

sheds there would be only one handling. But what do we find to-day? It is first of all delivered from the farmer's wagon into a temporary stack, then from that temporary stack into a truck, then it is handled again from the truck at the depot into the stack at the depot. It is handled from the depot into a truck and then again out of the truck into the mill or else to the ship at the port. These handlings all cost money. Not only that but we have in each handling further damage done to the bags handled, and every time hooks are put into the bags a certain number must be destroyed and there follows a loss of wheat. If that wheat had been stored direct it would have remained in the best condition. What do we find has taken place in the past? We find that wheat has not been lifted until the wet season has set in and then it has been put into the truck wet at the sidings. The wheat has to be conveyed in wet weather and has been further damaged by rain on account of the lack of covering it has had from the temporary stack to the depot. There has been the extra cost of receiving the wet wheat. It has had to be up-ended to be dried before it could be put in the stack, and we found in some cases that the wheat was stacked while it was in a damp condition. Hon. members may not realise what one-eighth of penny per bushel may mean on a harvest of the dimensions of that handled last year. On all these handlings one-eighth of a penny does not seem very much, but when we take the aggregate on, say, a 15-million bushel, that eighth of a penny represents a sum of £7,812. If it were a farthing the amount would be £15,625; if it were a halfpenny it would be £31,250; and if it were a penny the sum would be £62,500 odd. I have the same figures here with regard to the amount which would be involved if the harvest were one of 10 million bushels. At a penny per bushel the amount would be £41,666; at a halfpenny per bushel £20,833; at a farthing per bushel £10,420; and at an eighth of a penny per bushel £5,208. In the old days before we had a Pool, the acquiring agents did not consider 2d. or 3d. per bushel a high sum. When we come to realise what these amounts mean to us we can imagine what they meant in the old days. It shows, as the member for Beverley has stated, that we want to save every farthing of cost. If we do not reduce the cost of marketing I cannot see how to reduce the further cost of production. So far as I can see, unless we adopt different methods we shall not be able to do that. We are to-day working with large implements and large teams, and those items mean so much in the aggregate to the wheat crop. With regard to the Westralian Farmers handling the wheat, it is claimed by that company that whatever profits they make go into the pockets of the wheatgrowers. Only seven per cent. can be paid by that particular company as dividends on shares. Further than that, the wheatgrowers who are not shareholders in the company gain an advantage by the company handling the wheat giving de-

bentures or bonus shares. If that be the case, all the wheatgrowers are working on better terms than could be given by other acquiring agents, who would not be working under such a system. It is therefore good for the State, and for the wheatgrowers, that the wheat should be handled by such a company if the profits which are made are returned to the farmers. There are one or two matters in the report which I would like to draw attention to, namely, demurrage and dual control. If hon. members turn up question 5549 they will find that Mr. Shillington, in the course of his evidence, stated that on one line alone the Railway Department waived an amount of £2,000 in connection with demurrage. On another occasion Mr. Shillington stated that no fewer than 1,000 trucks were held up. In answer to question 5546 he stated that on one occasion 2,000 wagons were under load with wheat. It would be much better if we could dispense with dual control and get the wheat handled at the lowest possible cost so that the growers might derive the greatest advantage. I trust the House will use its influence to see whether something cannot even now be done so that the acquiring agents shall have the full responsibility of delivering and stacking the wheat they have received in good condition at the depôts where it will remain until it is removed.

On motion by Mr. Brown debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 11.20 p.m.

## Legislative Council,

Friday, 13th December, 1918.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 3 p.m., and read prayers.

### BILLS (3)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Postponement of Debts Continuation.
  - 2, Sale of Liquor Regulation Act Continuation.
  - 3, Licensing Act Amendment Continuance.
- Passed.*

### BILL—ROADS ACT CONTINUATION.

#### Third Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.4]: I move—

That the Bill be now read a third time.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [3.5]: Unfortunately I was not here when the second reading was carried, and so I wish to make a few remarks on the third reading. I

have nothing but congratulations for the Government on the admirable condition of the road between Midland Junction and Fremantle, but I should like to suggest that some steps be taken for the prevention of lorries and vehicles working with the narrow tyres that I see on the roads. There is nothing more destructive to a road than the use of narrow tyres under heavy weights. I have watched lorries going about on our roads, and I am quite certain that their tyres are not more than two inches wide. Although I expect there are regulations dealing with the width of tyres, yet in my opinion those narrow tyres should be done away with altogether and the width of tyres fixed at not less than three inches or four inches. To maintain the excellent condition of the road between Midland Junction and Fremantle, the Government should take steps to prohibit the use of narrow tyres. I support the third reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.7]: I think the hon. member will find that due provision for the width of tyres is made in the Traffic Bill, which is to be introduced early next session.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and *passed*.

#### BILL—STATE CHILDREN ACT AMENDMENT.

Report of Committee adopted.

#### BILL—EARLY CLOSING ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading—Amendment, six months.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [3.10] in moving the second reading said: The most important clause in the Bill is Clause 6. It is because of the necessity for that clause that the Bill has been introduced at this stage. It is proposed to introduce next session a comprehensive amending and consolidating Bill to cover both the Early Closing Act and the Shops and Factories Act. When the necessity arose for introducing this small Bill to deal with the one point, it was thought the opportunity might be availed of to correct certain defects in the existing legislation. The Bill makes certain amendments in the definitions and I think it will be agreed that those amendments are necessary. The first provision made is to excise the words "for the purposes of trade" from the definition of "closed." This is desirable in order to overcome the difficulty of proving that a shop is open for trading purposes when it is, as a matter of fact, open to the general public. Then a definition is provided of "half-year." There is necessity for this in view of Section 14 of the Act, which permits of the working of overtime on 12 day in a half-year. It has been claimed by some that any period of six months constitutes a half-year, while on the other hand it is contended that that was not the intention of the Act, that a half-year should mean one particular period, that the year should be divided into

two halves. Public holidays are also defined. At present there is no legislative authority to proclaim a public holiday. Provision is made for this in every other State in the Commonwealth. In an award of the Arbitration Court it is provided that shop assistants shall be granted, and paid for, all public holidays. At the present time the term "week" is not defined. The weekly working hours are limited by the Act and also by an award of the Arbitration Court, and the question is frequently raised whether seven days, or six working days, constitute a week. It is desirable that the term should be definitely defined. There is also an amended definition of "shop assistant." This is desirable owing to the fact that in some shops, such as restaurants, hotels, and the like, many of the assistants are not shop assistants within the meaning of the definition, and consequently are not entitled to privileges enjoyed by other employees in that shop. Clause 4 inserts a new section in the Act, giving power to the Governor to proclaim a public holiday and requiring all shops, except small and exempted shops, to close on public holidays. This is desirable by reason of the fact that shops which are dependent on shop assistants to keep open are compelled to close on public holidays, while under existing conditions many shops which can be temporarily run by the occupier and his family remain open on those days for the purpose of trade. This amendment is strongly urged by both the Master Grocers' Association and the Shop Assistants' Union. Clause 6, dealing with Section 13a of the Act, provides that the closing time shall be in accordance with the industrial award. It is for the purpose of introducing this new section that the Bill is brought before Parliament this session. It was designed to meet the position which has arisen in consequence of the disagreement between the Master Butchers' Association and the Butchers' union of workers, and those employers known as the City or Barrack-street butchers. It is not the purpose of the Bill to settle this dispute between these three conflicting parties, but rather to make such provision that they could go to the Arbitration Court and have their dispute settled by that tribunal. The facts of the case, which I think it is necessary to give to hon. members, are that some time ago the Coastal Master Butchers' Union of Employers and the Amalgamated Butchers' Union of Workers agreed that the employees engaged in the trade should cease work at five p.m. on five days in each week, and at one p.m. on Saturdays. It was also agreed that work should commence at six a.m. on five days in each week, and at five a.m. on Saturdays. At the request of the parties the Government published a proclamation in the "Government Gazette" fixing the opening time for butchers' shops at five a.m. on Saturdays, six o'clock being the hour previously fixed. Up to that time the shops were not allowed to open before six o'clock. A mutual arrangement was arrived at between the parties, and the Government, in response to their re-

quest, made the hour of opening on Saturdays five o'clock. The City Master Butchers, numbering about eight—a small number in relation to the total number of employers, but at the same time representing the larger butchers, and employing probably more hands than the whole of the other butchers put together—some of whom were members of the union and parties to the agreement, but some of whom I believe were not, took exception to the agreement, and those who were members of the employers' union and who were parties to the agreement retired from the union, and announced their intention of departing from the agreement. An application was then made to the Arbitration Court for the agreement to be made a common rule. This application was opposed by the city firms, and finally the court declined to grant it. The city firms then requested their employees to work until six p.m. on four days in each week, until nine p.m. on Fridays, and until one p.m. on Saturdays, these being the hours fixed by the Early Closing Act as the closing times for butchers' shops. The men refused to do this, and contended that they were bound by the terms of the agreement entered into by their union, and by the employers' union, to which, at the time it was entered into, the majority of the city butchers belonged. They therefore refused to work after five p.m. on any day. The Master Butchers' Union and the Employees' Union combined on the one side took one view, and the City Butchers took the contrary view, and strained relations have existed ever since between these two sides. I do not think there is the slightest doubt that there is great danger of industrial trouble arising unless some method of overcoming the difficulty is discovered. The union of employers and the union of employees requested the Government to amend the Early Closing Act by making it compulsory for butchers' shops to close at the hours fixed by the agreement at the time of the cessation of work by the employees. They wished the Government to amend this Act so as to put these hours in the Early Closing Act. This we do not propose to do. The adoption of the main clause of the Bill will permit the parties to approach the Arbitration Court on the question, and will empower the court to make an award which would fix the closing times for butchers' shops. Provision is also made that a shop shall not be deemed to be closed if it is not locked. The adoption of this new section would have the effect desired by the master butchers of preventing the sale and delivery of meat on Sundays, which it is claimed is going on in the case of certain firms, to the disadvantage of those who are not so favourably situated, in regard to facilities for cool storage, as they are. Clause 7 is the substitution of a new section for Section 14 of the Act. The reason for this is to permit the employment of shop assistants overtime during certain periods of each half year, and on one Saturday afternoon in each half year, for the purpose of facilitating the taking of stock. This has been asked for by several of the leading firms in the City, who find that they have

great difficulty in carrying out their stock-taking because of the restrictions imposed by the present Act. Under the Act no shop assistant is permitted to work overtime under any circumstances on any day on which a shop closes at one p.m. This amendment has been asked for by the employers, and the Shop Assistants' Union are agreeable to the proposal, provided that notice is given to the department of the employers' intention to employ their assistants on such afternoons. The clause, therefore, represents a mutual agreement between the two parties. It is considered desirable that this notice should be given, as past experience has shown that overtime is not recorded in the time book after it has been worked. The adoption of the proposal would enable the department to keep a reliable record of the overtime worked, and would ensure its limitation in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Suppose the necessity arises to employ someone suddenly, and it is impossible to get hold of the inspector?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think there would be any difficulty in applying this provision. So far as I know no difficulty is contemplated in the matter. Clause 8 amends Section 21 of the Act, and is purely a machinery clause. Clause 9 regarding the keeping of records, will ensure the keeping in one book of the records required to be kept under both this Act and any industrial award or agreement, and will do away with the duplication of records which now occurs in many instances. One portion of Clause 10 is printed in italics. The first portion of it empowers the Governor to make regulations defining substantial partitions. This is most necessary. The absence of such a definition has given rise in the past to great trouble in the administration of the Act. It is necessary for the department to secure the proper partitioning of various classes of business which are frequently conducted on the same premises. One portion of the business has to be closed at a certain hour, while another portion of it is permitted to remain open until a later hour and without some satisfactory partitioning the principle of the Act cannot be carried out. This will also remove one of the chief causes of complaint by the Retail Grocers' Association, that is, the employers' association, relative to the illegal trading by small mixed shops. They contend that a great deal of illicit trading is carried on by shops, which are permitted to keep open because they are small shops. They are not supposed to trade in these things, but they do trade in them. If a substantial partition was erected to the approval of the department they would still be able to trade legitimately, and this illegitimate trading would be prevented.

Hon. J. Duffell: The inspector would be responsible for a good deal of that, would he not?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: But we have no power at present to define what a substantial partition is.

Hon. J. Duffell: They have power to prosecute in cases where illicit trading is done.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Quite so, they can prosecute in cases of illicit trading, but if the facilities are there the department does not know that illicit trading is going on, and it may be carried on without the knowledge of the department. The portion of the clause in italics which will not come before this House until it is approved of by another place empowers the making of regulations providing for the registration of shops. This will be of considerable assistance in enabling the department to make a proper classification of shops, and will provide for a great deal of valuable and reliable data for statistical purposes, a most important consideration from the point of view of the department being that it will produce some revenue. I think it is highly justifiable that some revenue should be raised. At present the Act is administered at the cost of the State, and nothing comes in from it. Inspectors have to be employed, and I think it is only reasonable that a small registration fee should be charged in order to cover the cost of administering the Act. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) [3.25]: As one who represents the metropolitan-suburban area, I should say the proper method to deal with this is to reject the Bill on the second reading.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Partly as a protest against the conduct of business, and partly in fairness to the employees and employers and the public, who are sometimes overlooked in connection with this matter, I think we should do this. We have had an exhausting week. To anyone who has had anything to do apart from his public business it has been most trying. We have pledged ourselves to engage during the whole of next week in Bills of prime importance, of which, in my opinion, there are six, and involving a great deal of detailed Committee work. When I look at the Fruit Cases Bill—

The Colonial Secretary: I told you it was not being gone on with.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Although it is not for me to make suggestions to the leader of the House, I do think the Fruit Cases Bill ought to be discharged from the Notice Paper. I have so little confidence in the way things are conducted—this is no reflection on the leader of the House—that I do not know what circumstances or exigencies might arise when this Bill might go through, and the people I represent be left lamenting. Our Standing Orders are suspended, and a Bill can be dealt with in all its stages at one sitting. I was absent from the Chamber for five or ten minutes yesterday, and something I objected to very much went on. The Bill to which I have referred is of great importance, and if we reach the Committee stage with it I do hope that members will dispose of it in a quarter of an hour, and let us get on with the particular business of the House. In the case of this Early Closing Act Amendment Bill, in order to give it proper consideration, it would be necessary for us to get into close touch with

the people concerned, and to attempt ourselves to act as representatives of the public, who are also concerned. That is the attitude I shall take. I sincerely trust hon. members will support me, and throw out the second reading, thus helping the Government.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [3.31]: I have much pleasure in supporting the last speaker's suggestion. His proposal is equivalent to an amendment that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. I feel sure the leader of the House would view such an amendment not without satisfaction, because of some other measures of greater importance that are coming forward. He should hail such an amendment with pleasure because in introducing the Bill he stated that the Government contemplated the introduction of a consolidated measure at an early date. The rejection of this Bill would afford the Government an opportunity of effecting that admirable purpose, and would save our statute-book from being littered with amendment Acts. Moreover, those interested in the various industries affected by early closing laws will know exactly where they are. At present with the multiplicity of amendment Acts, it is difficult for the ordinary layman to know exactly what obligations he is under. I move an amendment—

That the word "now" be struck out, and "this day six months" added to the motion.

It is desirable, in any case that this particular measure should receive further consideration than the House can give it at this stage of the session. The last speaker has referred to the exhaustion from which he, in common with other members, suffers. In view of the number of important measures which await our consideration and decision, we might well let this Bill lie till the early days of next session, when hon. members will be better fitted to deal with it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [3.34]: I have much pleasure in seconding Mr. Nicholson's amendment. It is unfair to the House and to the country and to the people that a measure of this kind should be sprung upon us at so late an hour of the session. We were here for days and weeks in the earlier part of the session, when we might have dealt fully with such a matter as this. But now we are trying to deal with important Bills affecting the general welfare of the country, and we are at our wit's end to deal with them. On top of that, we get a measure such as this, which I cannot criticise in detail, not having seen it, but which, I understand, prescribes when a man shall get shaved and when he shall come back from getting shaved, and when he shall get his meals. Amendments of our early closing laws may be necessary. I claim to have some knowledge of the subject, because I served an apprenticeship in a business where the hours were from 7 in the morning till 9 at night, except on Saturday night, when the closing hour was 10; and no half-holidays. Let us deal with more important measures now.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [3.36]: I shall oppose the amendment, and support the second reading of the Bill, although I admit there is a great deal of force in the statements of various hon. members. If we are to be consistent, however, we must say that we are going to take the same course as is proposed in connection with this Bill, with every other Bill on the Notice Paper; that is to say, all the Bills not yet considered, including many measures much more important than this one. To me it seems unfair to single out this small Bill for an adverse amendment such as has been proposed, when we have so many more important Bills coming forward. In regard to many of these matters, Nemesis seems to be overtaking the Colonial Secretary. I well remember bringing before the House a few years ago Bills at a much earlier stage of the session than this, in respect of which the present Colonial Secretary moved the six-months amendment on the ground that there was not sufficient time to debate them. I am not so much concerned about this particular measure, but I am certainly concerned about other Bills. Let me point out that there is not a single Act under which the Chief Inspector of Factories operates that he can do anything with at all; not a solitary one. Every one of those Acts has been riddled through and through by judgments of the Full Court. It was the intention of the Labour Government, before the war broke out, to introduce this Bill; but the outbreak of hostilities lead to our dropping all party Bills. I have not had time to look into this measure sufficiently to know the purport of all the clauses, and I certainly should have liked to refer the Bill to those in our province who are interested in it. I know, however, that many of the clauses are only machinery clauses; and I believe the main clause is, as the Colonial Secretary has said, No. 6, fixing the hours in the meat industry. Before the Labour Government went out of office, I spent three or four days with the employers and the employees trying to fix up the question of hours. Unfortunately I could not succeed. I do not think there is anything really drastic in any clause of the Bill, and I earnestly hope the House will pass the measure.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN (West) [3.39]: I support Mr. Nicholson's amendment, for the reason already stated, but we shall not have time to discuss this measure in the manner it deserves. A great principle is involved, and I am perfectly certain that members will not have an opportunity this session to discuss that principle adequately. The Bill proposes to transfer the question of closing hours from Parliament to the Arbitration Court. That matter alone will take more time to debate than we have at our disposal for the entire Bill. Accordingly, I support the amendment.

Hon. J. MILLS (Central) [3.40]: All the arguments used by Mr. Dodd are in favour of the second reading being fixed for this day six months. In the interests of the employees

I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON (North-East) [3.41]: I shall oppose Mr. Nicholson's amendment. In spite of what has been urged, this Bill should be considered. It is very remarkable if we cannot find time to discuss a measure of particular importance to those concerned. Rightly or wrongly the State has taken upon itself the regulating of trade to a considerable extent. What amounts to almost a deadlock has been reached by those concerned in the meat industry. I remember introducing to the Colonial Secretary a deputation of employees who stated their reasons for regarding this amendment as essential; and I have been given to understand, on what I consider reliable authority, that the employers also desire this amendment. Both parties desire to have the trading concerns definitely settled by law, according to the machinery provided by this Bill. There has been trouble in the meat industry in the past, and trouble in that particular industry causes no end of inconvenience to the public, resulting in a general outcry. If we refuse to accept our responsibility in this matter, the onus of the blame for any industrial trouble will be placed on us. The parties interested have endeavoured, with such machinery as the law provides, to settle the question; but they find this impossible because certain employers have relieved themselves from liability under an agreement made between the employers and the employees, by resigning from the employers' association which made the agreement. It will be understood that the great majority are prepared to abide loyally and straightforwardly by the agreement arrived at; but their position is made impossible by a few who just overruled the agreement by taking advantage of the legal point to which I have alluded. Those who now say that they are not prepared to debate this measure for the proper regulation of the question by law, are playing into the hands of those who are likely to cause a considerable amount of industrial trouble. I think I know something of the spirit of the men engaged in the industry. They will say to Parliament, and say rightly, "We ask you to settle this matter; but since you will not settle it by what is advocated nowadays, namely proper, legal means, we will take a hand ourselves." This is the kind of thing that causes strikes, and also what we have such strong objection to, namely direct action. I am making no threat, because I have no authority to speak for those people, and do not know what action they will take in the event of the rejection of this Bill. However, if they do say, "If the Parliament of this country is not going to settle this question, we will find a way of putting on pressure for ourselves," it will not be a matter for wonder. The butchers union have done the best they could. They entered into an agreement with the master butchers and for a while that agreement was observed. Then as I have explained certain of the employers went bush-ranging and though the greater number of the master butchers are prepared to abide by the

agreement others will not. It is easily seen that those who are prepared to abide by the agreement are at a considerable disadvantage as compared with those who have managed to evade the terms of the agreement by availing themselves of a technicality in the law. All they want is that there shall be a uniform method of getting over the difficulty and to provide that shops shall close at a uniform hour. Many here can understand the method in which this business is carried on, and what I ask is whether it is not better to have a uniform system which is as fair for one as it is for another as to have the position as we find it at the present time, a position which is liable to cause trouble at any moment. I fail to see how anyone can advocate that things should remain in their present condition when we have an opportunity of providing machinery whereby that difficulty can be settled.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Is there only one clause in the Bill? I have not seen it yet.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I am not here to speak for rushing this business through. We have plenty of time to allow hon. members to read the Bill through. At the same time it is a remarkable thing that those who represent the district particularly affected by the Bill, instead of allowing us time to go into the matter and consult those concerned, are anxious to throw out the Bill. They may find then that they have done something which will not meet with the approval of their constituents. It is a strange attitude to adopt on the part of those members. How do we know that they are not acting for the employers? Mr. Sanderson is generally so careful, and he always endeavours to make sure of his ground. On awakening to-morrow he may find that the master butchers are annoyed at his action, and then he will remember that instead of acting in his usual calm and deliberate manner, he has done something which is detrimental to the interests of many of his constituents. It would have been better if he had taken the time to acquaint himself with the position in regard to the butchering trade and those directly concerned instead of rushing in on the presumption that this measure was not wanted. Are we not to be allowed to consider the question now? It is no wonder that this Chamber has earned the unenviable reputation which it has got in the past if this is the way we are going to do business. If we have any doubt as to whether this measure is justified, it will be as well to take a day off and gather some information. I regard the amendment as magnificent bluff. Those who do object to it, for some reason not stated, conceived the excellent idea of blaming the Government for not bringing the Bill in earlier. It has not been shown that we have not sufficient time to deal, at any rate, with a particular clause referring to the matter that I have particularly discussed and which was explained also by the Colonial Secretary.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is Clause 6.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: Yes, that is the clause that I am particularly interested in, and I want some hon. member to show either that the employees in the butchering business or the

employers object to it. As a matter of fact this is their very solution of the difficulty.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Whose?

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The master butchers and the employees. This is something that they have agreed upon.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Nothing of the kind.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I would like more evidence than that which has been submitted by Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Holmes before I would take the responsibility of attempting to shelve the measure. Have they taken the opportunity of consulting those concerned with regard to the measure?

Hon. J. Nicholson: I have not had an opportunity.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: And the hon. member will not allow anyone else to have the opportunity. This is a matter with which hon. members could have acquainted themselves in a very short space of time. Mr. Holmes knows considerably more about it than he cared to tell the House when he seconded the amendment. This is an old dispute and the parties to it have not been able to settle it for the simple reason that the law does not provide the necessary machinery. Therefore, those parties asked the Government, and the Government acceded to their request, that a measure should be introduced to enable them to arrive at an understanding. With regard to those who have broken away and who took advantage of a legal technicality to get out of the agreement which they entered into with their eyes open, those people I have no doubt thought that by breaking away they would secure an advantage over those who abided by the agreement. Will this Chamber protect those people? In matters of this description we have to take a general view of the position. We are not here to protect a few blackleggers. If we are going to take up that attitude, which is a pretty dangerous one in these times, I should say a great majority of those concerned will be entitled to a little more consideration than that proposed by the mover and the seconder of the amendment, that the Bill be read this day six months. There is urgency for the Bill because those concerned have endeavoured by every means in their power to overcome the difficulty which has arisen in the butchering industry, and having failed, they asked the Government to assist them. When two parties fail to agree and both ask that machinery should be provided to enable them to arrive at a settlement, it is our duty to assist them, otherwise the responsibility will be ours if it is found impossible to amicably arrange the matter. The Bill, moreover, will have the effect of making it possible for an agreement to be arrived at by those parties. That is something which the whole community desires. The Bill will certainly not be a hardship upon either party, and since they have asked for it, I say that although we may be particularly busy, which is not the fault of the master butchers or the employees, we should give them what they ask for. They may say to us, "We were under the impression that the members of Parliament were there to attend to the enacting of laws

that we require. This measure we consider is urgently required, and we want to know what we are paying you for if you do not carry on the work of the country, which work you are sent to Parliament to do." Those people are entitled to a little more consideration than a five minutes discussion and firing the Bill into the waste paper basket. I wonder how Mr. Sanderson and Mr. Nicholson will be able to face their constituents after dealing in this way with the measure. Here is a chance for those members, instead of getting out of their responsibility by heaving the Bill off the Notice Paper, to square their shoulders and get to work. They can make themselves acquainted with the provisions of the Bill in no time, and give an intelligent decision, instead of getting out of their responsibilities by simply saying "We have not the time." The Bill having been introduced, at least it should demand the scrutiny of those who wish to vote against the second reading. Is it not better for those hon. members to take the usual course of acquainting themselves with the Bill and also acquainting themselves with the desire of those whom it will particularly affect?

Hon. J. Nicholson: There is no time to do that.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: There will be more time than that which will be allowed to the hon. member himself if he persists in this course. I do not think we are so short of time as all that. The Colonial Secretary was right when he said we have all the time there is. There is still time to consider a measure of this description. I certainly oppose the amendment for the additional reason that the old stereotyped argument which has been used for the past 20 years, that we have not the time, is not sound. This is an urgent matter and it is one that members can become familiar with in a brief space of time. It is not a question of going into the whole of the Early Closing Act but it is merely a matter of considering a short measure to deal with a specific purpose. I object to the attempt which is being made to discard the Bill altogether without considering the merits of the matter.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South) [3.57]: I hope the amendment will not be carried. I agree with what Mr. Dodd said when he spoke of the chickens coming home to roost in connection with the action of the present leader of the House in 1913 when he moved a similar motion in connection with a consolidating measure which was then introduced. On this occasion I am going to try to get between the chickens and the roost so far as the leader of the House is concerned. Mr. Sanderson, who prompted the amendment, and the hon. member who moved it, complained about there not being sufficient time. They are largely responsible for the fact that there is not sufficient time. I have only been here a part of the session and I believe before I returned they had monopolised almost the whole of the session, while since my return they have been doing nothing but talking the whole time. I cannot deal with any voice of authority in connection with the industrial aspect of this

matter inasmuch as I was away from the State for about 19 months, but I would like to say that I have not altered my opinion industrially, that I think the workers of the State should always get a fair deal.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I am not objecting to that.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Let us analyse the position. It is 10 or 12 years since the Shop and Factory Act was passed. In 1913 a Consolidating measure was introduced and rejected. Mr. Dodd has pointed out that on the eve of the outbreak of war another consolidating measure was ready to be brought down, but that it was decided not to bring it down, and further decided that no measures of a controversial nature should be introduced during the period of the war. And, in consequence, throughout that period not one measure ameliorating the industrial conditions has been passed. For four years the workers have waited, and apparently employers and employees have met the Colonial Secretary at different deputations, and the Colonial Secretary has pointed out that there was an absolute need for a consolidating measure. But he said the views put forward were so urgent that he thought Parliament would be justified in passing this session a small amending Bill until we could get the consolidating measure. I have not read the Bill, but I am satisfied to vote for it on the assumption that it has the approbation of both sides. I am convinced that the Government will not give the workers anything that they do not deserve. The Bill is necessary, and should be considered on its merits.

Hon. J. Duffell: It is most debatable.

Hon. J. CORNELL: You have discussed equally debatable Bills. I am coming to think that Parliament in this State is neither a useful nor an ornamental institution. Why cannot we discuss the Bill? Probably it is that the butchers of the country have graduated from buccaners to bushrangers and, no longer satisfied with pirating on the high seas, have taken to it on the land. It would seem that Mr. Holmes knows this measure is loaded, and is afraid it might go off in the direction of the buccaners.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: I went out of the butchering business 15 years ago because the labour conditions were impossible.

Hon. J. CORNELL: It does not follow that the hon. member's sympathies are not with the buccaners still. It may be said that I have gone out of the Labour party, but my sympathies are still with them.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Are they both buccanering organisations?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I hope not. The Bill is not controversial as between the employers and the employees. Apparently it is only their respective representatives in this House that consider it controversial. The Colonial Secretary can rely on my vote.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [4.5]: I am going to comply with the suggestion of the hon. member who has just sat down. I am going to discuss the Bill, for I will not have an opportunity of discussing it

in Committee, no matter whether the amendment be passed or rejected. The two gentlemen who have spoken in defence of the Bill have spoken to only Clause 6. There are eleven clauses in the Bill, but they have elected to defend only one of the eleven. I do not know who the Barrack-street butchers are. I presume they buy their stock from the St. George's-terrace farmers. It appears the Bill is aimed at bringing them back to the fold which they have left. The two gentlemen who defended the Bill have recognised only two parties to be considered, namely, the master butchers and the employees. After all, there is a third party to which we owe allegiance, namely the general public. I want to see that the general public are protected, not only in Clause 6, but in other parts of the Bill under which I do not think that consideration is given to the general public which should be given to them. It is because of this, and because I will not have an opportunity of putting my views forward in Committee, that I intend to support the amendment moved by Mr. Nicholson. I will do so, knowing full well the risks I run, risks which have been so eloquently pointed out by Mr. Millington. We in this House have to take individual responsibility, and responsibility for the House as a whole. The waving of that responsibility in my face, I am afraid, will only have the effect of making me the more determined to take it.

Hon. H. Millington: I asked you to take it.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: I understood the hon. member to deprecate the taking of that responsibility, to urge us to refrain from taking this rash step which may immolate us under the knives of the infuriated butchering community. I am prepared to sacrifice Clause 6 because it is found in bad company, that bad company being Clause 3. The convenience of the public will not be served by the new definition of "shop assistants," which will render it practically impossible for the public, not going home at meal time, to get a meal in any hotel or restaurant in the City. The convenience of the public is, as a rule, the last thing considered. I do not think that is right. I am going to risk sticking up for the convenience of the general public on this occasion, and according to the reasoning which I follow, that means that my vote will go with the amendment moved by Mr. Nicholson.

Hon. J. Cornell: It would do the Australian public good if we had a little rationing.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: Well, I might be persuaded to give my vote for that, if the hon. member will take the necessary steps. In regard to the protest against the late hour at which the Bill has been introduced, and the complaint that the lack of time is largely the fault of Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Sanderson, if I remember aright Mr. Sanderson has explained at considerable length on various occasions that he has no desire whatever to waste time. Perhaps if he cut those explanations out it might shorten the debates a good deal. In order that I may not render the same charge practicable against me, I shall content myself by saying that I will oppose

the Bill because I think it is not in the interests of the general public, because apparently it has been introduced chiefly to resolve this dispute between the master butchers and their employees and the Barrack-street butchers, and because, since it is promised that a consolidating Bill will be introduced at an early date, there is not much danger to those people who, after all, have to be considered after the general public, if they are forced to wait until that Bill comes down.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East—on amendment) [4.12]: No hon. member realises more fully than do I the difficulty of assimilating and dealing with the large number of Bills now before the House. But I had expected that after I moved the second reading and explained the reasons for the Bill, some hon. member would move the adjournment, so that, during the week end, members might make themselves familiar with the proposals. Then, if after that consideration, they said they were not prepared to deal with the Bill this session, there might have been some reason in it; but it is rather drastic to move, without any consideration at all, that the Bill be read this day six months. In regard to the butchers' dispute, I do not want it to be understood that all the parties to the dispute are in favour of the provisions made in the Bill for the settlement of that dispute. The facts in regard to that dispute I have already enumerated. A deputation from the employees waited upon me and put their side of the case. What they wanted was legislation to compel the shops to close at the hour stated in the award. The master butchers then waited upon me and put their case. It was identical with that of the assistants. In the meantime I was informed that there was another section with an entirely different view, and so I suspended the taking of action until that section also had waited upon me. What they wanted was, practically, that things should be left as they are. I came to the conclusion that it was not a matter for me or for the Government to determine, and that it would be improper to introduce a Bill asking Parliament to determine the question, because I thought a case of that kind could only be properly settled by the Arbitration Court. Consequently, the clause was put in this form. Whether it is satisfactory to one or all the parties to the dispute I neither know nor care. The only provision was that they should be able to go to the Arbitration Court. I do not think Clause 3 would have the effect that Mr. Kingsmill suggests, but at any rate it is Clause 6 that is regarded as being of urgency. For the others, there is very little harm in them, and most of them are necessary. I hope members will consider the Bill.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (North-East) [4.14]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

The PRESIDENT: There being no second order, the motion lapses.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [4.15]: I have no desire to oppose the ad-



jourment, but I think it would save time if I offered a few remarks at this stage. I find myself on the horns of a dilemma, and throw myself on the sympathy of both sides of the House. I have always been opposed to a certain extent to the Early Closing Act as it stands, but I am always in favour of industrial peace, and if there is anything I can do at any time to further industrial peace I shall always be glad to do it. I find the discussion has apparently turned this afternoon upon different butchers. I do not know anything about the dispute in question, but I look at the Bill and find that the title of it is "An Act to amend the Early Closing Act." Does this apply to all parties, or is it intended only to apply to butchers?

The PRESIDENT: Will the hon. member direct his attention to the question before the House, which is that the Bill be read this day six months? When this question is discussed the Bill itself can come before the House.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I am trying to show—

The PRESIDENT: But in a roundabout way.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I will let the matter stand.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (North-East) [4.17]: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and negatived.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It seems to me that the arguments used by both the mover and the seconder of this amendment can be used in connection with every Bill that is now on the Notice Paper remaining to be dealt with.

Hon. A. Sanderson: Some of them.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It was the practice of some hon. members to use that argument so far back as two months ago. If we are going to say that there is not sufficient time to deal with the Bill now before us, the people of this country will ask the Chamber to go out of existence altogether. We have been sitting here for some time this session for the purpose of dealing with legislation. In the early part of the session we had quite an extensive holiday. The House adjourned on several occasions because there was no business to do. Now that we have the business we find hon. members anxious to get away again, and have a further extended holiday.

Hon. R. J. Lynn: This House is not anxious.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Members of this House have said it is their intention to get away as early as possible, and that there is no time to deal with this Bill.

Hon. J. F. Allen: That is a Government statement.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: The statement of the hon. member moving this amendment was that there was no time to deal with legislation of this nature. If that is so, what creates the shortness of time? Members themselves have done so. The leader of the House is entirely in the hands of hon. members, and I am therefore right in saying that the majority of members are desirous of shirking the responsibility of the work of this country.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I disclaim that.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: It has already been stated.

Hon. H. J. Saunders: It could have been brought in here before.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Other Bills could have been brought in before, and we have seen hon. members spread themselves on the various Bills, and now we find they are pointing out that there is not sufficient time to deal with what is known to be necessary legislation.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: We were weeks waiting for work.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, and now that we have it we want to sabotage the Bills that are brought forward, and adopt the I.W.W. policy of going slow. The Colonial Secretary has pointed out that this legislation is for the purpose of compelling the shops to close in accordance with the Arbitration Court award. It is for the purpose of doing something in the direction of enforcing the awards of the industrial tribunal, which is there to settle industrial disputes. Now we have the Chamber desirous of throwing this proposal into the waste paper basket. It is not fair to the people concerned in these matters covered by this Bill. It is well for members to wake up to the responsibilities with which they are faced, and with which the State is faced and will shortly be faced in accordance with our industrial conditions. Mr. Cornell pointed out that this was the first Bill in connection with industrial matters, similar to those referred to in this Bill, to be introduced in the Chamber for the last four years.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: For the last five years.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: When it is brought along hon. members desire to shirk their responsibilities and not to pass this Bill. I want hon. members to consider the Bill. I should like to see the amendment defeated, and if some members are desirous of getting the adjournment of the debate on the second reading for the purpose of further considering it, it is quite an easy matter to obtain. I am going to vote against the amendment moved by Mr. Nicholson. It would have been just as logical for him to move a similar amendment in connection with every Bill that has come before this Chamber. If there is no time to deal with this Bill there is not time to deal with other Bills on the Notice Paper.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [4.23]: I do not think we are desirous of shirking our responsibilities. We have to face the true position. However desirous we may be of passing the Bill, it must go to another place, and if there is any responsibility on the shoulders of anyone it is not on the shoulders of hon. members here; it is entirely on the shoulders of the Government of the day. Months ago I read of the dispute and of the deputations which waited upon the Minister, when he said that legislation of this kind was necessary. If it is of such vital importance, as has been pointed out, it should have been before us months ago.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: What about the State Children Act Amendment Bill?

Hon. J. EWING: Other legislation before us is legislation which, to a great extent, has been considered in another place, and is here for us to pass when practically the session is over. Mr. Cunningham talks about the desire to shirk responsibility. No member desires to do that. These responsibilities are entirely on the shoulders of the Government. I do not think the Government are very anxious to pass this measure, or they would have brought it down at an earlier date in the session. I am prepared to vote for the amendment in order to economise time. There is no hope of the Bill passing this House and going to another place, and becoming law this session. Hon. members are fully acquainted with that position. We are, therefore, going to save time by supporting the amendment. I am perfectly prepared to take that responsibility.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (West) [4.25]: The remarks of Mr. Cunningham are quite correct. I have much pleasure in endorsing them. I am not going to take any fence before I get to it. If the Government of the day say they propose closing this session next week that is no reason, in my opinion, why this House should not give due consideration to every measure that we have now on the Notice Paper. When we arrive at the time, if it be next week or the week after, when the Government say they have no wish to go any further, then so far as this House is concerned we can go as far as we possibly can. Every session we hear the same thing. Another place will take weeks and weeks to discuss the Estimates, and will go on until close on to the end of the session and then Bills are sent down here and we rush them through. Others are dropped as they have been dropped in years gone by. To say that we have not time to deal with this measure at this late hour is something which might be said in connection with almost every other measure on the Notice Paper. If we consider the Bill, and it is discussed from now on to the end of the session, and we have no further time to discuss any other measure and the Government then decide to go into recess, we will have completed our session so far as this House is concerned on the measure which is being discussed before the House, and no other measure. It is a matter of indifference to us in this House. We are a House of review, and so long as we review these measures, and give them that consideration to which they are entitled, it does not matter to us how long the session lasts. We have had sessions lasting from eight to ten months. We have done nothing this year at all. It has been the most barren session I have ever known. If, after due consideration is given to this particular measure, it is desired to close the session, then we shall have done our duty and worked up to the last day, and given due consideration to the measures in turn as they are presented to us.

Hon. J. DUFFELL (Metropolitan-Suburban) [4.28]: I intend to vote against the amendment, for the reasons already given by Mr. Lynn. I do not wish to infer that the

leader of the House has brought this Bill forward at the eleventh hour believing that he would take the responsibility off the shoulders of the Government and cast it upon the shoulders of hon. members here. It has been stated by the Colonial Secretary that the Government are desirous of closing the session at the end of next week, and clearing off the Notice Paper. If that is so there is something radically wrong somewhere, with hon. members or the Government. If the leader of the House thinks he is going to introduce measures of such a contentious nature as this and that we are going to cast it off the Notice Paper to enable the Government to end their responsibilities and get into recess, I for one am determined that he shall do nothing of the kind. If needs be, I am prepared to do all I can to assist the Government. This measure ought to be considered, whether we get into recess or not. I hope we will not finish this session by the end of next week, but sit after Christmas, if that course is necessary for the consideration of important legislation. Let us sit until this and other important measures have been adequately debated. I am satisfied that the measure now before us, and also other Bills, will not pass through this House and another Chamber by the end of next week.

Hon. J. Ewing: In that case why waste time?

Hon. J. DUFFELL: If the leader of the House has not brought forward this Bill merely for the purpose of evading responsibility by casting it on the shoulders of members of this Chamber, he can have no reason to believe that the session will close on Friday next. The closing of the session on Friday next has not been demanded by the Legislative Council. We have agreed to the suspension of Standing Order 63 in order to permit of new business being taken after 10 o'clock at night, and we have also agreed to meet at 3 o'clock on Mondays and Fridays, this ostensibly for the purpose of enabling the Government to prorogue next week. But the bringing forward of so contentious a measure at this late stage of the session, assuming the session is intended to close next week, almost amounts to an insult to hon. members. Rather than shelve this legislation, I shall oppose the amendment and help to assist in the passing of the Bill, even if this course entails our coming back here after the new year. Indeed, I hope that will be the effect.

Amendment (six months) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	..	..	..	10
Noes	..	..	..	10
				—
A tie	..	..	..	0
				—

#### AYES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. J. J. Holmes	Hon. J. Ewing
Hon. W. Kingsmill	(Teller.)
Hon. J. Mills	

## NOES.

Hon. H. Carson	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. J. E. Dodd	(Teller.)
Hon. J. Duffell	

The PRESIDENT: I give my casting vote with the Noes, so that the matter may have further consideration.

Amendment thus negatived.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

## BILL—FORESTS.

## Recommittal.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clause 2—agreed to.

Clause 5—Preservation of rights of pastoral lessees and holders of mining rights:

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That after the word "provided" there be inserted "by Section 24 hereof."

Notice of this amendment, which follows on an amendment carried at the instance of the Colonial Secretary, appeared on page 2 of yesterday's Notice Paper, but it does not appear on to-day's Notice Paper.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: Should not the amendment appear on to-day's Notice Paper? It is a point of importance.

The CHAIRMAN: I agree that it is a point of importance. The amendment ought to appear on to-day's Notice Paper.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Mr. Nicholson has not given any reason for inserting such an unusual provision in the Bill. I have no objection to it, but think it is unnecessary.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: By the clause as amended it is left open as to what exactly is wanted. The intention was that these rights should be limited to the rights to which we referred and the powers which were taken under Clause 24. It was for the purpose of defining exactly what was intended that I moved this amendment, so that these rights which are reserved shall be subject to the rights reserved under Clause 24.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: After that explanation I do see an objection to the insertion of these words. The Government do not admit that Clause 24 interferes with anyone's rights. The whole of their permits, concessions, and leases are granted subject to regulation, and there is nothing in Clause 24 which would not be a proper matter for regulation. To insert these words would be to admit that they had these rights, and that the Government were not entitled to make regulations in respect of these matters.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It is not that.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: There have been two violations of the Standing Orders, or at any rate of the usual procedure of this Chamber, largely due, I imagine, to haste. If this

is going to occur again it will be a serious matter. We are usually guided by the Notice Paper, but in looking at the Notice Paper to-day it appeared that certain things had disappeared from it, and that we were not going to deal with them. I do not blame anyone, but it does not help us in the conduct of business. The reference to strangers seems to be most unusual, and irregular. I have never heard it before, and hope I shall never hear it again.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The addition of the words would make it clear that timber lessees and others will be subject to the rights reserved under Clause 24. Under that clause it is provided that no hewing shall be carried on except under certain conditions, and by adding these words it will make it clear that these rights are reserved.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: As the clause stands it is abundantly clear that the only effect the insertion of these words would have would be to make practically a declaration by Parliament that this was an invasion of the rights conferred on these lessees and concessionaires.

Amendment put and negatived; clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 6—Power to extend existing permits:

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Why is nothing on the Notice Paper in connection with amendments to this Bill? It would appear from the Notice Paper that the Bill was not going to be discussed. There is not a word about new clauses.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendments should be on the Notice Paper.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I have an amendment, which appears on a recent Notice Paper, to the following effect—

Paragraph (i).—After the word "acquired," in lines 4 and 5, insert the words "such royalty to be assessed," and after the word "permits," in line 7, insert "less the rent paid during the period of temporary suspension of operations apportioned over the period of such extension."

Will this amendment be in order?

The CHAIRMAN: In my opinion the amendment is out of order, as it is an appropriation of revenue.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Would the following amendment be in order—

Paragraph (b).—No. 1, after the word "extension" in line 5 insert the following:—"In addition to the rents thereby reserved a royalty of 1s. per load on all timber acquired and to the regulations. etc.," and strike out all words from "in lieu" to "permits" inclusive.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the amendment is worse than the other. It is not in order.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I shall have to submit to that.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can object to my decision at once in writing. I then re-ort to the House that such objection has been taken, and it will be debated in the Council.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I would point out that this is an imposition of an extra amount of taxation and not an appropriation.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not an appropriation; it is an imposition of a tax.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: It is to the advantage of the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: That has nothing to do with the rules which govern this House.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I will not take up the time of the House if you rule that it is out of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Both amendments are out of order.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 8—Conservator of Forests:

Hon. A. SANDERSON: We should have a definite decision on this clause. Are we prepared deliberately and with full knowledge to hand over the powers such as are asked for to the Conservator of Forests? There are many sound reasons why we should do so. There are also sound reasons why we should not do so, but I think they should be on record if only for future reference that this Chamber after a full and fair discussion deliberately carried out the proposal of the Bill. The measure in Victoria, we have been told, is being amended this session, but I have not had an opportunity of seeing the official documents in order to ascertain in what direction it is being amended. The New South Wales Act which was referred to provides for a board of three. I have looked up the debates of that State and I find from "Hansard" that there was no discussion at all on the Bill in Committee in the New South Wales Parliament. It went through in about 10 minutes or a quarter of an hour. We have had a full discussion on this question and I do not wish to labour the matter further.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I hope the clause will be carried. If it is not carried, one of the vital principles of the Bill will be struck at. The intention is to preserve a continuity of policy. If it is desired that the present unsatisfactory state of affairs shall continue until the forests are destroyed, then hon. members can vote with Mr. Sanderson.

Hon. J. E. DODD: I intend to vote against the clause. If the argument of the Colonial Secretary is good it is good for all departments. If we are to have a Conservator of Forests appointed in this way let us also have an Under Secretary for Mines appointed in the same way, so as to have a continuity of policy there. And so it should be in regard to other departments. Personally, I believe all departments should be responsible to the Minister and through the Minister to Parliament.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	17
Noes	..	..	..	6

Majority for	..	11
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# AYES.

Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. J. Nicholson
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. E. Rose
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. V. Hamersley	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. W. Hickey	Hon. H. Carson
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller.)

# NOES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. R. J. Lynn
Hon. J. E. Dodd	(Teller.)
Hon. J. Mills	

Clause thus passed.

Clause 14—Qualification of officers of the professional division:

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: I move an amendment—

That in line 3 the word "Governor" be struck out and "Senate of the University of Western Australia" be inserted in lieu.

This to a certain extent is consequential on an amendment which has already been carried that the Senate shall say which forestry school shall have been attended by the Conservator, and the diplomas he shall hold, and which forestry school shall be recognised as a training college for the employees of the department.

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

Clause 24—Hewing of railway sleepers within State forests prohibited:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I suggested last night that the recommittal of the Bill should be postponed until to-day in order that we might have on the Minutes of the Proceedings the full text of the clause as it stands at the present time. As clause 24 stands it practically destroys the value of the Bill. This is roughly the position. Mr. Millington's amendment strikes out Clause 9, and makes it lawful to fell and hew timber for railway sleepers on any country where a mill has operated. The maps on the wall of this Chamber show the country which up to the present has been gone over by the classifiers. The country embraces practically the whole of the jarrah belt of timber in this State. The classified area has been coloured in two distinctive colours, green being that which is cut over and yellow being that which is more or less virgin country. The area of virgin country left to the State is very small indeed, while the area of cut-over country forms the main bulk of the timber belt to-day. It is into the whole of that country that Mr. Millington's amendment would admit the sleeper hewer. This green area is not cut out from the point of view of the miller. Sawmillers and all who are acquainted with the South-West know that the bulk of the country has been lightly worked over. The big mills have cut the eyes out of it, but there is plenty of opportunity for the small mills to go into the country and cut timber in an economical fashion as compared with the wasteful fashion

in which it will be cut by the hewer. One of the principal objects of the present Bill is to ensure that timber which is suitable for treatment by sawmilling shall not be treated by hewing. If the clause stands as it is, it will mean that an enormous area of country entirely suitable for the sawmiller will be over-run by the hewers.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Only returned soldiers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No. This portion of the amendment refers not to returned soldiers but to all hewers.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: It applies to returned soldiers and all hewers.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Returned soldiers would be included in the proviso. We also have the special provision in the amendment moved by Mr. Cornell. The decision of the Committee is that directly the big mills come to a stop the hewers step in and cut out entirely the small mills, which have been in the habit of following up the big mills, and which cut through the forests in a more economical fashion than is done by the hewers. The effect will be that sawmilling will practically cease, except in that country where the big mills are operating, and the exploitation of the forests will be through the agency of hewers entirely. It may be contended that little harm will be done, because the number of hewers would not be large in view of the proviso. The Forestry Department have traced some 2,000 hewers, who had operated before 1914. These are exclusive of all who were operating for Millars' Karri and Jarrah Company and the timber corporation and men who were working on private properties. The number is not greatly limited by the proviso confining this privilege to those who were hewers before the war. Records were not kept prior to 1915 of the hewers working in the country. Anyone could swear that he was a hewer before 1914, and there would be nothing to disprove the statement, and the Conservator would be compelled to issue a license. Practically anyone is at liberty to cut timber which has been merely cut over by the big mills. I intend to move later that the amendment moved by Mr. Millington be struck out and the clause restored to what it was when it left the Legislative Assembly, so far as hewing by other than returned soldiers is concerned. So far as the returned soldier is concerned, I would be in accord with the amendment, provided there was a satisfactory definition of the term virgin forest. I do not consider the clause itself gives a satisfactory definition. An equitable amendment would be the one I suggested yesterday. It is a serious position. If the clause is to stand, our forests will be devastated by the hewer, and reach such a state that they cannot be restored. It will not be for the good of the returned soldier, and will mean that the State will lose a valuable asset. I move an amendment—

That all the words after "after" in paragraph (a) be struck out, and "all timber thereon which in the opinion of the Conservator is suitable for sawmilling

purposes has been felled or" inserted in lieu.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: We have not received much assistance from the Government in the way of making suitable provision to meet this position. The only course suggested is to restore the old clause. My advice from the timber workers' representatives is that they realise that a provision could be made for cutting, and for spot mills also to operate, on those areas, but they have no assurance after it has been cut over by the big mills and by the spot mills that the hewers would have a right to ply their calling on the area even then. This proviso, although ostensibly providing for the hewer, absolutely excludes him.

The Colonial Secretary: No.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The Conservator will consider that he has no right to allow hewing to take place if there is one tree which is suitable for saw-milling purposes left in any given area.

The Colonial Secretary: That is an extreme interpretation.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: The Conservator is bound by the terms of the proviso to administer the legislation as I have pointed out. If a guarantee could be given that the hewer would be able to carry on his avocation under certain conditions, well and good. It is remarkable that regulations cannot be framed which will enable the Conservator to make provision that after the area has been cut over by the big mills and the spot mills, a timber hewer would have the right to follow his avocation. At the present time the proviso definitely provides against that.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: The whole discussion on hewing seems to have centred on the question of the hewer. But there is a more important aspect of it which so far seems to have been overlooked. Perhaps I may be pardoned for repeating that while Clauses 3 and 5 declare most emphatically that existing rights shall not be affected by this Bill, the Government nevertheless have set to work to take away one of the conceded methods of working, namely, the getting of timber by hewing. If they have their way, the Government will prevent hewing altogether, as is proved by the original drafting of this Bill. They have, however, taken the rents of concessionaires and lessees during that period of the war when they were unable to make use of their leaseholds. For practically four years timber production has been almost entirely prevented in this country by the war, as the Government themselves recognise by their proposal, in this Bill, to extend the terms of concessions, leases, and permits for the period they compulsorily lay idle. I hold that the Government have no right to abolish hewing, which has proved of great advantage to concessionaires and leaseholders. I intend to support the proposal to permit hewing, provided the hewer is debarred from going into virgin forest. But Mr. Millington's amendment asks that anybody shall be permitted to hew in forest country over which the mills have cut.

The CHAIRMAN: That is the Bill as it stands at present.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: I believe it was proposed last night, and carried, that all returned soldiers should be allowed to work at sleeper hewing if they had followed that calling prior to the war. But now the Colonial Secretary practically proposes to take away that concession to sleeper hewers. I oppose the Colonial Secretary's amendment on the two grounds I have indicated. Moreover, the amendment leaves the matter entirely to the discretion of the Conservator, whom we know to be absolutely opposed, possibly for good reasons, to hewing in any form. But hewing is advantageous to those engaged in the timber industry, and some latitude should be allowed to sleeper cutters.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I desire to point out to Sir Edward Wittenoom that the concessions and leases were in every case granted subject to regulation. It is provided that timber shall not be cut otherwise than in a proper manner. For the past 14 years the practice has been to grant sawmill permits under regulations, one of which provides that the holder of a sawmilling permit shall not, without the permission in writing of the Conservator, fell or cut, or allow to be felled or cut, any sleepers or any timber for sleepers, until all the timber suitable for mill logs, poles, piles, and beams shall have been cut. The present proposal does not go one step further than the regulations which have controlled the matter for 14 years.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: The Colonial Secretary is quite wrong in his contention. One cannot allow people by their concession to hew sleepers, and then take away that permission from them by regulation. Timber getting methods have never been defined. It would be just as legitimate to stop sawmilling as to stop hewing; hewing is just as legitimate a method of getting timber as is sawmilling. The safeguarding provisions in concession instruments and leases do not mean that the Government can stop concessionaires or leaseholders from sawmilling, or from hewing either. Regulations must be in accordance with the spirit of the Act under which they are made; and the spirit of the Land Act is that sawmilling and hewing may both be employed for getting timber. Of course, a sawmiller cutting down trees under certain dimensions could be stopped by regulation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: A provision which was not quoted by Sir Edward Wittenoom is that regulations may be enforced in respect of timber concessions and leaseholds, "providing that such regulations do not impede the proper working of the said timber companies." Surely there could not be clearer words to indicate that the regulations might interfere with working of the forests considered to be improper, or with working opposed to the conservation of the forest. Timber hewing as it has been practised of recent years was never contemplated when these concessions were granted; otherwise it would have been provided for.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Hewing has been recognised for years past; so much so that the Government, like everybody else, have encouraged it. What about the South-Western Hewers' Co-operative Society?

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask hon. members to confine their remarks to the amendment under discussion, which relates to the localities in which hewing may take place.

Hon. J. EWING: I agree with Mr. Nicholson's remark of a few sittings ago that this matter will never reach finality in the way we are dealing with it. The matter requires close consideration by men closely in touch with the practical side of the question. They should be able to submit to Parliament something of a satisfactory nature. One purpose of this Bill is to prevent undue waste, and also to conserve the forests, as the Colonial Secretary has said; and that position has to be recognised. But I do desire that those who have been engaged either as sawmillers or as hewers in our timber industry prior to the war, and who will be dislocated if we pass the proviso as has been suggested, should receive protection. I do not consider that Mr. Millington's amendment will allow the hewer to go into the forest as soon as the big mill has cut over it. The spot mill should go over it first. A fair decision will not be reached on the information before this Committee. I suggest again that a select committee should consider the subject, in consultation with the Conservator.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I understand the Bill is essentially to preserve the forests. According to the statements made, the big mills get 50 per cent. and the spot mills 70 per cent. out of the logs. I know of a case where Millars abandoned one of their areas, and a spot mill went in and cut 50,000 sleepers from it in 12 months. If we inserted a provision providing that the soldier hewer is allowed to cut on an area which does not contain more than four loads per acre, and the ordinary hewer on an area containing not more than, say, three loads per acre, it would be a satisfactory solution of the difficulty.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: The question is, are we going to give any concession to these people, who unquestionably have vested interests? The hewing system is wasteful and must be stopped, but in the meantime those having vested interests should be given certain concessions. When hon. members like Mr. Millington and Sir Edward Wittenoom agree on a question such as this, surely we should be guided by them. Personally I will vote for the protection of vested interests.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I support the amendment. I fail to see where the vested interests of the hewer come in. He pays so much a month for the license, and when war broke out and sleepers were no longer required, his job was gone. Certainly the man who went to fight for his country should be given special consideration on his return, but I cannot see why special consideration should be given to the hewer who stayed at home and merely changed his avocation. In regard to the tim-

ber mills, which have been kept running at a loss during the last four years, it is a different proposition altogether. They certainly have vested interests.

Hon. J. CORNELL: But one cannot proceed without the other.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: No. The men who come back from the war can go into the mills. The hewers who stayed at home have gone to other jobs, and seeing that hewing is doomed, we ought not to do anything to induce those men to go back to it.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I oppose the amendment. The timber hewers certainly have vested interests. Mr. Greig admits that the concessionaires, especially those who have timber mills, have vested interests. The vested interest of the timber hewer lies in the fact that for many years prior to the war he made his living in our forests, where he has his wife and family. Moreover, it is not only the hewer who follows the avocation from one year's end to another who should be considered, but there are other men with small holdings who, at certain periods of the year, take on hewing to eke out a livelihood. If the amendment is carried the Conservator will not have any discretionary powers. A few days ago Mr. Sanderson said, "If we were going to cut out the hewer, let us cut him out straight away." That is what we are faced with. Yet these people are told that their interests are safeguarded under the Bill. In another provision in the Bill we find that in the event of necessity arising for the Conservator to terminate a concession lease, the concessionaire shall be compensated. In what way is it proposed to compensate the timber hewer for the loss of his avocation? If it is right that those other people should be compensated, it is right also that compensation should be paid to the hewer. The Bill as it stands will, to an extent, safeguard the interests of the hewers, but I should be sorry to see the amendment carried. The leader of the House and the Conservator have been unable to evolve an amendment as satisfactory as the clause itself.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We appear to be getting back to where we were yesterday when progress was reported. I was under the impression it was intended there should be some conference between the parties immediately interested, with a view of seeing whether some satisfactory provision could not be devised. Yesterday the Committee passed an amendment which provided that it should be lawful to fell and hew, for railway sleeper purposes, such timber as may be standing on any area after such area has been cut over for sawmilling purposes. The concluding words took the place of words which the leader of the House is now seeking to restore to the Bill. This clause is surrounded by many difficulties. I want to see proper conservation carried on, but at the same time I do not want to see everyone deprived of their rights or interests. It has been said that the hewer has no vested rights, but I contest that point. The Government were largely responsible for creating that useful body of men known as hewers. However we

should allow this clause to be referred back for further consideration.

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

Ayes	..	..	..	5
Noes	..	..	..	18

Majority against	..	13
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#### AYES.

Hon. H. P. Colebatch	Hon. C. McKenzie
Hon. J. A. Greig	Hon. G. W. Miles
Hon. J. J. Holmes	(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Hon. J. F. Allen	Hon. H. Millington
Hon. H. Carson	Hon. J. Mills
Hon. E. M. Clarke	Hon. J. Nicholson,
Hon. J. Cornell	Hon. E. Ross
Hon. J. Cunningham	Hon. A. Sanderson
Hon. J. E. Dodd	Hon. H. J. Saunders
Hon. J. Duffell	Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom
Hon. J. Ewing	Hon. J. W. Hickey
Hon. V. Hamersley	(Teller.)
Hon. R. J. Lynn	

Amendment thus negatived.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Does the Colonial Secretary intend to proceed with the amendment he foreshadowed with reference to the definition of virgin forest? I am prepared to move an amendment to the proviso which was added yesterday which in effect will cut out any need for a definition of virgin forest. I will alter the amendment which appears in my name on the Notice Paper so that it will read—

Add at the end the following:—"Notwithstanding the provisions of this section it shall (subject to the provisions of Section 75 of this Act) be lawful for any person holding an active service discharge from the Australian Imperial Forces, who satisfies the Conservator that prior to the passing of this Act he followed the occupation of a hewer in this State to hew timber for railway sleepers under and subject to the conditions existing on the 31st December, 1914.

I understand that the amendment as carried yesterday does not clearly specify on what terms the returned soldier can go on to the lease or concession. The alternative offer by the Colonial Secretary, that is, three loads of round timber to the acre, I have been told by a couple of gentlemen both qualified to speak, amounts to nothing. It is not too little to ask that if a hewer desires to cut he should be allowed to cut under conditions which existed before 1914. I am not asking that this should go on forever. We must remember also that there are very few discharged soldiers who are hewers. There will be 20,000 men coming back shortly and a big majority of the hewers who went away will be amongst that number, but it will be 12 or 18 months before they are demobilised and before they take up their old occupation.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: After the decision on a previous question which gave such very large privileges to the hewer, I did

not trouble further about the clause. It would be a mistake to carry the amendment. It would be so inconvenient because they would be working under two sets of regulations. I am quite prepared now to let the clause stand as it is.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am prepared to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I move an amendment—

That in the proviso after "Conservator with" the following words be struck out:—"immediately prior to enlistment he was engaged in the occupation of hewing railway sleepers;" and "prior to the passing of this Act he followed the occupation of a hewer in this State" be inserted in lieu.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I would agree to the amendment if the hon. member would insert the word "sleeper" before "hewer."

Hon. J. CORNELL: I agree to that.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The clause will now give leave to the hewer to hew timber for railway sleepers on any timber concession, lease or permit. There is no mention as to the necessity for obtaining the consent of the owner of the lease, concession or permit. In this way we shall be overriding the grant which has been made to these owners.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I think that point is already provided for.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I move an amendment—

That after the word "permit" there be inserted "(subject to the consent or approval in writing of the owner or proprietor of such concession, lease or permit being first obtained)."

The CHAIRMAN: It would be well in the interests of the Clerks, for whom it is difficult to keep pace with amendments moved in this manner, that I should have three copies of this amendment typed.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Originally I thought there was some necessity for this amendment, but I do not think so now. The proviso rejected at an earlier stage has a direct bearing on this amendment. If the amendment means that consent in writing must be obtained by the hewer before he can go on country, what do Subclause 2 of Clause 5 and the further proviso added at the instance of the leader of the House stand for?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not see any objection to the amendment because the intention is to restore the returned soldier to the same position as he held before the passing of this Bill. But before the passing of this Bill he had to obtain permission to hew. Whether or not the amendment is necessary, I do not know, but its insertion will do no harm. There is no occasion for inserting this amendment in the previous clause, because that clause does not give a right to any person to hew timber.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am prepared to accept Mr. Nicholson's amendment.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I think the point to which Mr. Cornell draws attention is sound. In the circumstances it would be better to add the words which I have suggested to Clause 24 as a proviso. The Government have already granted certain rights to the holders of concessions, leases, and permits; and they cannot, therefore, give those rights to another set of people. The Government cannot derogate from the rights they have granted. I ask leave to withdraw my amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I now move a further amendment—

That the following proviso be added to Clause 24:—"Provided that no person shall be entitled to enter on the area of any concession, lease, or permit without first obtaining the consent or approval in writing of the owner thereof."

That will meet the whole case.

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

Clause 53—General penalties:

Hon. J. A. GREIG: On behalf of Mr. Stewart, I move an amendment—

That in Subclause 2 the words "one-twentieth" be struck out, and "one-hundredth" inserted in lieu.

The clause as it stands specifies a minimum fine of 1s. in the pound of the maximum, which would mean a minimum fine of £5 where a maximum penalty of £100 is imposed.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I hope the amendment will not be carried. The hon. member moving it seems to think that £100 is the penalty for every offence under this measure. But it is only the maximum penalty for certain serious offences. Fines are provided of £5 and £10. A minimum of one-hundredth on a fine of £5 would mean 1s. The Interpretation Act makes it perfectly clear that when a penalty is imposed it is a maximum.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I remember Mr. Stewart calling attention to this matter. There may be cases where a conviction would be necessary because the offence was proved, but where there might be extenuating circumstances that would make the minimum of one-twentieth on £100, namely £5, an excessive fine. The court might consider such a fine excessive, but would still have to impose it. The amendment is well worthy of consideration.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The fixing of a minimum penalty is an innovation, but a justifiable one seeing that maximum penalties are fixed. In many cases justices have inflicted penalties which were not considered creditable to them. I shall vote for the clause as it stands. A similar provision might well be included in all legislation dealing with offences.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

New clause:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: I propose to make a final appeal to hon. members to do something to protect the forest against indiscriminate and continual hewing. No Bill has been received with more approval than was this



one, and in many respects the Committee have passed it in thoroughly workable shape. The one blot is this matter of indiscriminate hewing. I do not wish the Committee to go back on anything done, but this clause provides that the privileges extended to the returned soldier shall continue for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years only, and after that the returned soldier shall have no privilege in the matter of hewing. I ask the Committee to say, as regards the hewer generally, that he also shall have this privilege for  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years and no longer. I move an amendment—

That the words "to discharged soldiers of the Australian Imperial Forces" be struck out.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I agree with the Colonial Secretary. It would be unfair to make such a discrimination as exists in the new clause. The limitation would be entirely on the soldiers and would not extend to the other hewers.

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: I do not think the case has been fairly stated. The privilege extended under the conditions imposed would extend to all hewers, including returned soldiers. Mr. Cornell moved for a further concession to returned soldiers and, it being a special concession, he limited it to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years. But that is entirely different from the general principle which Mr. Nicholson has said limits the concession to returned soldiers. My reading of the amendment is entirely different. As a matter of fact, the returned soldiers have an additional concession to that stated in my amendment. I fail to see how that can be limited to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years. After the emphatic manner in which the Committee have decided this question, it is scarcely fair to come along now with this proposal. To limit this concession to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years is entirely in opposition to the spirit of the amendment already carried. It would be most dangerous to limit the whole scope of the amendment in this fashion.

Hon. J. CORNELL: A greater concession has been given to the soldiers than has been given to the ordinary hewer, but the soldiers' concession is limited to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years, whereas the other lesser concession is unlimited. The result will be that in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years time the soldier hewer will meet the civilian hewer on equal terms.

Hon. H. Millington: Then they will both be out.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If that is so, I see no objection to the amendment. But I want to know by what process of reasoning the hon. member determines that they will both be out. It is accepted by a large majority of the House and by another place that sleeper hewing is not in the interests of the forests. In view of that the Government, on the advice of the Conservator, decided to cut out the hewer altogether. Another place reinstated him in a minor degree. Now this House has gone farther. The question is whether the hewer is to continue for all time in the forests or whether he is to get notice to quit.

Amendment put and passed; new clause as amended agreed to.

[The President resumed the Chair.]

Bill again reported with further amendments, the report adopted, and a Message accordingly forwarded to the Assembly requesting them to make the amendments, leave being given to sit again on receipt of a Message from the Assembly.

## BILL—DISCHARGED SOLDIERS' SETTLEMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. J. E. DODD (South) [8.11]: Like other hon. members, I deeply regret that the Bill was not brought down earlier. It seems to me when we have Bills like the Criminal Code Act Amendment, the Prisons Act Amendment, and others which have been before us for a long time past, not much consideration has been shown in bringing down this Bill at so late a stage. I am disappointed indeed at what has been done for the returned soldier. There is a certain amount of diffidence felt in speaking on this matter, because one may be charged with playing to the gallery if one criticises too strongly the methods adopted by both the Federal and State Governments. On the other hand, we as members have a big responsibility upon us, and if we do not do the best we can, we are going to share in all odium that may be vented when the soldiers return. After  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years of war all that we can produce is the Bill now before us. Certainly the Federal Government have been doing something lately, but I do not know that they have done very much, and we in this State have done little in the way of legislation except bring forward this Bill. When we consider that probably before Parliament meets again we shall have 15,000 soldiers back, it behoves us to see that we are doing something to settle those soldiers. The Colonial Secretary has said that this is a time of opportunity. It is indeed a time of opportunity, and if that opportunity be not taken I hardly like to contemplate what may happen. In this respect, I should like to read an extract from the Whiteley report dealing with this question, which may give food for thought. Every member knows that the Whiteley report is a report issued in England by a committee consisting of all classes and is one of the best reports ever issued on this complex problem of settling soldiers. It would repay every member to study the report for himself. One of the statements made therein is as follows—

The circumstances of the present time are admitted on all sides to offer a great opportunity for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employer and employed, while failure to utilise the opportunity may involve the nation in grave industrial difficulties after the war. That is true not only of Great Britain but it is true of Australia. I think they will look to us to see whether we cannot evolve something which will be a little better than has been placed before us by the Government.

I am very glad this has not been made a party question, and I hope it will not be a party question at any time in the future. There is no doubt that extremists of both sides may possibly make this a party question, but if that should happen, an infinite amount of harm will be done. It always seems to me that the war has resulted in the mutual forbearance and sacrifice which we see all around, and that we are consequently being given a chance which possibly may never come again, a chance which I think we should try to make use of. I agree with what Mr. Sanderson was reported in the Press to have stated: that the Federal Government should shoulder a bigger responsibility in connection with the repatriation of returned soldiers. What the Federal Government are doing in connection with this Bill is very small indeed. They are only paying the difference in the interest between the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. and whatever the current rate may be in the future. We are told when we ask for concessions that no discrimination between States can be used. On the other hand, we might point out to the Federal people what we have done on behalf of the Empire, and that we have used no discrimination in regard to the men whom we sent away. I do not think that the Federal people are doing half enough. I entirely agree with the statement that they should take over the whole of the work of repatriation. They must recognise that unless they are prepared to step out and embark on something new and to help the State more than they are doing, the possibilities are such that I hardly dare to contemplate what may happen. We have a Bill before us only dealing with land settlement, and, as Mr. Cornell has pointed out, it only gives relief to the men best able to look after themselves, that is, the men who are fit and able to do something. There is no room in this Bill for the unfit man, and although the Colonial Secretary has pointed out what has been done by the repatriation committee here, and that we have been told in the Governor's Speech that the State has been assisting in vocational training and so on, I think very little indeed has been done. It is all very well to try to get a job for a man, but the position is that we should create these jobs. We are not creating any new positions. We are simply, as it were, a committee to find certain work for certain men without creating any new work at all. I was reading a review the other day of the poem "Digger Smith," and I was very much struck with an extract from that poem by Mr. Dennis, who makes "Digger" revert to politics and tell us that he has—

Come home from a dinkum scrap to find  
this land of light  
Is chasin' its own tail around an' callin'  
it a fight.

That seems to put the position very clearly. We are chasing our own tail around. For the past four or five years all that we have been able to produce is a Bill like the one before us. I do not blame this Government only, but I would have gone much further than they have

done. When we can spend something like 400 millions in Australia upon a war, I think we might very well launch out and see whether we cannot spend a few millions in other directions. We are told that the Federal Government are going to spend 100 millions. We are only told that. If I were certain of being successful, I would move an amendment to this Bill something on these lines, that we should ask the Federal Government to make a grant to this State in consideration of what we have done for Australia and the Empire. We must remember that we have had absolutely no war expenditure at all in Western Australia. The Federal Constitution provides against discrimination between the States, yet discrimination has been shown by the Federal Government, inasmuch as the whole of the war expenditure has been confined to Sydney and Melbourne. We have not had a penny of it. All that we have been getting out of the Federal people is a naval base, and now the work there has been stopped. On the other hand, we have sent away ten per cent. of our population, whereas the other States have only sent away seven per cent. We would not be out of place in carrying a motion such as I have suggested, asking the Federal people whether they cannot give us some assistance in regard to this question of land settlement. If, before the war, anyone suggested that we should take a million pounds or two million pounds for such a purpose the people would have held up their hands in holy horror. Yet we have spent 400 millions in destroying life and all we are prepared to do for the soldier who have returned is to say to the fit man "You can take up land and we will lend you £500, but you will have to pay interest on that." True, we are giving the land to the soldier at a half price, but we compel him to pay back the £500 and compel him also to pay interest on that money. Then again, the Bill only deals with one industry, namely, land settlement. Therefore it is only of use to the fit man. There are a number of other industries in the States which, if they were dealt with on similar lines, would yield better results than land settlement. In connection with mining and other industries in the North-West, if the Government would provide the means of settlement, I am certain that a great deal of good would result. If certain terms were extended to miners as they are to be extended to farmers, much good would follow, and have no hesitation in saying we would get more immediate results. I believe there are other industries to which those remarks would apply. Provision has been made in the Bill for the appointment of a board. I think that board is to be composed of four people, but they will only recommend what is to be done. Their duty will be to recommend what shall be given by the Agricultural Bank, and if any words of mine have any weight with the Government, I would urge that they make that board the final one if possible, and cut out entirely all circumlocution. If we can make that board final and let them deal with the whole problem, we will overcome a lot of

difficulties. I would like to see the board composed of, say, a couple of farmers, a commercial man, a returned soldier, and someone to represent possibly the industrial element. Surely from amongst the men we have in the community we can select a good board. We do not want faddists but men who are prepared to give their time and attention to the work; then some good will result. Mr. Kingsmill in speaking referred to the Agricultural Bank and mentioned the name of Mr. Paterson, and I made one or two interjections regarding that gentleman. Mr. Kingsmill said we wanted a man who knew something of human nature, a man in entire sympathy with the position that he occupied, and he thought Mr. Paterson would fill the bill. I have no objection to Mr. Paterson, I believe he is that type of man, a thoroughly good man. But it is of no earthly use saying that he is the man we require unless he is prepared to get into touch with human nature, and that is where Mr. Paterson fails. The Colonial Secretary has stated that the liabilities of farms that soldiers have taken up have been reduced, and he has also told us that this has been applied to other than soldiers. I want to quote an instance, and I ask the Colonial Secretary to make a note of it and institute inquiries to see whether what I am about to state is correct. I know a man who wanted to take up land in one of the farming areas in the province represented by the Colonial Secretary. That man is as good a man as could be found in Western Australia for that class of work. He has four or five children. He heard of some land upon which there was a liability of £300 or £400, and he went to the Agricultural Bank to see about it. They told him to inspect the land. He did so, and went out about 100 miles and spent some time in going over the whole property. He knew some of the people in the district, and they accompanied him. He came back, went to the Agricultural Bank, and they asked him to take over the whole of the liability. The land has been lying idle for three years and no one will take it up. This man was not prepared to take over the whole of the liability. Then he was informed that the matter would be placed before the board or Mr. Paterson, I am not sure about that point, and to return on a certain day. He was living 12 or 13 miles out of Perth, and he came in on the appointed day to ascertain whether the board had decided his case. He found that nothing further had been done and that Mr. Paterson could not be seen.

The Colonial Secretary: Was he a soldier?

Hon. J. E. DODD: No, but he is a capable man, and the ridiculous part of the transaction is that this land has been lying idle for three years, and to-day it is not worth nearly as much as it was three years ago. The property has deteriorated, and yet they asked this man to take over the whole of the liability before going on it. I guarantee that a better man could not be found anywhere to take over such a property as that. I know him personally. He has a small

block of land elsewhere. The consequence is that he has to remain practically out of employment while waiting to get hold of the other property which he wants. He told me that if he could not get a definite reply he would sell out and go to South Australia. The family consists of six or seven, and if they leave the State there will be a loss of that number to our community. Every man on a farm means another 12 or 13 people engaged in wheat production. We can understand, therefore, what the loss will be in such cases. The time which has elapsed has not been long, but it was altogether too long. To a man who is dependant upon 9s. or 10s. a day, and has to come 12 or 13 miles, when a matter can be settled by the use of a little common sense and by the study of human nature, even a day is altogether too long. I think the time in this case was a fortnight. Possibly it has now been settled. If the Colonial Secretary thinks it worth while he might inquire into the matter.

The Colonial Secretary: Will you give me the name of the man?

Hon. J. E. DODD: Yes. Then we come to the question of dependants. The definition is fairly wide and clear, but I think I can show where we might extend it a little more. Suppose one of us had sons at the war, who were not dependants. It is quite possible that we might also have other lads here who were not old enough to go to the war. Surely, if our sons who did go were killed it would be fair to say that when the man has other lads who were not old enough to go to the war they should share in the benefits of this Bill. I think that the man who has lost sons at the war and is not dependant on those sons, and if he has younger boys who could not go, they should be entitled to share in the benefits of this Bill. This is a matter that is worthy of consideration. In regard to the discrimination to be shown to returned soldiers, mentioned by Mr. Cornell, I hardly agree with what he said. My opinion is that the man who has enlisted and gone to the Front, whether he got into the firing line or not, is entitled to share in the benefits of this Bill, as I believe he is to be allowed to do. I do not think we should make any discrimination in that respect. Another question was raised by Mr. Cornell in regard to Clause 4, Subclause 2, which I think we might very well deal with. Perhaps the Colonial Secretary might see his way clear to agree to strike out this Subclause. I would strongly advise him to do so. I cannot imagine that clause passing another place. It reads—

This Act shall not apply (a) To any discharged soldier if the termination of his appointment or his discharge from service was due to misconduct or incapacity resulting from his own default, or (b) the dependants of any such deceased person as aforesaid if before his death his appointment was terminated or he was discharged from service owing to misconduct or incapacity resulting from his own default.

We all know what military law is. I am reminded of a well known family in Western

Australia. One of the lads of this family was fined £5 and sentenced to one month's imprisonment for being two days over his furlough in England. He had absolutely no intention of deserting, for he was not a lad of that nature. He merely overstayed his leave by two days, and was treated in this way. This kind of thing is taking place in military law every day and even worse cases than this occur, and yet we are providing the clause here which would cut out a lad like that from any benefits under the Bill. I hope the clause will be struck out altogether. If the board in its wisdom thinks fit to reject any particular application, let it do so on its own responsibility. Let a thing like this not be put into the Bill, when we know what is taking place every day in connection with military law. In regard to the purchase of land, I noticed in the "West Australian" the other day the case of a man named Birrell. This man was trying to get some land. I also noticed that the report of the inspector stated that the price demanded for land was considerably in excess of its value. The account went on to say that the result of the returned soldier seeking for land has been that owners are asking unreasonable prices for their properties. We are also told by the leader of the House that this is so, and that there is some difficulty in getting land at a reasonable price. This could be overcome by the board adopting the principle appertaining in New Zealand, that is of taking the land at the owner's valuation, plus ten per cent. If a man is mean enough to take down a returned soldier—because that is what they are doing as the returned soldier has eventually to pay for the land under the Bill—surely we can take the land at his own valuation, plus ten per cent. Certain provision is being made at Osborne Park for poultry farmers. I hope the Government will do nothing further in that direction. I trust that these soldiers will make a success of their holdings, but I am very doubtful of it. To take a man and put him there on a bit of sand, build a house for him and put up a windmill, and give him poultry and expect him to make a living is a hopeless task.

The Colonial Secretary: It is only intended to supplement their pensions.

Hon. J. E. DODD: In regard to pensions, I think that very much more might be done. If a man is able under this Bill, whether he is getting a pension or not, to take up a selection, the pension does not make any difference to him. Unfortunately, it does make a difference to him in other respects. A man's pension is being taken into account and is being reckoned in the amount that is to make up the current rate of wage. This seems to me a scandal, and I trust something may be done in the matter. Sir Edward Wittenoom does not seem to be able to understand the difference between occupied land and used land, and unoccupied land and unused land. There is a vast difference between the two. If there is not sufficient land within a radius that is served by our railways for

soldiers to take up and work, then it is a poor look out for Western Australia. If we cannot get enough land with the immense radius that we have in this State for returned soldiers to settle upon within a reasonable distance of a railway, the outlook is very bad. The hon. member does not seem to be able to distinguish between land and land values either. There is also a vast difference between these two things. The Bill may be all right if some of the clauses are amended. My trouble is that we have not gone half far enough. When we realise what is taking place in other countries, and think of the number of men who may be back here within 12 months, we must agree that there is nothing out of the way being done to place these men, and I cannot help feeling somewhat alarmed. We are only dealing with the matter in dribs and drabs. I did the best I could to get men to go to the war. I was appointed chairman of the last recruiting committee that was formed in this State by the Federal Government. Whilst I was able to do so I did the best I could to obtain recruits. At the same time those of us who have endeavoured to do what we can in that respect should also try to do what we can to see that the soldier gets a fair deal, and that he at least will get a reasonable opportunity of making good; and possibly then that social unrest which is found in nearly every country of the world may be avoided here. It seems to me that no Parliament in Australia has done what it ought to have done in connection with the soldier. I know the difficulties with which the Government are faced. There are some difficulties we cannot see, because some of the men will not make good, but every man should have a reasonable chance of making good. I do not think he is getting that chance to-day, or will get it under this Bill. All we are doing is to give him land for half its value. If we gave the land away we should not be doing too much. Our finances will not allow us to go very far, but it is for that Government, which had the means of raising money to prosecute the war and has the means of finding the money to re-establish our soldiers who are coming back and reconstruct society, to do more than they are doing to render assistance to this State. I trust, if it is possible at all, our Government here will endeavour to urge upon the Federal people to give a little more consideration to the State than they have done. If this House could express an opinion on this matter before the session closes I think it would be a good thing. I am sorry the Bill is not more comprehensive and does not give a better chance of debating what ought to be done. I do hope, in view of the possibility of 20,000 men coming back before Parliament meets again, that we shall all realise our responsibilities as well as the Government. I have here a little quotation which seems to fit the situation exactly. It is from the lines written by Mr. Dennis who says:

"We want the land we battled for  
To be a land worth while."

But it is "Bill" who voices the final appeal with his—

"Cobber, it's up to me an' you

To see that 'arf 'is dreams come true."

It is up to us to see that their dreams come true, and that they have a reasonable chance of making good, and that the land to which they come back has been a land worth fighting for and is a land worth living in.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES (North) [8.45]: I desire to say a few words in support of the Bill. Like the previous speaker, I regret that it deals only with land settlement of soldiers. To my mind, land settlement is suitable only for the strongest of the soldiers; and we have to devise some scheme whereby men, if they are not able to resume the occupation which they left, will be enabled to take up occupations for which they are physically fitted. We cannot in the present condition of this State afford to lose a single resident, either soldier or civilian. The trouble in this State—a trouble which the returning soldier will encounter—is that affairs have been allowed to drift during the last four years so as to alarm the bona fide worker here to-day, and also to alarm the employer. There is a decided drift nowadays from west to east. A few years ago the drift was from east to west. The completion of the Transcontinental railway has had its advantages, certainly. It has made a connecting link between east and west that never existed previously. But any man now dissatisfied with the outlook in Western Australia can simply take the railway back to whence he came. Numerous suggestions have been made as to co-operative societies and co-operative colonies of soldiers in connection with land settlement. I favour colonies of soldiers, where the men who have fought together could settle in a group and work together. In that case the men who have had experience on the land could rightly direct their comrades who are without such experience. But if we send one soldier in one direction, and another soldier in another, to deserted farms, the conditions are not promising, and unless the men are thoroughly experienced farmers hardly anything but failure can await them. Now, there is one corner of this State in the far south-west, between Port Augusta and Albany, that could be made a second Gippsland. But for the virgin growth that exists there, and but for the labour conditions of Australia, that portion of the State could speedily be made a second Gippsland, and could absorb in any event all of our soldiers who are prepared to go on the land; and this without our resuming one acre by way of compulsory purchase. But the difficulty is that under existing labour conditions that country cannot be brought under cultivation.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: What is the difference between the South-West and Gippsland in that respect?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Gippsland was brought under cultivation before the present go-slow system of getting all the pay you can and doing as little as you can came into vogue. Gippsland was brought under cultivation when

men were prepared to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. To bring that portion of the South-West into a condition suitable for settlement by the soldiers or by anybody else would take ten years. The country would have to be rung, and then allowed to stand for three years, and then burned, after which one would have to wait another three years for the dead limbs to come down, and then another burning off; and after a lapse of ten years the country could be brought under cultivation as a payable proposition under present labour conditions. There is a way out of the difficulty, but that is a Federal matter. The Alien Immigration Restriction Act prevents us from bringing that land under cultivation to meet the requirements of the returned soldiers. I agree with Mr. Dodd that there must be a tuning up and a tuning down between employer and employee to meet the difficult conditions which have arisen. There is no doubt whatever that we owe a duty to the men who have gone abroad to fight for this country and have saved it. I do not consider that in this Bill we are going far enough. There is one occupation which I regard as suitable and desirable, and as likely to prove profitable, for the returned soldier; and that is pearling. From the very inception provision has been made under the Pearl Fisheries Act for those men who left that industry to go to the war to be entitled to resume that occupation on their return. But there may be a number of other returned soldiers prepared to go into that industry; and £500 would easily buy an outfit. The question of labour would not apply at all, because there is legal provision that labour to work the boats can be imported. There is also this consideration, that success in pearling depends upon personal application. The man that makes money out of pearling is the man who gets the pearls. The shell pays the working expenses: the pearls represent the profit. Not long ago I spent ten days in Broome, and I discussed the business with a large pearler. I said to him, "If ever I embark on the pearling industry, I shall be my own shell-opener; I will go on the boat and get my own pearls." That is what the returned soldier would be able to do—go on the pearling boat and get his own pearls. One of the biggest pearlmen in Broome said to me, though, in reply to my remark, "There is a better method of pearling than that." I said, "What?" He replied, "Open the other fellow's shell." The returned soldier, even if he had only one leg, could take up pearling with a boat and crew, and be on board and open his own shell and get his own pearls. But simply to get rid of our soldiers by pushing them on to the land, irrespective of whether they are fit for the occupation, is a proposal which I do not believe the country will support. While there is money provided for settling soldiers on the land, there will be a tendency to get rid of them by that means, whether or not they are suited to agricultural pursuits. There is also the possibility that a number of the returned men might desire to take up pastoral instead of agricultural pursuits. In the far North there are millions of acres not yet taken up by the shepherd princes

referred to the other night—it used to be “beef buccancers,” but now it is “shepherd princes.” Those millions of acres are capable of producing cattle and sheep as well as is any part of Australia. In fact, Mr. Canning, the man who is at present classifying the leaseholds in the North—and if there is one man who knows anything about Western Australia generally, it is Mr. Canning: the very fact of his being appointed to carry out the classification shows that his opinion is entitled to consideration—Mr. Canning told me, years ago, with his own lips that behind the ranges in the Kimberleys, where the cattle are grown, there is a vast area of country capable of carrying 10 million sheep. Of course, there is the difficulty that we have administering our Lands Department an Honorary Minister, Mr. Willmott, who said a few weeks ago in another place, “It has been suggested that we should send these soldiers to Kimberley. Do hon. members know that men cannot live in Kimberley unless they are acclimatised?” I ask this common-sense question, how are they to become acclimatised unless they go to Kimberley? Are we to inoculate them here in Perth? The expert officer states that there is in Kimberley a stretch of country capable of carrying 10 million sheep, and the Honorary Minister controlling the Lands Department says the country is not fit to live in. What about the men who went to the North 20 or 25 years ago? How did they get there? It took some of them two and a half years to get there from Eastern Australia. Did they have the conditions we find in the North to-day? No; but ten times worse conditions. To-day they may be pretty bad, but nothing in comparison with what returned soldiers have faced at the Front. To-day, indeed, Kimberley is a paradise in comparison with what it was 25 years ago; but how can we expect any settlement there if the Honorary Minister in charge of the Lands Department says the far North is not fit to live in, or that men cannot live there until acclimatised? The hon. member who recently made that reference to “shepherd princes” accused the pastoralists of this State of having secured the extension of their leases during the absence of the soldiers at the war.

Hon. J. Mills: Quite right.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: That hon. member has spent all his life in this State, and has had so much faith in the pastoral industry of Western Australia that he has not taken up an acre of pastoral land here. Let me tell the House the reason why, in my opinion, the terms of pastoral leases were extended. It was principally because the Government wanted more revenue. And we see the result in the September returns which, instead of the usual monthly deficit of £130,000 or £140,000, show a credit of £7,000. Analysing the figures of revenue, one will find that the surplus is due to increased land revenue. The hon. member would lead the House to believe that the extension was given away for a song during the absence of the soldiers.

Hon. J. Cornell: So it was.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: But the rent to be paid is a matter entirely in the hands of Mr. Canning, subject to the approval of the Minister.

Hon. J. Mills: But the rent cannot exceed double the original valuation.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Nothing of the kind. The pastoral lessees agreed to pay double rent pending re-appraisal. A pastoral lessee not satisfied with the re-appraisal reverts to his original rent, and goes out at the end of the term of his old lease. But it is in the hands of the appraiser, not of Parliament, to say what those leases are worth. If the appraiser fixes them too high, the lessee will go back to this old lease. While we have a right to do all that we can for the soldier, we have also to see that the men who made the country 30 or 40 years ago get some consideration. There are all sorts of other pursuits that can be profitably followed by some of the soldiers. It would be wicked to send unsuitable men on the land. There is the danger of trying to get rid of those men by giving them £500 and pushing them on to the land. Whatever else we might do, there should be one Minister and one board responsible for the repatriation of the soldiers. Not only do we want a sympathetic Minister but we want one who will do it now. Some time ago it was announced that the Premier was to be the Minister controlling repatriation. I do not question that hon. gentleman's virtues or his sympathy, but unfortunately he wants to do things to-morrow instead of to-day. I understand that the Commonwealth advances this money to the State, the State advances it to the soldier and the State is responsible for repayment to the Commonwealth. There is a duty to the soldier, and also a duty to the State. One thing we have to guard against is, that we do not get a Government anxious to secure a lot of money and distribute it amongst the soldiers with a view to getting them off their hands. It is the State's responsibility that requires to be watched. Sympathetic administration must be combined with practical administration. These men are asking to be reinstated in their old employment, and I believe this House is determined that those men shall take up their old occupations if they so desire.

Hon. J. Mills: That is not much for the sacrifices they have made.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No, but it is better than the other proposal. In the one case they ask for bread and are given a stone, while in this case it is proposed to give them a decent start in life. There is any amount of capital in Western Australia waiting to be put into concerns that will return current rate of interest. A great number of the soldiers could be employed on farms and stations, but the trouble is that immediately one gets half a dozen men on a station one can look out for labour troubles and some system of go slow. Both sides have to come together. During the war the business men of the country have shown a marked inclination to do this. My appeal to the other side is that this inclination should be met half-way. Let us hope that as one of the results of the war

we shall get the wolf lying down with the lamb. If I can do anything towards securing, in the interests of the Bill, one Minister both sympathetic and practical, and the appointment of a small board, I may be relied upon to do it.

Hon. J. A. GREIG (South-East) [9.10]: I have pleasure in supporting the second reading. We have waited long for the Bill, but now that it is here I congratulate the Government upon the measure. If the soldiers do not succeed on the land it will not be the fault either of the Government or of the Bill. Generally the provisions of the measure are all that can be desired. Mr. Cornell has said he thought that not more than 10 per cent. of the soldiers would take up the land.

Hon. J. Cornell: I referred to 10 per cent. of the enlistments, not of returned soldiers.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I am reluctantly compelled to believe that not more than 10 per cent. of the returned soldiers will go on the land. I think the chief reason for it is that those engaged in agriculture are the worst paid section of the community. Personally I cannot advise returned soldiers to go on agricultural land under existing conditions, nor even under conditions that existed before the war. The Bill is all right in itself, but the people of Australia require to so alter the prevailing conditions, that men may go on the land and live there in comfort.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: What is required is that a few of the Customs duties should be taken off.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I am glad the Government have realised that on the land is the best place for settling the men; but the question comes in, why are other industries protected while the primary industries are not protected? The Bill provides that a soldier going on the land shall be given his land at half price. Suppose he takes a 1,360-acre farm. Of this, 160 acres will be free. Suppose the other 1,200 acres are valued at 10s. per acre. That will equal £600 of land value. At half price it will cost the soldier £300, and so we appear to be making him a gift of £300. But he will require £1,000 worth of machinery to work his land, and on that machinery there is a duty of about 30 per cent., or an increase in the price of the machinery by at least £300. If that man went into any secondary industry, he would have that duty as a protection in his favour, whereas in the agricultural industry he finds that the protection is entirely against him. Thus, while we give him £300 with one hand, we take it from him again before he can get a return from his first crop. If the Federal Government were to give us a free-trade Australia, we should be able to wipe off our war debt in a few years. No Government in Australia has put forward that proposition or have been game to face the problem. I maintain that protection is ruining Australia to-day. Take Western Australia at the present time. Some 3,110 gold mines have produced on an average over one ounce of gold per ton, and altogether have yielded over 13 million pounds'

worth of gold. To-day those mines are closed down.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But they are not worked out.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Experts tell us there is more gold in those mines to-day than has been taken out of them. Why, then, are they not working?

Hon. J. Cornell: Twenty millions of capital has been sunk in those mines.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: That may be so, but in other parts of the world mines such as those would still be paying handsomely. Why is it that they do not pay?

Hon. J. Nicholson: Because of the cost of production.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Exactly. No man could say that wages are too high compared with the amount the wage-earner has to pay for the cost of living. The cost of living is high, and the cost of production is high. The same thing applies to the agricultural industry. At the present time there are 900 farms in the hands of the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. J. Cornell: The number is growing; it was 700 a few weeks ago.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I do not say that all the men who went on farms were very good farmers, but they were triers, and those men do not give up jobs and put from five to ten of the best years of their lives into hard work on the farm for the fun of the thing. Men have gone out into the country and practically ruined their lives, and to-day they have to give up the farm. The fact that the farms are in the hands of the Agricultural Bank shows how careful we must be when we are settling returned soldiers on the land.

Hon. J. Cornell: The hon. member will get what he is after by a prohibitive tariff.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: No. Knibbs states that the agricultural industry is the most profitable industry in Australia, because the wealth of every nation is calculated upon the value of its primary production. But in that same "Year Book" from which I extracted those remarks, he says that those engaged in the agricultural industry are paid worse than any other section of the community. I ask hon. members who have been talking in a glib manner during the past three or four years about settling soldiers on the land, that they should take those questions into consideration. The industry has no direct representatives in the Federal Parliament, and in very few of the State Parliaments has the industry direct representation.

Hon. J. Cornell: They are controlling the Government here.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Nor will other political parties give them representation, and we find that hon. members talk about this class of the community as being spoon-fed. I ask who it is that has been spoon-fed? It is those who have had protection in their favour right through. The primary producers did not ask for spoon-feeding; all they asked for was a fair and open deal to compete in the open markets of the world, and they want to be placed in the position to be able to do so. The primary producers

of Australia have had to make good with a protective duty against them. If we removed that protective duty the primary industries of the State would flourish and wheat production would be a paying proposition for the grower. To-day it pays everybody except the grower.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Would you class the squatter as a primary producer?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: Certainly. There is already a movement on foot to put an export duty on wool, so as to try to crush that primary industry. That industry is making good to-day because protection cannot affect it very much. A very few pounds a year in jute goods and shear blades will take off the crop. The result is that the pastoralist is not handicapped in the same way as the primary producer in the agricultural districts. We are killing our primary industries, starving them at the expense of the secondary industries and building up large towns in Australia. We have about half the population of the Commonwealth in the cities. I admit the farmers to-day are being spoon-fed. The farmers have been ruined by protection. Their industry is waning and they have been given spoon-feeding so as to keep the industry going. To-day the protectionists' association are advocating that all farm implements and tools of trade shall be put on the free list. They can see that they have bled the farmer white, that they have overdone the matter. Only the other day did we not see that Senator Lynch realised that farmers were leaving their properties all over Australia, and he asked some questions in the direction of having a commission appointed to go into the whole matter. He realises that the chief industry in Australia is waning and that something must be done to find out the cause. If they ask the 900 farmers who have gone off their properties in Western Australia, they will get the answer they require without having to appoint a commission to find out. For every industry except agriculture prices are fixed. The manufacturer and the wage earner between them can fleece the rest of the community. The worker goes before the Arbitration Court, gets what he wants, and prices are based by the merchants on what is given him, and the increases are passed on. Co-operation is the one thing which will tend to better the conditions of the primary producer. But I also realise that Australia is a politically class-ridden country, and that unless the primary producer has direct representation in Parliament all that he gains by co-operation will be taken from him by political means. Mr. Kingsmill referred to share farming. That is probably a good suggestion and particularly for those who want to gain colonial experience in farming. Some years ago I tried to let some of my land for share farming. The terms and conditions I offered were that the land was already cleared, there was water in the well, a man could work the land, have the whole of the crop, and I would lend him a plough, seed drill, and stripper. All I wanted was the stubble. But I could not get anyone to take it on those terms. Land could have

been got on similar terms all over Western Australia. There is nothing in the way of preventing share farming. But when the returned soldiers find that they can get improved farms on the conditions I have mentioned, they will hesitate before they take up virgin country. With regard to repurchased estates, the Colonial Secretary said that the producing capacity of the land justified the prices paid for those properties. There is no doubt that the Government will be careful in connection with those estates. They made a mistake in the first place by paying more than the intrinsic value of the land. Those estates were bought in the boom times. Another question referred to was the differentiation in connection with length of service between what are known as the "dinkum" soldiers and the "dud" soldiers: that is to say, the men who actually fought and the men who went for a holiday at the country's expense and then returned. I cannot see how we are going to differentiate. The man who volunteered and was turned down is just as loyal and as patriotic and is entitled to as much consideration as the man who went away. There were probably some men who went because they were not plucky enough to remain behind. In some of those cases such pressure was brought to bear that to have remained behind would have earned them almost a Victoria Cross. Again, with regard to community of interests. I have never understood that to mean, as some members said, something in the nature of the Paraguayan settlement. I understood that each soldier was to have his own farm, and that probably 16 or 20 soldiers would be settled in groups with congenial surroundings. Personally, however, I do not think the plan would be a wise one. Wherever soldiers go amongst old settlers, they get assistance. In the Williams district where I live we have decided that every man who went to the Front from that district and returns and is prepared to take up land there, the settlers will make him a present of 100 breeding ewes. That offer has nothing whatever to do with the Repatriation Board at all; it is a recognition by the people of what those from the district have done for their country. If other places were to do something similar it would show that there was general appreciation of what had been done by our soldiers. Mr. Sanderson said that this Bill might prove unsatisfactory to the soldier and dangerous for the State. I quite realise it may prove unsatisfactory to the soldier, but I do not see how we can make the Bill any better. It is not the Bill that requires to be improved, it is the conditions to which I have referred; the tariff needs to be revised.

Hon. J. EWING: How long will you have to wait for that?

Hon. J. A. GREIG: I do not know. I have no desire to further prolong the debate on the second reading of the Bill, but I would point out that we have a big problem to face. The payment of interest and pension in connection with the cost of the war will run us into an additional tax of 12s. 6d. per week for each man in Australia over the age of



21 years. We can therefore imagine what the taxation is going to be before many years are past. That sum will only pay interest on the war bill; it will not pay the principal. Then there is the question of the indemnity we shall receive. If that is used to pay off the war loans it seems to me that one section of the community will benefit very largely. Manufacturers in the Eastern States have made their fortunes out of the war by supplying war material at advanced prices. They then put their money into war loans, and if we get an indemnity with which to pay these men they will really have been paid twice over, for all the while they will have been receiving interest on their loans. When they get their money back they are going to be in a very fine position.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Repudiation is the only alternative.

Hon. J. A. GREIG: We want to look forward to the future and do things in a big way. A million or two spent in the repatriation of our soldiers will not either make or break Australia.

[The Deputy President took the Chair.]

Hon. J. W. HICKEY (Central) [9.31]: I support the second reading of this Bill. I felt rather keen upon it at first, but after the doleful picture painted by Mr. Greig, who is recognised as a direct representative of the farmers in this Chamber, regarding the lot of the men on the land, I feel rather dubious about it, or at all events less enthusiastic concerning it. I join in the general regret that some measure in connection with repatriation was not brought forward by the Government before now. Unfortunately, according to the arrangements which have been made, the Federal Government have full charge of repatriation matters. I have had the honour of being a member of one of the training committees attached to the repatriation scheme. Perhaps I ought not to mention it, but that committee recently went so far as to say that if the Federal Government did not soon put it on a businesslike footing it would refuse to sit. It had come to the conclusion that, surrounded as it was by regulations and red tape, it was impossible for it to do its work properly. I understand that the other repatriation committees are in a similar position, but I do not think that absolves us from the part we should play in the matter. The State Government is not altogether to blame, for previous Governments must also take their share. I am of opinion that action should have been taken in this matter concurrent with the war. The history of this war is the history of all wars. It is possible that excuses might have been found in the past for other Parliaments, but there is none for the Australian Parliament, because an agitation has been going on in this connection ever since the outbreak of hostilities. On various occasions public speakers have said that nothing would be done until the war was finished, and though we came in for a certain amount of criticism

we did wait in this State until the end of the war before any attempt was made to make provision in this direction. I am sorry that we have not at least followed more closely the example of Queensland. Although the Bill possibly falls far short of some of our aspirations, and we regret that it does not include provision in such directions as mining, pearling, and other propositions, at the same time we can hold out very little hope that anything further will be done until next session. We heard, on the occasion of the introduction of the second reading of this Bill, that a certain number of men had been settled at Yandanooka—I think eight—on the Avondale estate a few more, and at Harvey, Riverton and Osborne Park a few more, and that the Government had hopes of providing for others. I trust their hopes will be realised. We have men walking about the City keen on getting land but having no opportunity of doing so. I trust the Government are serious in this matter, and that when the Bill is passed, as I hope it will be, something of a practical nature will be done in the immediate future. The scope is limited, and the only opportunity of dealing with our returned men is to settle them on the land. Even this I am sorry to say is not to be extended to the whole of our soldiers. We are again lacking in this respect, because I notice in connection with the provision made in Queensland, that the operations of their Act are extended to all the soldiers of the allied armies. I think the Government are shortsighted in this direction, and that we should extend the operations of this Bill to all our allied soldiers, and to those who are admissible to the Commonwealth under the White Australia policy. From the business standpoint, apart from the sentimental aspect of the question, we are going to be left behind. Canada and Queensland are operating, and France is also at work. We understand from men who have returned, and from their letters, that already agents are busy in London inducing men to go to Queensland, Canada and France.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Queensland has had a man there for 18 months.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: And a little longer. Almost every soldier from Queensland acts as an organiser on behalf of his State. We have also had the views of one of the distinguished members of the French Mission, Dr. Siegfried. He made no secret in the course of his speeches, of the fact that France was going to make a bid for Australian soldiers as settlers in that country. I hope the Government, even at this late hour, will extend the operations of this Bill to all soldiers of the allied armies. We are disqualifying possibly some of our best men. This was referred to by Mr. Cornell, and there is no need for me to stress the point. Those of us who are men of the world and have a little experience in many directions, know well that some of the best citizens would be disqualified under the Bill if it passed in its present form. I hope that the hon. member who spoke so pointedly on the subject will in committee

move an amendment to give effect to his views, and I will support him if it overcomes the difficulty.

Hon. J. Cornell: Strike it out.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: Much regret has been expressed that the Bill went no further in the direction of settling men on our agricultural lands. I am pleased to say that almost every member has stated his desire to do everything possible to assist the returned soldier. When in Committee I intend to give an opportunity to those members to prove their bona fides. There are large tracts of pastoral country in Western Australia that are almost unused. Members particularly interested in this, the representatives of the North, I am pleased to hear, have emphatically stated that they are most anxious to assist in settling returned soldiers. I have framed a small amendment in connection with the pastoral lands of the State, which will give an opportunity to those hon. gentlemen to prove by their votes that they are in earnest in this matter. I have no doubt that they are. It will be remembered when the question of the extension of the pastoral leases was up for discussion here that the hon. Mr. Drew moved an amendment, which I supported, that provision should be made to give the Government power to resume areas to the extent of 20,000 acres within 20 miles of the seaboard or a railway line for closer settlement purposes. The amendment was turned down in this Chamber after a considerable amount of opposition from members representing Northern provinces. It is true they may have had substantial arguments for the position they took up on that occasion, but if I remember rightly, one of the strongest reasons I gave for supporting the amendment was that there would be an opportunity for the Government to settle many deserving men upon pastoral country in those particular localities. I was told that it was ridiculous to think that 20,000 acres in that part of the State would support any man. One hon. member said that a settler would starve on that area. I do not say that I am a judge of pastoral country, although I know it fairly well. I am always pleased to accept the opinions and the judgment of those people who are in the position to know the capabilities of that portion of the State. We have had no better illustration in connection with this debate than that afforded by Mr. Mills, a gentleman who is in a position to judge of the question seeing that he has been in responsible positions for a number of years, and that his judgment has always been accepted by both the large and small land holders of Western Australia. Mr. Mills has gone even further than I am prepared to go, and has said that an area of 15,000 acres in certain localities would be sufficient to enable a man to earn a livelihood. I do not pin myself down to any particular area up to 100,000 acres. In my opinion the Government should have power, through a board or some other body, to say that if a returned soldier wants some of that country they will give it to him. All I am asking in the amendment that I propose to move is that this par-

ticular class of land should be brought under the same conditions as exist with regard to the resumption of land for agricultural and other purposes. I am only asking that the power to resume conferred upon the Governor by Section 4 of the Land Act Amendment Act of 1906 may be exercised so that the land can be disposed of to discharged soldiers for agricultural, grazing, or pastoral purposes. Section 4 of the Act I have mentioned says—

The Governor may from time to time resume, enter upon, and dispose of the whole or any part of the land comprised in any pastoral lease for agricultural or horticultural settlement, or for mining or any other purpose as in the public interest he may think fit.

No reasonable objection can be taken to this power being granted on behalf of our returned soldiers. We have made all reasonable safeguards, and can see that this shall be subject also to Sections 109 and 146 of the principal Act. We are not attempting to put in anything like a bald or cold resolution, but are only asking that the Government should have power and opportunity to do something in this direction. This proposed amendment is subject to both of these reservations. I am not hitting at the wool princes or anything of the kind. I certainly think there is a good opportunity for settlement in that quarter. The question may be asked, how many men, after all, can be settled there? I know the country fairly well, and I am satisfied it would accommodate a large number of families. I refer particularly to the country between Mullewa and Peak Hill, and further north. The hon. member knows that country perfectly well, and so do other hon. members. There are many miles of country along the northern rivers practically lying waste to-day. That is shown by the number of sheep sheared. Mr. Holmes complained of the slow development of the North by reason of labour conditions. I do not think that argument has very much bearing, because one would not need to be a millionaire in order to pay all the wages paid to-day in the North-West. As a fact, not many men are employed on the north-western stations—which proves that the properties are not receiving that development which should be given them under the terms on which they are held. Instead of having a few pastoralists in that country employing a few men—blacks in some instances—we should have a large and prosperous community there. The prosperity of that community would certainly be reflected over the whole of the State. I wish to afford every reasonable chance for the soldiers to obtain whatever country the Government of the day might decide they are entitled to get. I desire also that reasonable facilities shall be given for the development of that northern country, so that the returned soldier will have a decent chance there. I am satisfied that the soldiers will become more prosperous in that country than they will if settled on the agricultural lands of the South-West. Moreover, the State as

a whole will benefit more from the settlement of the soldiers on our northern lands. I trust that the amendment I have outlined will be carried in Committee. I do not wish to stress the arguments already put forward by hon. members; neither do I wish to proceed on the lines of Mr. Holmes, who complained about labour conditions in the South-West, and about labour conditions in the North-West, and about labour conditions in various other places. I do desire, however, to express my agreement with those hon. members who say that this is not a party question, but a question on which we should all be unanimous. While regretting that the Government have not gone more thoroughly into the question, and that after 4½ years of war we only now have this measure, yet I welcome the Bill. I trust we shall all be unanimous on this matter of repatriation, and I hope my amendment will have the support of those representatives of the North-West who have repeatedly stated in this Chamber that they are prepared to do everything possible for the returned soldier. I hope they will exhibit that spirit when my amendment is moved in Committee.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [9.50]: I have very little indeed to add to the very full discussion which has taken place on this important measure. But as a former member of the State War Council, the activities of which have ceased since the appointment of the State Repatriation Board, and as one who was associated on that council with the work of repatriation prior to the appointment of the board, I feel it my duty to add a few words to what has already been so well said by many hon. members. I certainly intend to accord my support to the Bill. It must be borne in mind, however, that the measure is doing more than to carry out the arrangement made many months ago between the Federal Government and the State Government on the subject of repatriation work. The Bill, as I understand it, is simply confined to the settlement of returned soldiers on the land, and does not embrace any of the other activities in which it is possible that the soldiers may find an avenue of settlement. Various industries have been referred to by a number of members; but these particular industries or activities, in which it has been suggested the returned soldiers might find employment, are such as will be taken up by the State Repatriation Board. I do not for a moment pretend to say, although I give my support to the second reading, that I regard the Bill as by any means perfect. I do not think it is perfect, and other hon. members have expressed themselves to the same effect. I have listened with much interest to the criticisms which have been made and the very many excellent suggestions put forward. I hope the Government will take serious notice of these matters, and see whether some of them cannot be acted upon. I do not intend to go through these various suggestions. Even in its imperfect form I regard the Bill as a start in the right direction. I am not going to offer any congratulation to the Government for bringing in this measure, because I think it

is not the Government but the soldiers who are entitled to congratulations. The Government are merely seeking to provide some little help to the returned soldiers in taking up ordinary avocations after the strenuous life in the trenches. The congratulation needed is, therefore, congratulation to the men whom we shall all be glad to welcome back. I may refer particularly to the question of assisting the returned soldier to find markets for whatever produce he may have. Let us take, for example, the work of an orchardist. At present an orchardist finds it very hard indeed to make a living. The ordinary orchardist knows that there is not the market here; and the same thing may apply to various other avocations in which the returned soldiers may engage their energies. Unless a market is provided for the produce of a man's labour, the result must simply be disappointment to the man and loss to the State. The Government, I venture to say, can do a very great deal in assisting, not only the returned soldier, but also other settlers who are engaged on the land. I recently had it brought under my notice that there was a splendid market offering practically at the doors of our State, in the East. You, Mr. Deputy President, some time ago made an excellent report as to the result of your visit to Java and the Straits Settlements. In those countries there are teeming millions who are, I believe, becoming used to many of our products. If something can be done to open up the immense market awaiting development there, I have no doubt we shall be able to assist many returned soldiers to settle successfully in such work as that of orchardists, and also in other departments of labour, so that they are likely to become successful and contented settlers. Many other suggestions might be made, but I do not intend, at this late hour, to enter into further details, beyond stating that the Bill at this stage will receive my hearty support, and that I hope the Government will yet find it possible to extend further assistance to the returned soldiers.

On motion by Hon. J. Ewing, debate adjourned.

## BILL—DIVIDEND DUTIES ACT AMENDMENT.

### Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [9.58] in moving the second reading said: This is a very brief, very simple, and very important Bill. The reasons for its introduction are threefold. In the Land and Income Tax Act provision was made for an allowance in mining development work to be made at the main shaft. The provision does not appear in the Dividend Duties Act, and the object of introducing this amending Bill is to place, in that respect, mining companies affected by this Act on the same basis as the mines under the Land and Income Tax Act. In addition, the Government propose to grant a further privilege to mining companies with the object of assisting as far as possible the operations of those companies when they take

up options on mines outside the property in which they are really operating. The money they spend on development such companies will be allowed to deduct from their profits in the same way as if it had been expended on their own particular mine. It is estimated that allowing this deduction to be made will involve a loss to the revenue of probably a couple of thousand pounds per annum. But the idea in taking the risk of that loss is to encourage companies to spend their money in developing new properties; and, undoubtedly, if by giving such encouragement even one additional good mine should be developed, it will pay the State for losing this £2,000 annually for a good many years to come. Clause 3 extends to companies generally an exemption from duty on interest on Western Australia Government security. This provision obtains also in the Land and Income Tax Act, but it was not inserted in the Dividend Duties Act, which was an omission. The consequences are that in respect of life insurance companies, many of whom have invested largely in Western Australian stocks, as the Dividend Duties Act now reads they would be liable to pay duty on the interest received from those investments, whereas those stocks have always been issued to them on the understanding that they were exempt from State Income Tax. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [10-1]: It was very interesting to hear the Minister's remarks on the encouragement to be given to the development of mining. It should have a very good effect. I congratulate the Government upon the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; the Colonial Secretary in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Interest on Western Australian stock:

Hon. H. MILLINGTON: This should be inquired into. It is not a new provision?

Hon. A. SANDERSON: I regret that I heard only the last portion of the Colonial Secretary's statement on the second reading. What does the clause mean?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: To be candid, I am afraid it means that through a little hasty legislation last session, we did something which we had no intention of doing. Prior to the amendments passed last session, these companies came under the land and Income Tax Assessment Act. Under that Act their interest, derived from Western Australian Government debentures, was exempt from taxation. Then it was decided to place these companies under the Dividend Duties Act, and the necessary provision giving them exemption was not inserted. If the hon. member has the slightest doubt about the matter, we will report progress.

Hon. A. SANDERSON: It is important, and I should be glad if the leader of the House would postpone this.

[The Deputy President resumed the Chair.]

Progress reported.

## BILL—INCOME TAX.

### Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [10-10]: The Bill proposes, not to remedy an error, but to supply an omission from the Act of last year. Last year for the first time a definite method of calculating the taxation was adopted. The Bill is merely a short provision to put in the Act that method of calculation. It should have been done when the Act was passed, for in that Act the illustration will be of great convenience to taxpayers. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etcetera.

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

House adjourned at 10-12 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Friday, 13th December, 1918.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4-30 p.m. and read prayers.

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

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND DEBATABLE MATTER.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [4-40]: When the Estimates of the Electoral Department were being discussed the leader of the Opposition raised a question in connection with certain photographs of premises, and I promised to get some information from the Chief Electoral Officer. I have that information now and would like with the permission of the House to place it before hon. members. I have asked the Chief Electoral Officer to explain about the claims of certain electors and I think I may read his answer.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member may proceed.

Hon. P. Collier: On a point of order, is the Attorney General in order in proceeding to read a statement which may contain debatable matter and to which I shall not be able to reply?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Attorney General said he had given the leader of the Opposition a promise that he would supply this information in con-