitled to 2·01 members and obtained two; and in Wilmot they were entitled to 2·46 members and obtained two. Grouping the State as a whole they obtained 19,067 votes as against their opponents 29,893. On that basis they were entitled to 11·69 members, and they obtained 12. That is the result of proportional representation as it is in operation in Tasmania. It is not my intention, nor is it necessary to describe the method of putting that system into operation, for so far as the voter is concerned, it is exactly the same as the system we have in vogue here. I have only to say with Professor Jethro

Brown that the method of counting is of no more concern to the voter than the method of manipulating a railway engine is to a passenger in the carriage. So long as he has a similar method of casting his vote and knows the effect of it, it does not concern him much about the counting. This is a system that has been found to be fair to both parties.

Mr. Jacoby: Where else is it in operation?

Mr. SCADDAN: In several parts of the Continent.

Mr. Draper: Was that result in Tasmania the necessary result?

Mr. SCADDAN: Yes; the people in the country had exactly the representation they were entitled to according to the voting.

Mr. Draper: That was the result, I know, but was it the necessary result?

Mr. SCADDAN: If the hon. member means, would it have happened in any case, I say, yes. In several places where it has been in operation it has had exactly the same result; and that being the case, there can be no fairer system than that in operation in Tasmania. A greater Nanson than the Attorney General, Professor Nanson of Melbourne, has something to say on this system. The Attorney General is somewhat related to him, and I believe he will listen with some interest to what Professor Nanson has to say on the result of the Tasmanian system—

The Tasmanian experiment in proportional representation has been wonderfully successful. It has fulfilled all the expectations of its advocates, and it has falsified all the predictions of its opponents. It was declared complicated, incomprehensible and impracticable, but it has been found by the scrutineers to be as easy as falling off the proverbial log. The numerous onlookers at the various scrutinies positively revelled in the interesting development of the scheme, and enthusiastically praised it as securing fair and equitable representation to all parties. The scheme has done justice to all parties. Each had obtained as nearly as

possible the amount of representation it was entitled to by its numerical strength. For the first time in the history of elections all parties seemed to be satisfied. The Labour party is enthusiastic in praise of the scheme. The party polled 39 per cent. of the votes and it has scored 40 per cent. of the representatives. This is more than the party has ever had before.

Although, as I said previously, they obtained a greater number of votes than they obtained representation in the House—

Some people think that this gain is due to an increase in the strength of the Labour party. But this is not so, because this party polled 15 per cent. more votes at the last Federal election than it did last week. The gain is really due to the equity of the new system. This, indeed, is admitted on all hands, and is made evident by the fact that with the old system Labour would only have got six seats, instead of twelve. The Labour party would under the block vote, have secured the six seats for Darwin, but the remaining 24 seats would have gone to the anti-Socialists.

That is proved by the fact that in the Darwin electorate there was a majority for the Labour candidates, but they did not get the whole of the representation which they would have got under the system we have here, which provides that wherever there is a majority congregated in an electorate that majority gets the whole of the representation just as in the recent Senate election.

The new system has stood a severe test, for never before in the history of Tasmania have there been so many parties and factions.

That is the main objection to the proportional system, that it permits faddists, as they are termed, to enter Parliament as against the concrete ideas held by substantial parties.

Mr. Jacoby: It permits groups.

Mr. SCADDAN: That does not work out in practice.

Yet the result of the election is



the rejection of all candidates save Labour men and anti-Socialists. Surely this is a sufficient refutation of the theory that proportional representation would fill Parliament with fools and faddists and degrade Parliamentary government. The election has left no bitterness, for everyone recognises that he has had fair play. All sections of the community approve of the new system, because it reflects public opinion with wonderful exactness. The whole election worked smoothly, and there was not a single hitch although more than 100 counts were necessary in some cases. The working of the scheme has been so smooth and successful that there is no chance of any attempt to return to the old system. Indeed, the only modification suggested is an increase in the size of the electorates, in order to give the new system fuller play.

Mr. Stenberg comments—

It will, therefore, be seen that practical experience has dispersed any grounds for anxiety as regards the practicability of the proportional representation scheme.

I did intend to refer more fully to the results of the proportional system, but I think I have put sufficient forward to enable members to grasp the matter, and to see whether it is desirable to give some opportunity for adopting a system such as this, to give proper representation to the opinions of people irrespective of where they may be for the time being. I could have grouped a number of constituencies to show what was likely to be the result basing it on the returns of our last general election, but as I thought it would have a somewhat personal application to members I have not done so. I am not urging this system for a moment, because I assume that the party of which I am the leader at the present moment would gain any advantage. Both parties would gain this advantage, that they would know that when they were in Parliament enacting laws they would have the support of the majority in the country in doing so. Unfortunately, we frequently see laws enacted which have not the support

of a majority in the country though they have the support of the majority in the House. I desire to conclude my remarks in this direction by quoting Mr. Stenberg again. I congratulate Mr. Stenberg on the report he has submitted to Parliament in this direction. He went to Tasmania for the purpose of seeing this system in operation; he was an enthusiast before he went, and he came back more enthusiastic than ever in support of it as against the system now in operation here. He says—

The subject of this report, as will readily be noticed, is a very far-reaching one, and it has, therefore, unfortunately proved impossible for me to deal with every aspect, in as exhaustive a manner, as I desired, in order to make each point perfectly clear. However, from what has been brought to light it will doubtless be admitted that there is evidence to prove that the single member electorate is not the most satisfactory constituency on the basis of which to construct a Legislature, if it is intended that such body shall be a true reflex of the popular will of the country.

I commend that report to the Minister in control of the Electoral Department. Having set up a case in some slight way for proportional representation, I ask members to give the matter some consideration. Unfortunately, these matters do not receive the attention of members, because, as I have pointed out, under the present system members are more concerned about pandering to their constituents for the time being than they are of attending to matters which may give a proper expression of opinion to the will of the people and to democracy in this Assembly, with the result that these matters are not given proper consideration. Whether they are prepared to accept a system of this kind at the present juncture or not, I would urge members at least to give a semblance of justice to the people, insofar as their representation in the next Parliament is concerned, by defeating the Bill we have now before us and introducing one on the lines of the Queensland

electoral law. If we cannot agree to go to the extent I have urged to-night, we ought in justice to each party and in justice to the people of the country to frame a Bill for the representation of people in Parliament so that no dominant party in Parliament for the time being can construct a future Parliament and so that we will leave the construction of that Parliament to the people. The Bill before the House is only here with one desire, that is, to defeat the aspirations of the people and the free expression of will by the people, and to retain on the Treasury bench those gentlemen now occupying it. The Attorney General may dispute that just as plausibly as he introduced the Bill, and say it is for the purpose of readjusting anomalies and rectifying inequalities, but I would point out that those leading public opinion in this State, the prominent Press, have condemned the Bill as one that will not permit the people to give a free expression of their opinion in Parliament. Therefore, I feel that this Parliament is not justified in carrying a measure of this description. We ought not to be concerned about the dominance of any party in Parliament except so far as it is the desire of the people of the country; and it is a shameful thing for any Government with a majority such as there is at present, a small majority, to defeat their opponents without any regard to the will of the people, as has been done on this occasion by deliberately gerrymandering some of the electorates of the State. Not only has that taken place, but the Government have deliberately refused representation to that part of the State where they know their opponents have obtained a majority of the representation, that is, the goldfields: and have given extra representation to other portions of the State where they obtain their members. The Government deliberately attempt not only to defeat their opponents, but to do an injustice to the people of the goldfields districts. I hold we are not justified in supporting a Government who would take action of that kind. I am not concerned about

my seat and I am not concerned so much at this stage about the result it will have on the party at present in Parliament, but I am concerned about the result it will have in permitting the people to give free expression of their opinion. I believe the Attorney General himself is not opposed to the referendum. I believe it is a good safety valve, yet the present electoral system and the one which the Attorney General is putting into operation nullifies the effect of the referendum.

The Attorney General: I have always advocated constituency referendum.

Mr. SCADDAN: I cannot imagine the Attorney General assuming to be a democrat and urging constituency referendum.

Mr. Bath: He did not urge constituency referendum, he urged bulk referendum.

Mr. SCADDAN: The Attorney General knows well that constituency referendum can have no effect at all.

Mr. Bath: It is not a referendum.

Mr. SCADDAN: Because each member of the House would cast his vote here in the direction that he thought would most satisfy the people upon whom he depended for his re-election, without regard to the masses. That being the case, we can justly assume that each electorate would support the action of its member with the result that you would have a referendum only doing what Parliament had already done. It would not be a referendum at all. I am pointing out the defects under our present system which permit a few electorates with a small number of electors, to control Parliament, while the great bulk of electors have not the representation they are entitled to, with the result that the people do not control the laws of the State. I again urge the Government to take the advice, not of myself, but given to them by the *West Australian*, to withdraw this measure and take the opportunity of introducing a Bill which would give satisfaction to every democrat in the community, and if they cannot go so far, to give better satisfaction than has been done by the Bill before the House, and introduce a

measure on the lines of the Queensland Act, and allow commissioners to arrange the boundaries in the method laid down in that measure. I am satisfied that there would not be the personal bickerings and the bitterness which have taken place in this Chamber, if they adopted an attitude of that kind. I trust even at this hour that the Government will withdraw from the position they have taken up, and consider the effect a Bill of this kind will have, and permit the people, who, after all, are those most affected, to give free expression to their opinions by having just and proper representation in this Assembly.

On motion by Mr. Layman debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 10.45 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Friday, 16th December, 1910.*

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 10.30 a.m., and read prayers.

### PAPERS—OUTER HARBOUR, FREMANTLE.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. H. Daglish): There was on the Notice Paper a motion in the name of the member for Fremantle. It had been agreed that this motion should be treated as merely formal, so in the absence of the member for Fremantle he himself would move it. He moved—

*That all papers, reports, etcetera, in connection with the construction of an outer harbour at Fremantle be laid on the Table.*

Mr. Bolton: Had the member for Fremantle no interest in the affairs of Fremantle?

Mr. SPEAKER: This being merely a formal motion it was within the province of any hon. member to move it for the absent member, unless the House objected.

Mr. Bolton: There was no objection; he merely called attention to the absence of the member when there was important business concerning his electorate.

Question put and passed.

### BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

1. Workers' Compensation Act Amendment.

2. Tributeters.

Transmitted to the Legislative Council.

### BILL—PERTH MUNICIPAL GAS AND ELECTRIC LIGHTING.

#### *Council's Amendments.*

Two amendments made by the Legislative Council now considered.

#### *In Committee.*

Mr. Taylor in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

No. 1—Clause 9, Strike out Subclause 1 and insert new clause (for taking the poll):

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The amendment made in another place to Clause 9 was really in the direction of providing more complete machinery for the carrying out of the purpose of the Bill. There was no change whatever in principle represented in the amendment; it was merely an improvement in the drafting. This particular Bill had not been drafted by the Parliamentary draftsman or the Crown Law authorities, but on the order of the Perth municipal council. He moved—

*That the Council's amendment be agreed to.*

Mr. ANGWIN: The excuse made by the Minister was a poor one. The Minister should have taken care in the first place to see that the provisions of the Bill were in the best form.