

personally, I welcome the growth of the Country Party, although I am not a member of that party and am never likely to be one. Still I welcome their growing strength because I think they will check the evil of centralisation and will cause more attention to be paid to the men outback who are the most deserving citizens of the State.

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

House adjourned at 5.53 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 23rd August, 1921.

	PAGE
Questions: Municipal Corporations Act, Amendment ...	328
Midland Workshops, apprenticeships ...	328
Wheat—1, Firm offers for export ...	328
2, Local contract notes for export ...	328
Timber royalties, cancellation of license ...	329
South-West, inspection by Federal Members ...	329
Address-in-reply, ninth day ...	329

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

QUESTION—MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS ACT, AMENDMENT.

Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Works: 1, When does he intend to introduce an amendment of the Municipal Corporations Act to give to municipalities the option of rating on the unimproved value of land? 2, In view of the fact that the municipal year commences on the 1st November, will he consider the advisability of introducing the Bill at a sufficiently early stage to allow of its being brought into force for the next municipal year?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, If possible this session. 2, No avoidable delay will occur.

QUESTION—MIDLAND WORKSHOPS, APPRENTICESHIPS.

Mr. DAVIES asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Who are the members of the Apprentices Selection Board at the Locomotive Workshops at Midland Junction? 2, What is the method adopted in selecting apprentices?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, The workshops manager, shop foreman of trade concerned, union representative of trade concerned. 2, (a) Educational qualifications are tabulated and considered; (b) candidates are interrogated by the Board, and physique and personality noted; (c) candidates with outstanding qualifications in (a) and (b) are given preference; (d) candidates with approximately equal qualifications in (a) and (b) ballot for order of appointment.

QUESTIONS (2)—WHEAT.

Firm offers for Export.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has it been the practice of the State Wheat Marketing Scheme to give exporters of Western Australian wheat firm offers of wheat for export for 48 hours, to enable them to arrange freight and quote for the delivery of the wheat in, say, South Africa? 2, Has this system been terminated under instructions from the Australian Wheat Board in Melbourne? 3, Are the Government aware that this action will prejudice the sale of Western Australian wheat, as grain exporters in this State obtaining only tentative quotations locally will be unable to quote against Victorian exporters who are in close touch with the Australian Wheat Board in Melbourne and are able to obtain firm offers of wheat there? 4, Will he protest to the Australian Wheat Board against the disadvantages imposed on the export of Western Australian wheat in this respect, and the consequent loss to the Western Australian producer?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, Yes, to certain destinations on behalf of the Australian Wheat Board. 2, Yes. 3, The export of the actual grain of the Western Australian harvest to desirable markets may be affected, but the local pool will share in any Australian wheat sales effected overseas. 4, (a) Yes; I have done so. (b) There is no loss to the Western Australian producer.

Local Contract Notes for Export.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Has it been the practice of the State Wheat Marketing Scheme to issue contract notes locally for sales of Western Australian wheat for export? 2, Is it true that this practice has been stopped under recent instructions from the Australian Wheat Board in Melbourne, and that the Australian Wheat Board has decided that all such sales are to be finalised in Melbourne in future? 3, What are the reasons for this alteration? 4, Is he aware that this new system will place Melbourne brokers at a great advantage as compared with residents of Western Australia in regard to handling Western Australian wheat for export, with a corresponding loss to the Western Australia-

lian wheat grower? 5, Will the Government make a vigorous protest to the Federal Government against the system of centralisation in Melbourne, which is being adopted by the Australian Wheat Board in this matter to the detriment of our producers?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, It has been the practice for the State Wheat Marketing Scheme locally to arrange sales of wheat for export to certain destinations on behalf of the Australian Wheat Board. 2, This arrangement has been stopped. 3, Australian Wheat Board telegraphs that the present condition of the market renders it particularly essential that the board should be the sole seller of wheat overseas. 4, There may be a disadvantage to local brokers, but there should not be any loss to Western Australian wheat growers. 5, The matter has already been taken up with the central board.

QUESTION—TIMBER ROYALTIES.

Cancellation of License.

Mr. MANN asked the Minister for Forests: 1, Has the Conservator power under the Forests Act, 1918, to differentiate in the matter of royalties for the taking and removal of forest produce? 2, Does he agree with the Conservator in imposing on certain timber companies royalties in respect of licenses issued since the passing of the Act which are three times (that is, 15s. 3d. as against 5s. 5d. per square load) the royalties payable by other companies, making a difference to one company of approximately £7,500 per annum? 3, Have not complaints of unfair treatment been received from Bunning Brothers, Limited? 4, Is he aware that this company and Lewis & Reid, Ltd., have been carrying on business in competition with Millars' Timber and Trading Company, Ltd., Whittaker Bros., and other companies for a period of over 15 years? 5, Does he consider it equitable that Bunning Bros., Ltd., and Lewis & Reid, Ltd., should have to pay three times the amount of royalty which the other timber companies are called on to pay? 6, Will he take steps to suspend the payment of the royalties pending a revision of the position? 7, Why was Timber License 63/11 held on account of Bunning Bros., Ltd., cancelled? 8, If the reason was that the concession was not being worked, did the Conservator take into consideration the fact that it was being worked in conjunction with other concessions and that work on them had been greatly hampered owing to the abnormal conditions which prevailed during the war? 9, Will he cause the Conservator to take steps to reinstate the concession referred to?

The MINISTER FOR FORESTS replied: 1, Yes. 2, When a permit holder desires an extension of his permit which has expired through effluxion of time, the royalty is revised under Forest Regulation 42, made under Section 44, Subsection 40, of the

Forests Act, 1918, and the Conservator advises what royalty should be imposed. This royalty is based on the value of timber sold in the particular district in which the permit exists, and which is ascertained by the sale of sawmilling permits by public auction or tender. 3, Yes. 4, I am advised by the Conservator there is evidence that one firm have joined with Millars' Timber and Trading Company in the export of sleepers. 5, Their permits having expired they are subject to revision of royalty as set out in answer to No. 2. 6, The Conservator does not recommend such a course. 7, Bunning Bros. were not operating in the area, and did not apply for exemption. The permit was therefore forfeited under Section 12 (a) of the Land Act Amendment Act, 1904, for a breach of the conditions. 8, The Conservator took all the facts into consideration. 9, The Government has not the power to do this. The power is with the Conservator of Forests.

QUESTION—SOUTH-WEST.

Inspection by Federal Members.

Hon. P. COLLIER asked the Premier: In order that the resources of the State might be made more widely known in the Eastern States, will he facilitate an inspection of the South-West by the members of the Commonwealth Joint Committee on Public Accounts who are now sitting in Perth?

The PREMIER replied: I will give them an opportunity of seeing something of the South-West, the wheat lands, and the gold-fields if they are willing to make the trip.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from the 18th August.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna) [4.45]: I do not know whether the applause from the Opposition which greeted my rising has any significance as expressing the unanimity or thorough accord which has hitherto prevailed during the debate or—

The Minister for Mines: It is a tribute of personal love and affection.

Hon. T. WALKER: That may be so, but I am somewhat astounded at the rather general consensus of admiration which we have heard expressed during the course of this debate.

Mr. Pickering: It is a case of a mutual admiration society.

Hon. T. WALKER: I can well understand personal affection even for one's ubiquitous political opponent, but it seems a somewhat serious thing that we are drifting into an attitude that would denote ultimate satisfaction with all that is done by the Government.

The Premier: I do not think they have gone so far as that. I wish you would.

Hon. T. WALKER: I think we have gone so far that an actual promise has been se-

cured from more than one quarter to help the old chariot along. When I review what Parliamentary experience I have had—and I have had a few years of that experience—I think if I have learnt one lesson more than another it is that for the health and well-being of the general public, we must have a watchful Opposition. We must have a critical Opposition. We must recognise in a Parliament of this kind, or of any kind, that there are lines of principle that one party supports and desires to see supplant the lines of principle followed by the other side. Otherwise, there would be no necessity for an Opposition. If there be no division of opinion, and if one has not to work for one such line of principle and is desirous to substitute that line for another, then Parliamentary Government is at an end. I know the gravity of the situation raises some questions beyond party and beyond Parliament. For instance, there is the question of finance. I think it is here that the greatest amount of promise of help was given. In the question of finance, the whole world at present is involved. We have had the cries of parties to the effect that we must settle the financial difficulties of this State. A mandate from one section, or rather from the backers of one section, comes forward that we must reduce the deficit; we must make ends meet. May I tell those hon. members that while the world is running in its present trend, it is absolutely impossible to settle the finances of this State satisfactorily. I do not care what Government may be placed in power. We cannot spend the money that is required for the development of this State and get it back from the population we have now. That is the problem staring us in the face. It is insoluble. Put any Government hon. members may like in power, and if the Government are going to keep the wheels of progress going, they are bound to get into debt. The only question I have to ask myself is: Will the future pay the debt? Has the country the resources and the possibilities to enable it to untimately balance the ledger?

Member: Easy.

Hon. T. WALKER: I say "easy" too. With our resources as they are, it need not concern us so very much that we cannot make ends meet at the commencement of our great career. But there are certain pressures that are being placed upon us and which must be removed in order that the State may go ahead.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Get back to work, for instance.

Hon. T. WALKER: I will deal with that aspect in a moment. There are certain pressures, however, that can be removed and those pressures are not in the domain of that section of the community that we call "the workers." They belong to another class altogether. While we have the present system governing us—the financial system that is known as the capitalistic system—we are bound to have pressure that will

almost bleed us white. Let me give hon. members one or two cases in point. Australia, through the late war, has been plunged into debt to the extent of something like 400 millions. We have to pay that somehow or another, and where is it to be paid? Not all of it in Australia by a long way. It has to be paid among the civilised nations of the world, and amongst the Allies chiefly.

Mr. C. C. Maley: If you work, you will soon get it back.

Hon. T. WALKER: True, we can develop the country that way, but I submit that the worker has developed the country, and I would like to tell the member for Irwin (Mr. Maley) that in no avenue of work has a conclusion been reached which is not touched by labour. Labour has helped to achieve that end. There is no wealth that the hon. member for Irwin enjoys that is not the result of production by toil. It is work that has done it. I submit that it is the very element of production in Western Australia that has tied us into a knot at the present juncture. We have produced, not what feeds our population—

Mr. C. C. Maley: We should not talk too much.

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not know what the member means by these inane and stupid interjections.

Mr. C. C. Maley: We want more work and less talk.

Hon. T. WALKER: I wish we had more sense and less froth on that bench where the hon. member sits. It is the very productiveness of the Commonwealth that has got us into our present situation. We have produced infinitely more than is required for every inhabitant of this State. We have produced millions of pounds worth of wealth that has left the State. It has to feed others in other parts of the world, and the rope that draws the surplus which our work has produced, is the interest on borrowed money, and it is the grip that capitalism has on this State. It is that that is causing us to be where we are.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Of course you cannot develop a young country without borrowing.

Hon. T. WALKER: Mr. Speaker, I ask you to permit me to continue my speech. If the member for Irwin wants to make a speech, I will sit down. I say that it is that surplus that is paying the interest bill to the money lenders of the world. I was pleased indeed with the lucid and capable speech delivered by the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo). He put his finger upon a vital point when he said that it is impossible for this State to recover itself while the hand of the Commonwealth, in a financial sense, is upon this State. Every source of revenue is taken by the Commonwealth before we get there, so to speak. Before we can deal with the resources of the people, the Commonwealth has exploited them. We have to employ officials and pay big salaries in dribs and drabs, in one way and another, for doing work for the Commonwealth. They come

upon every avenue of taxation and when they have satisfied themselves, what is left for the State? What can the State accomplish in such circumstances? The principles of the Constitution have been departed from by the Commonwealth Government. Originally the States came together under a compact in mutual agreement, allotting certain functions to the Commonwealth and certain functions to the State, in each instance preserving under the Constitution the sovereignty of each State. Within its own borders, it was a sovereign State; but all that has been broken down. We are stumbling step by step into dependency upon the Federal Government. We are tributaries to the Federal Government and all avenues of industry, as well as of commerce, are shackled by the hand that the Commonwealth has upon them. There is growing need for reform in that direction. I shall not deal longer with that point now, for it must come up for discussion at length by and by, but it is clear that we cannot restore our financial health and strength while the Commonwealth disease is rampant. It is here amongst us and we cannot get rid of it; we cannot get on our feet, while that supreme burden oppresses us. This brings me to another phase of the question. I do not want to labour any section in the brief speech I intend to make. I want to deal with the cry raised by a certain section of this Chamber. A certain degree of vanity and pride has served to make them believe they are the Constitutional clique in this State. The Nationalists some time ago appealed to the country on the score of law and order and constitutional government, but they are out-done by the party that we know technically as the Country Party.

Mr. Pickering: *The party.*

Hon. P. Collier: *The boss party.*

Mr. Simons: *Monger's magpies.*

Mr. SPEAKER: *Order!*

Hon. T. WALKER: I have a cutting from one of our newspapers which says that the Primary Producers' Conference was continued at the offices of the Westralian Farmers' Ltd., and that there was a full attendance of delegates, and that the President, Mr. A. J. Monger, occupied the chair. The first business of the day was the consideration of recommendations from the executive dealing with the political platform, and it was agreed that the following new planks should be incorporated: (1) The encouragement of a spirit of nationhood amongst the Australian people—

Mr. Pickering: *Hear, hear!*

Hon. T. WALKER:—and the maintenance of constitutional government.

Hon. P. Collier: *That is the point.*

Hon. T. WALKER: That is the point I want to emphasise, to maintain the Government we have, constitutionally. The next is, "the integrity of the Empire." It is in that one particular, so far as nationhood is concerned, that we are all working to build

up the nation. Everybody is doing something to build up the nation.

Mr. Pickering: *Then why complain?*

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not complaining. That is a pure platitude, and I need not pay any more attention to it; it goes without saying. But I do want to draw attention to the "consistency" of the Country Party.

Mr. Pickering: *That is one of our faults, consistency.*

Hon. T. WALKER: Constitutional government! The maintenance of constitutional government! Yet it is from this party that the proposal comes to have elective Ministries. Do they know what constitutional government means? Does not every student of constitutional history and law know that in order to have constitutionalism, we must have our King, our Parliament, and our Executive? And if we are going to appoint Ministers by a vote of this House, elective Ministers, where is the King coming in? He is no longer in Parliament. You have deprived him of his prerogative. You cannot have elective Ministries and constitutional government; you cannot maintain the Constitution and have that innovation, if innovation it be. Perhaps I may not be objecting to the charge because I believe in progress. I believe our Constitution will grow and will have to be altered to suit the altered conditions; but where is the consistency in making this brand of constitutionalism to maintain the Constitution? The Constitution that governs this State decides the number of members there shall be in Parliament. If we are not to maintain that Constitution what will become of the cry of lessening the number of members?

Mr. A. Thomson: *Are you going to support the reduction of members?*

Hon. T. WALKER: I question whether I am. I should be very sorry to get it into the clique to which the hon. member belongs. It is in numbers that we have safety; that is the advantage of numbers. Let us see how they have gone about this matter of preserving the constitution. Only the other day there was a conference held—

Mr. A. Thomson: *And don't forget—*

Mr. SPEAKER: *Order!*

Mr. A. Thomson: *Open doors.*

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes, and open mouths as well. I find that at this conference they admitted a Professor from our University. Now the University, if I understand it rightly, is an institution which might not be all that is perfect, and it might be starved for want of funds.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: *And 'tis not the only institution that is starved.*

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not the only place that needs funds to carry it along. But the Professor, paid from a grant made by the State through the representatives of the people, is paid to do his work as a

teacher, and therefore should have some respect for the Constitution, he ought to have some respect too for Parliament, for the King's representatives in the administration.

The Premier: Hear, hear!

Hon. T. WALKER: What does he do? This professor in the University wants money for his University. He may have knocked at the door of the Treasurer. I do not know. He may have knocked at the door of the Minister for Works. I do not know.

The Minister for Works: He did.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have no doubt the Minister can speak for himself; but I do know that whatever encouragement or whatever rebuff he received by Ministerial knocking, he went to the gathering of the Country Party in conference, and made a speech there, telling them he would be glad of their assistance and actually tried to induce them—there can be no question about it—to coerce the body sitting on the Treasury bench in this House, and in that way to coerce Parliament.

Hon. P. Collier: He had no right to be there.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is so. Everyone has his citizenship rights, and I begrudge no one the privilege or the right to express his views at the proper time and place. But this was a political move and had political significance. No other purpose was in it. He goes forth and says:—

In carrying out such economy nothing better could be done than the development of the brain, human resources, and the energy of our young manhood. The University had not cost the State, since its inception, as much as our precious trading concerns.

He drags this in before the conference of what shall I call them—bucolics—

Mr. Pickering: Primary producers.

Hon. T. WALKER: Well, primary producers. He sneers at what the Government have done and what the Government are doing, and in order to make that sneer he absolutely misrepresents the facts.

The Minister for Works: He was misled by the "West Australian" newspaper.

Hon. T. WALKER: Very possibly. But he ought not at a public meeting of that kind scatter newspaper claptrap. He is in the position of a professor of the University and should set an example. There is nothing I can think of more valuable in a University than to consider a professor setting examples to the students. A professor creates the atmosphere there. What kind of atmosphere is Professor Shann creating when he goes forth with such cheap sneers as those I have quoted. Then he goes on to say in his address to the primary producers—

The annual grant needed to be raised from £15,000 to £20,000. That was a flea-bite compared with what was devoted to other objects. To invest in the brains

of the younger generation would mean nothing like the wild cat Wyndham freezing works.

The wild cat Wyndham freezing works! This from a professor who is at the University to uphold, if anything, by example and precept the Constitution that gave him his University. Now the evil of it is this, that he goes to this section of the community to stir them. For what? Because he recognises that they are using their power to coerce the Government. What this party says the Government will do. Is that constitutional government? You get people, even a professor of our University, working these primary producers to soothe the Government on. They may take it as a compliment. But what were those members of Parliament doing, who were at this meeting, to permit the professor to sneer at the work of Parliament?

Mr. Angelo: The present administration are not responsible for the freezing works.

Hon. T. WALKER: No, but they are responsible for their management. I will not deny that had it not been for the war, no more valuable investment would have been made than those freezing works.

Mr. Angelo: It is a question.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not a question any more than the works at Carnarvon are for the good of the North-West. The professor was allowed to make this sneer in the presence of members of Parliament.

The Premier: They are always doing it.

Hon. P. Collier: It is their privilege.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not their privilege to seek a political body and try to use its political influence. There must be a distinction made between free expression of opinion and the deliberate use of a political body for the purpose of coercing the Government. I have another matter. I am quoting again from the report. This is headed "The Gold Buyers' Bill." It reads as follows—

Mr. Bloxome introduced the question of the proposed Gold Buyers' Bill, which was submitted by the Chamber of Mines.

Talk about a party! I never knew anything more conglomerate than this party. The report continues—

It was decided to adopt the recommendation of the mining committee to assist by means of a deputation to the Premier and the Minister for Mines requesting the Government to introduce this Bill at the opening of Parliament as a Government measure. The mining association is to be requested to co-operate on the deputation. The deputation is to be introduced by the Leader of the Country Party—

Mr. A. Thomson: Nothing wrong with that, is there?

Hon. T. WALKER: No, not with that. The report continues—

who will be accompanied by as many members of the party as may be available. An advance copy of the Bill—

This is what is wrong with it! This is what I am going to ask them to justify constitutionally. Listen to this—

An advance copy of the Bill will be sent to the Minister for his information.

This is constitutional government! This is sticking to the maintenance of the Constitution! Farce, humbug, on the part of members who can be guilty of such conduct as this. It is this I am objecting to. I object to whittling away what is really the safeguard of the citizens of the State, the protection of this Parliament from the undue influence and machinations of those outside it. This is what really I am objecting to.

Mr. Pickering: We will consider that point.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have very much doubt about the result. If the hon. member has to consider it, God help us! It is not only small matters of that kind to which I would refer. I have in my hand a report of a speech delivered before the conference by the Minister for Agriculture. This was published in the "West Australian" of the 17th inst. It is a long speech. I am not going to read it, but I am going to draw attention to what follows the speech in the newspaper. Immediately after two columns of speech we get the heading "In Parliament," under which we read this—

The Minister for Agriculture made a statement in the Legislative Assembly last night similar to that published above.

That is the report of his speech in this House! The two column report is of the speech made by the Minister to the primary producers' conference.

The Premier: He practised on them.

Hon. P. Collier: But they got the information before us.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is the point. There were in that speech matters of great importance to the State as a whole, the possible realisations, payments to be made from the old wheat pool.

The Minister for Agriculture: It was all here on the same day.

Hon. T. WALKER: See how little is the distinction I am drawing realised by the hon. member! The Minister thinks the question answered when he says it was all here on the same day. But the point is that the information was given first and foremost to the primary producers. Parliament had to wait until the primary producers got the facts. Is it not invariably the rule that matters of public importance must first be communicated to Parliament? Is it not a fact that, constitutionally, that is the attitude of every hon. member? The primary producers can learn of facts that are going on in the Government, behind the scenes so to speak, which members of the House cannot get until the primary producers have been supplied. The fact that the Minister went before those people, seemed to imply that, he considered them of greater importance than he considered this Chamber. And he is a Minister, a representative of the Crown! Yet he divulges first to them the secrets of the Government before he speaks to us. It was the same with the bulk handling question. Before this

Chamber knew anything about it, before this House had a chance to glance at the Bill, the question was dealt with and the Bill read and discussed and adopted by the primary producers. And not one of us, members of the House, had seen a copy of the Bill.

The Minister for Agriculture: We had a similar Bill last year.

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not care. It was carried there, it was discussed there, before it was placed in the confidence of the House.

Hon. P. Collier: Never previously has such a thing been done in the history of the State.

Hon. T. WALKER: There can be no greater breach of constitutional methods. Moreover, it is absolutely ignoring Parliament and treating the primary producers' conference as Parliament itself.

Hon. P. Collier: That is so.

Hon. T. WALKER: And matters are not ended there. I come to a point which surely all hon. members will be interested in. Here is a report in the "Daily News."

Mr. Pickering: I suppose you will reflect on that paper.

Hon. T. WALKER: I may have occasion to reflect on its opinions and its policy, and sometimes even on the correctness of its statements. But this is not one of those cases. This is a report headed "The Treatment of the Insane," "Position at Claremont," "Allegations and Denial," "Royal Commission Wanted." Then follows this—

The chairman (Mr. A. J. Monger) said he had received a letter from the Colonial Secretary (Mr. Brown) with a request that it should be read at the conference. The Minister wrote: "I notice on the agenda paper for conference a motion relating to a Royal Commission to inquire into the Claremont Hospital for the Insane. This no doubt has emanated from Courthope himself, who is at present practising his profession in the Goomalling district. Courthope has distributed numerous papers throughout Australia in which he makes grave charges against the Claremont asylum officials. You no doubt have received these documents yourself. I am sorry to say that the editor of 'Stead's Review' saw fit to publish Courthope's statements without making the least inquiry whether such statements were true or not. I sent a very long reply to Stead giving him the whole of the facts, but he has not seen fit to acknowledge my letter. I had a very nice letter from the Rev. G. Tregear, who is now in the East. He spoke highly of the management of the asylum. He was the visiting chaplain for several years. I am forwarding you a copy of Dr. Anderson's report on the charge made by Courthope, in order that you may not be ignorant of the position when the motion comes on. I leave it to you to judge for yourself whether Courthope's statements are reliable or not. The file contains reports which clearly prove that Courthope's statements are absolutely untrue. I am paying

close attention to the working of the asylum, and a board was appointed last year to undertake all the necessary work for the comfort of inmates and the management of the institution. The board (under the new Act) has mandatory powers which are now being exercised, and every case is thoroughly investigated. Should patients consider they are unlawfully detained or badly treated they are entitled to place their case before the board, who have absolute power to act in any direction or decision arrived at. The board is doing good work, and is of great assistance to the officials and staff. The work is most unpleasant and arduous, and the staff are not unmindful of their responsibilities. I hope in future there will be no necessity for so much outside influence. The Government is anxious that the true facts should be known. I hope the conference will agree—

Here is the point:—

that a Royal Commission is unnecessary.

I want hon. members to observe that. The report continues—

The present board is quite capable of rectifying any anomalies in existence and I do not think it would be advisable to interfere with its work.

I trust hon. members will note that. The report continues—

I intend shortly to write to Dr. Sinclair, of Sydney (Inspector-General for Insane in New South Wales), asking him to visit this State to investigate and report upon the working of our asylums. Dr. Sinclair is a man of wide experience as far as lunacy is concerned, and he no doubt would be able to give me good advice regarding the inner working of our institutions. Motions like the one to which I refer reflect upon me as the Minister controlling asylums. I would not care much if such motions were justifiable, but they are not. I give you my assurance that the strictest attention is being given to the management by myself, and I am doing my best for the unfortunate sufferers in the institution."

Mr. Pickering: Very sympathetic.

The Minister for Works: They will not give him a fair chance.

The Colonial Secretary: It is for Parliament to say whether there should be a Royal Commission.

Hon. T. WALKER: I know that. What does the Minister do but write to Mr. Monger? Why discuss the matter with Mr. Monger? Has he not the moral courage to take the responsibility of setting his own course and defending himself to the House if he be accused?

The Colonial Secretary: Because of the motion on the agenda paper.

Hon. T. WALKER: Is it not for him to defend whatever may be necessary for him to defend in this Chamber?

The Colonial Secretary: Undoubtedly!

Hon. T. WALKER: But the Minister writes to Mr. Monger.

The Colonial Secretary: Because of the motion on the agenda paper.

Hon. P. Collier: What does that matter?

Hon. T. WALKER: The Minister was present at that meeting and asked the Chairman to read this letter to that body.

The Colonial Secretary: I was not there.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Minister was present in his letter.

The Colonial Secretary: I was not.

Hon. T. WALKER: He was present by proxy. The letter was in his language. He was in the assembly, and was trying to influence it. He prayed and begged Mr. Monger to stand by him and use his influence to stop the primary producers from voting for it. He tried to kill the resolution, but neither the amendment nor the Minister's letter killed the resolution.

The Minister for Works: Now they are killing the doctor.

Hon. T. WALKER: In to-night's paper we find the following statement:

The Colonial Secretary (Mr. F. T. Broun) stated this morning that he intended to give effect to the Government's decision to appoint a Royal Commission to enquire into the question of the care of the insane as soon as possible.

Hon. P. Collier: Last week it was not necessary.

The Colonial Secretary: I say it is not necessary now.

Hon. P. Collier: Instructions from the conference: this is responsible Government.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! Hon. members will need an inquiry here directly.

Hon. T. WALKER: Quite right, Mr. Speaker. There is great need for an inquiry if we can find an independent commissioner to make it.

Hon. P. Collier: Constitutional Government!

Hon. T. WALKER: Only a week ago the Minister begged and prayed—if I am not exaggerating his own language—that Mr. Monger should use his influence with the primary producers.

The Colonial Secretary: I say it is not necessary now.

Hon. P. Collier: Your Premier says it is.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not necessary, says the Minister, but he is willing to do it. Why? He is willing to do it because the conference carried the resolution.

Mr. Pickering: Because the journalists carried the resolution.

Mr. Corboy: Are you not going to carry the responsibility?

Mr. Pickering: They take precedence.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is exceedingly wonderful that the Minister should one week ago be telling us that it is not only unnecessary to have a commission, but urging the chairman of the primary producers' conference to help him in defeating that proposal. Why is there this sudden change?

Hon. P. Collier: Because of instructions from outside.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is now stated—they will not admit the fact for there is a species of hypocrisy in addition to the cowardice of their statements—it is not because the primary producers carried the resolution, but because there was a deputation of journalists which waited upon the Premier months ago.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was over Mable's case.

Mr. Pickering: The Premier said so.

Hon. T. WALKER: Why wait until this motion is carried before this comes to light?

Hon. P. Collier: Because of instructions from any old outsider.

Hon. T. WALKER: We never heard about this journalists' deputation until the primary producers had given their mandate. If they have given that mandate, what becomes of the position of the Colonial Secretary?

The Minister for Works: Who elected the journalists as representatives of the people?

Hon. P. Collier: The Premier says he took instructions from them.

Hon. T. WALKER: I know. That is a diplomatic evasion of the facts. It is not telling the truth. We never heard about the deputation or what they represented, or of the appointment of a commission until the resolution of the primary producers. Two or three days after, however, we have a statement made that the Premier has agreed to appoint a commission.

Hon. P. Collier: Following on a request of the journalists.

Hon. T. WALKER: This came from the dictators, those behind the Government, those who give the Government life, and without whom the Government could not live. They are using their power in a way that is diametrically opposed to constitutional Government. Constitutional Government is impossible whilst that power exists outside. We know full well the result of the commission that is to be appointed. It is to be appointed at the dictatorship of the primary producers.

The Premier: What is that?

Hon. T. WALKER: The appointment of a commission of inquiry into lunacy questions, which the Premier has promised because of the resolution carried at the primary producers' conference.

The Premier: I say it is not so.

Hon. T. WALKER: I know the Premier says that.

Hon. P. Collier: The Colonial Secretary says it is not necessary.

The Colonial Secretary: And I say so now.

Hon. P. Collier: But the Premier says it is. You had better get out. This is no place for you.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I agree with the Minister that it is not necessary at present. Give the board a chance. It is pure waste of money.

The Colonial Secretary: Absolutely!

Hon. P. Collier: But that is not the question.

Hon. T. WALKER: This appears on Monday, August 22nd, which is not long ago. The Minister in his letter says:

The Board is doing good work. The work is most unpleasant. I hope the conference will agree that a Royal Commission is unnecessary.

Mr. Pickering: I hope so too.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is on Monday.

Hon. P. Collier: That is from the Minister controlling the Department.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Minister in charge of the Department, who tells us now that he is giving all his attention to it. I believe him. Then he goes on to say:

I would not care if such motions were justifiable but they are not.

The Colonial Secretary: Neither are they.

Hon. T. WALKER: Has the Premier done an unjustifiable thing?

Hon. P. Collier: That is what he says.

Hon. T. WALKER: Has the Premier proposed to deal with the Minister's Department in an unjustifiable manner?

The Premier: No!

Hon. T. WALKER: He says it is not justifiable.

The Premier: He says the conference ought not to deal with it.

Hon. P. Collier: He says an inquiry is unjustifiable.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Minister says a commission is unnecessary.

The Premier: The motion is unnecessary.

Hon. T. WALKER: We want the truth and only the truth.

The Premier: Let us have it.

Hon. T. WALKER: The truth is that the Minister says that the commission is unnecessary.

The Colonial Secretary: I say it is not justifiable because it is unnecessary.

Hon. T. WALKER: Now he has contradicted the Premier. It is unjustifiable because it is unnecessary. It is both unjustifiable and unnecessary. These are the Minister's own words now and yet he has done it. In to-night's paper the following report appears:

The Colonial Secretary (Mr. F. T. Broun) stated this morning that he intended to give effect to the Government's decision to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the question of the care of the insane as soon as possible.

Hon. P. Collier: Unnecessary and unjustifiable!

Hon. T. WALKER: Is it constitutional for a man thus over-ridden in the responsible office he holds to stay in the Ministry?

The Colonial Secretary: When you were in the Cabinet, and the majority of Ministers disagreed with you, did you get out?

Hon. T. WALKER: Where I had disagreements I handed in my resignation until something was done to carry out my views. I was never placed in the position of the Colonial Secretary, however, and no other Minister of the Labour Government

was ever placed in such an invidious position as that in which he finds himself.

Hon. P. Collier: Instructions from an outside body.

Hon. T. WALKER: There never was a case of a Labour Minister shirking his responsibility, or expressing positive views of the necessity or otherwise of a particular policy, and having to eat humble pie by accepting the dictation of his colleagues.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. Teesdale: You ought to sympathise with him.

Hon. T. WALKER: Under constitutional Government if a Minister cannot carry out the management of his department he gets out of it. It is the unwritten law that a Minister who cannot be left a free hand and his independence in the control of the department, for which he assumes responsibility, leaves his colleagues and hands in his resignation, more particularly when that position is forced upon him by outsiders.

The Premier: He protested against it.

Hon. T. WALKER: He declared it to be unnecessary and unjustifiable, but Cabinet carried it in spite of him, and two days after he says, "I am willing to carry out the decision of the Government." What is proposed to be done by the commission? Are we again to whittle away the rights of the people by bringing over here someone to whitewash the institution?

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister wants the head of a department in another State to hold an inquiry concerning the head of a department in this State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Give the committee a chance.

The Premier: I thought you objected to the commission.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do object to the commission at present.

Hon. T. WALKER: We understand that when the journalists approached the Premier on the subject they drew attention to what was required in the commission. The first paragraph of their proposal was—

The adequacy or otherwise of our lunacy laws to ensure that no person shall be certified as lunatic, and confined as such, unless his mental condition is such as to absolutely justify to an open court or other jurisdiction as the Commissioners may consider desirable, certification and confinement.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Will the Premier give us the names of the members of the deputation? We should like to know who they are.

Hon. P. Collier: More secret deputations!

Hon. T. WALKER: The article continues—

2.—The adequacy or otherwise of our lunacy laws to enable a patient respecting whose mental condition reasonable

doubt may exist to secure inquiry into his or her case.

3.—The whole effect of our lunacy laws, and whether the provisions of them are such that the objects for which they are framed are reasonably achieved, namely—

(a) The confinement of persons whose mental disability would render them, if at liberty, a danger to others or to themselves;

(b) the proper curative treatment of lunatics;

(c) the humane care of incurable lunatics;

(d) the efficient administration of the estates of lunatics controlled by the Master-in-Lunacy.

4.—The discharge, on probation, to the benefit of the finances of the State and the happiness of the lunatic, of harmless lunatics whose friends or relatives are willing to accept responsibility for them.

5.—The extent, if any, to which the administration of our Hospitals for the Insane, as distinguished from possible defects in the lunacy laws, is responsible for grievances, if any, under which lunatics, or persons confined as such, may suffer, or may have suffered.

6.—Whether the degree of culpability in respect to administration, if any such error or culpability should be proven, is such as to warrant changes in the personnel of the administration. Royal Commissioner or Commissioners to report recommending reforms which may be necessary.

Those are the deputation's suggestions to the Premier regarding the scope of the Royal Commission. But what is desired now by the Government? Simply to invite over here the head of the Lunacy Department of New South Wales, simply to bring over a brother superintendent, so to speak. It is like bringing one doctor to report upon another, as occurred in the Mable case; bringing one doctor to whitewash another. That was also done in the case of the Education Department: one man, from New South Wales, comes here to report upon another man who has precisely similar responsibilities. Naturally, one man is not going to disclose the weaknesses of the other. The two men stand by each other. And that is what will happen in the case of this proposed Royal Commission, if the Government carry out their expressed intention: the Royal Commission will represent merely a worthless expenditure of public money. I admit that a Royal Commission is necessary, absolutely necessary to go back even behind, if I may so express it, the select committee which did such good work, work that has already had many beneficial results. There are certain matters to clear up in connection with that institution at Claremont that require fearlessness and independence to tackle them: otherwise no good can be achieved. We do not want another such Commission as that in the Andinach case, which proved to be neither more

nor less than a white-washing Commission. That case, and others which I can mention—I shall have them ready at the proper time—want probing down to their very foundations. We cannot accomplish that by inviting a brother, so to speak, to come over and white-wash the superintendent here. Such a course would be simply wasting the money of the State and deluding the public.

Mr. Teesdale: The New South Wales superintendent would not be the whole show; he would be only one man on the Commission.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member must know what can be done when such a Commissioner is appointed, in this instance a Commissioner with the highest reputation as an alienist. Whatever he says will be accepted, and the hon. member himself will take it with open mouth. On that aspect of the matter I am reminded of the Education Commission. Mr. Board was only one man on that Commission, but the position he held was such as to entitle his opinion to more than respect, to deference, on the part of his brother Commissioners. And so it will be in the case of this proposed Commission. On these questions affecting the health of the community, I say the present Government and the preceding Administration have been lacking; they have had no zeal whatever as regards the treatment of the unfortunate in our midst. They have taken things as a matter of course, and allowed them simply to drift. We did have, established by a Labour Government, a home for inebriates. What has become of that institution? The present Government have allowed it to be closed; and so we have the terrible spectacle of old women being sent for the hundred-and-twentieth time to Fremantle gaol for drunkenness. No treatment for them; no attempt to cure them. The institution established for that purpose is gone. There are skeletons in the cupboard of that asylum at Claremont; but on the part of the Government there is no care, no trouble, no worry about that fact. Things just go on. I doubt not for one moment that the Colonial Secretary is doing his best, but I have always said that his best in dealing with such a gigantic problem is ineffective. The hon. gentleman has not the qualifications that are necessary for the control of one of the most vitally important departments of the whole State. Nothing can be more serious.

The Colonial Secretary: Strange to say, most of these things happened before I took the department over.

Hon. T. WALKER: So they may have done, but the hon. gentleman is living in a period when things are moving forward. He cannot deny that the Labour Government did their utmost to create innovations in the Lunacy Department and in every other department—especially innovations tending towards the betterment of the lot of the mentally deficient and the unfortunate.

The Premier: And we have gone on improving.

Hon. T. WALKER: No; the present Government have gone back.

The Premier: Prove it!

Hon. T. WALKER: Let the Premier not be foolish. What is being done?

The Premier: Very much better than in your time.

Hon. T. WALKER: No; things are not being done better than in our time. In fact, nothing has been done better since our time. The home for inebriates has been closed. Is that better?

The Colonial Secretary: Closed why? Because we had only one woman in it for six months.

Hon. T. WALKER: If that institution had been properly and sympathetically cared for, every drunkard in the State would have been sent there.

The Colonial Secretary: There were no drunkards to send there.

Hon. T. WALKER: There have been drunkards all the time, but the magisterial benches have not been instructed to send them there. The cases of inebriates have been dealt with as ordinary police court cases. If drunkards are to be confirmed in their weakness, it is only necessary to demoralise them by leaving them to the rough handling of unsympathetic police, leaving them to be dragged into the police courts and humiliated before a garish crowd, and then to be sent to Fremantle, to wear out their lives in the cold cells there.

The Colonial Secretary: They are well looked after there.

Hon. T. WALKER: Well looked after, and herded with criminals! Such treatment for a woman who cannot resist intoxication, who is afflicted with the disease of drunkenness from head to foot, who is obsessed with a lust incomparable with any other lust afflicting humanity! She is well looked after when she is consigned to a cold cell at Fremantle, where she hears the clanking of the locks and the jarring of the iron gate, where she sinks into the slumbers of her own despair! That is the Colonial Secretary's idea of "well looked after."

The Premier: I would not take you as a judge of that, anyhow.

Hon. T. WALKER: I do not want the Premier to take me as a judge. I have cried out, and the hon. gentleman and others have tried to take the fire, as it were, from my altar, if I may be vain enough to put it in that way. They have pretended that they are doing the thing, that they are instituting reform. We passed legislation, upon the promise that it should be carried out, creating a reformatory for prisoners. Governments have come and gone since then. It has been my lot to ask the Judges of this State to send unfortunate men to that reformatory. The Judges have asked me, "Where is this reformatory?" Yet that reformatory is embedded in our criminal law,

stands upon our Statute-book! It should be possible for our Judges to send to that reformatory men whom they believe to be capable of reform. Where is that reformatory?

The Premier: Where did you establish it?

Hon. P. Collier: We were not in office then.

The Premier: Yes, you were.

Hon. T. WALKER: No. That legislation was passed at the instance of Mr. Robinson, then member for Canning and Attorney General.

The Premier: I apologise.

Hon. T. WALKER: I foretold that that legislation would prove a farce. A reference to "Hansard" will show that I disclaimed responsibility at the time.

Mr. Pickering: Unfortunately, that Attorney General had not the money to establish the reformatory.

Hon. T. WALKER: What is the use of trying to get applause and credit for attempting to do a thing when one knows that one cannot do that thing, has no chance whatever of doing it? If it was not possible to do all that that measure suggested, still, a little might have been done. However, nothing has been done—nothing. I say fearlessly—I would risk my life upon the fact—that there are men in Fremantle gaol to-day as innocent of the offences for which they have been convicted as I am. Yet there they are, left there to be degraded for all time! What is cared, what is felt, on that score? I brought up one of those cases here in the last Parliament; I may have again to refer to it. These things show that the present Government have no heart for the down-fallen, the weak. Society as it exists is producing these weak creatures. In our homes are born children mentally and morally imperfect. Not one iota of care is taken of them. They are left to go through life as best they may, to fall, as ultimately they must, into these places of cruel incarceration. Then the Government say they are doing the right thing! There is need for reform, not only in the lunatic asylum, but in our prisons and in our schools. If any hon. member cared to go out to Mt. Lawley some day and see the apology for a court which has been established, and the dwellings for the children of the State, he would be astonished. The State becomes father and mother to these children. Just look at the Government's idea of being father and mother to unhappy neglected children without parents, or who in any case cannot get care and attention for their physical, mental, and moral welfare. The Government say they are going one better! It is a disgrace to the community. Sensible people coming here and observing what is being done under grandiloquent names and phrases, would be shocked at our childishness, our stupidity, our want of common-sense. Nothing is done. Yet what can there be more important than this phase of government? Go into the outback districts and see what is being done for the people

there, how they are left to do the best they can. Want of money is the cry. Yet there is plenty of money for white-washing commissions, although none with which to build a decent home for the neglected children of the State. I want to draw the whole world's attention to that fact, that we are negligent, lacking in sympathy, lacking in heart. What do Governments exist for? Merely the collecting of taxes and the spending of them? Is that the sole purpose of government? Is it not rather to protect the weak, cure the sick, uplift the fallen and keep the strong and powerfully aggressive in check? But in this respect there is no constitutional government on that side of the House. We hear a lot of the abolition of party. Why, the party that supports this apathetic Government consists of no fewer than four parties all in together! Let us cease all this rot, and put our heads and hearts to work to help our fellow men, to relieve some of the sufferings and sorrows that exist under our eyes, to protect that liberty which should be dearest to us all, from those who would plunge us into an asylum for a whim or a fear, or a fallacy, from those who have taken people away from their friends and the society they moved in, and lodged them, where they have no voice, cannot be heard; and if they speak after that, the world is cautioned not to believe them because they have been in a lunatic asylum, and so are not to be trusted any more. If the Government attended to the moral and physical welfare of our citizens there would be no need to talk of production. That instinct to work which is deep-seated in the human family would assert itself. Idleness would be an impossibility. Everlasting expenditure of energy must take place, given due happiness as the result of its exercise. Already we create more than we need, and still go on creating; but let us have the conditions in which this work can be carried on healthfully, honourably, and worthily, so that we do not break hearts whilst we are doing it and dig graves in our cemeteries for those who fall prematurely by the way. That is the work of Government, and I say that in this respect the present Government are signally deficient, and cannot proffer one promise of hope that they will reform or improve.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. W. J. George—Murray-Wellington) [6.7]: In the whole course of my 25 years connection with public life in this State I have never heard so many congratulations showered from all parts of the House as during this debate. It puts me in mind of the days of my youth when, before one set to work to knock the other fellow about, one always shook hands with him. So I conclude that the congratulations we have had are but preparatory to the more serious interchanges which the session will bring about. I, too, tender a welcome to the member for West

Perth (Mrs. Cowan) with whom I have had a friendly acquaintance for many years. I hope that her advent will enable certain matters, about which I feel very strongly, to be placed before hon. members by a member of that sex which we all respect. The lady has been referred to as the mother of the House, while another member has been dubbed the baby of the House. As to who is the father and who the daddy, rests between the Speaker and me. The Speaker has had the longest continuous career that can be boasted in the House, while mine is close up to his, although there has been a break in mine. So, as he may be regarded as the father, who will put the baby right, with dignified advice, I as the daddy will use the slipper when the mother is away. We have just come back from facing our constituents, from a strife which in my opinion was more bitter than ever before. Later on I will refer to some episodes of the elections. But just now I want to emphasise strongly my belief that the rolls were the worst I have ever seen. We are supposed to have compulsory registration, yet we have rotten rolls. In one part of my electorate, where there should be 300 persons entitled to vote, we polled 95 per cent. of the votes and yet we got but a little over 100. Within the last few weeks I have received an amended roll. The elections are over, and the names that should have been on the rolls before the elections have now been put on. In my electorate a man and his wife who have been living in the same house for the past 25 years were taken off the roll. They have now been put on the supplementary roll. I have my suspicions, which I will vent very freely if I can get sufficient proof of what has been going on. We have heard of the stuffing of rolls, but I think there has been going on something further than the stuffing of rolls. There have been peculiar tactics by the non-supporters of members who have been opposed by a certain combination.

Mr. Simons: What combination?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If the hon. member will allow me to proceed, he will not have to ask me many questions; for by the time I have finished, I will have given him all the information which even his journalistic experience will enable him to digest. I propose to deal with a few extracts from speeches made by members during this debate. I will deal with them as copiously as I can, in the endeavour to explain that the information which has been given to some hon. members was unreliable. If I give them reliable information, probably it will prevent them from making further mistakes. Reference has been made, and no doubt further reference will be made, to the forestry trouble. I do not intend to say very much about it, but I well remember the debate which took place.

Mr. SPEAKER: There is on the Notice Paper a motion relative to the subject. I

hope the Minister will not anticipate that motion.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, I will merely give my personal view of what took place a few sessions ago. I well remember the explanation given by the then Attorney General of the amendment to the clause. I remember the debate that took place. My understanding of it was that since, during the period of the war, business had been interfered with, notwithstanding which the general expenses had to be maintained to a large extent and that with no hope of any profit, it was considered fair by the Government and was endorsed by Parliament that some consideration should be given to them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Minister's speech does not tally with the clause.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That consideration was an extension of the period of such leases and permits as they held; with the one condition that they should have paid during the period it was going on all their dues and rates, so that they could come under the new conditions which were to be imposed.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Before tea I was dealing with what has become known as the forest trouble and I was explaining to the House that as far as my memory serves me, and so far as the records I have dealt with refresh my memory, the question which was placed before the Chamber by the then Attorney General (Mr. Robinson) was that, during the war, all business concerns like all persons had suffered, and seeing that these timber mills had met their dues and taxes and had generally tried to carry on, in their own interests, of course, as well as in the interests of the State, it was only fair if the State could do it without loss to itself, that some sort of consideration should be given to them. It was decided that they should be given such consideration as the Government might feel came within the four corners of the clause itself. As I understand the question when it was decided by the Government on the information which was placed before us—and I am told it is accurate—the action of the Government has been to carry out the intention of the measure, and to allow these people such extension of time, under far improved conditions of payment to the Government, than before. If this has been done, I contend that the Government have carried out their obligations in an honest and straightforward way. It is true that the Conservator of Forests does not see eye to eye with the Government, but the power is placed in the hands of the Government for them to decide, and surely no matter how high the official might be, if the Government have the power, the Government should certainly have some say in what should be done. I do not mind saying that the view I put forward is this: If during the continuance of the war it were shown that the

trade had fallen down very considerably owing to the war, as compared with what it was previous to the war, and if we allowed what would have been the natural increase of business as time went on, the amount by which they fell short of trade could be easily ascertained. That was my idea and the views of the Government were distinct. I think that members and people in the country who know me in connection with timber matters will realise I am speaking what I believe to be true when I say that the view of the Government was that the Act should be carried out, and that these people should be considered fairly and justly with reference to this particular matter. Surely that would be only giving effect to the spirit which animated the Governments of all the States and the policy of the Commonwealth Government during the terrible period through which we passed from 1914 onwards. In every contract made by a Government during that time, there was a provision that if owing to interference with the markets, interference in connection with labour troubles and so forth attributable to the war, the contractor was adversely affected, he should be able to get some allowance from the State or the Commonwealth. When members consider the position, they will realise that it would be only fair and just that a principle of that sort should be observed. When the debate comes on I shall listen with quite an open mind to all the arguments that might be brought forward, and I shall endeavour so far as lies in my power, to give a fair and just statement in connection with it. While dealing with this I wish to direct attention to some remarks which were made by the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) during the debate on this question. The hon. member said—

They had only to throw their minds back to the time when they had the most eminent legal authority in the State as a member of the Chamber. They had the benefit of his advice with questionable results. On this particular clause he was satisfied the House was misled.

I cannot say anything as to what was in the minds of other members of this Chamber at the time, but I have been connected with the timber industry of Australia since 1885 in Tasmania, in Victoria, and in this State, and I assure the House that no misleading took place so far as I was concerned. I have quite clearly in mind what was put before us and I believe the Government have carried out the intention of the House when the clause was passed. One hon. member interjected, "His clients came before the interests of the House." Mr. Robinson is not here to defend himself, and it is only just to say as a former colleague of his for some years, that whatever may have been his shortcomings, if he had any in other matters, on this point he did not mislead me. Whether my knowledge of the trade enabled me to grasp the position

more clearly than those not accustomed to the timber trade, I cannot say.

Mr. Johnston: You had a great advantage there.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Anyhow I do not think he misled the House.

The Minister for Mines: And his firm are not advising either.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not know much about Millars' legal advisers. I have no reason to be grateful to them, because what was perhaps one of the most disappointing episodes in my life in connection with the railways was brought about by the accusations and what is called under-the-lap work of a former manager of that company, but I do say that whatever was done in that connection, Millars' have done for this State good service, because they have caused our timber to be carried into quarters of the world where otherwise it would not have gone, and they have found big industrial employment in this State, and their men, as the member for Forrest (Mr. O'Loughlen) knows, do not speak badly of them. So far as Mr. Robinson's firm may have been connected with Millars', I believe they had to do with the arbitration business of that industry; in fact I know they had because I was advocate in the Arbitration Court at one time and the firm of Haynes, Robinson and Cox were advising them. I do not think it is justifiable to make remarks of that kind, which remarks in my opinion have very little foundation. I noticed that another gentleman, when dealing with this matter, quite inadvertently I am satisfied, made remarks which, in his quiet moments, he would not have uttered. Mr. Lane-Poole is Conservator of Forests, and he is a gentleman whose qualifications for that office need no longer be questioned. He is acknowledged to be a gentleman whose training has been good; he has devoted his whole soul and energies to his work; he is an enthusiast and so far as I have found him an honourable man. Yet, during the Premier's speech, a remark was made by the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson), "Unfortunately our State Forestry Department is in the combine." That was a very cruel thing to say.

Mr. A. Thomson: I meant the State Saw-mills.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member said that unfortunately our State Forestry Department was in the combine. If he turns to "Hansard," page 143, he will find it reported in that way, and whatever the hon. gentleman's intention may have been the remark as I have quoted it is certainly a cruel one. The remark carries its own refutation because, if the State Forestry Department were in the combine, where would there be this bother over the extension of the permits by the Government?

Mr. A. Thomson: I meant the State Saw-mills.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I take the hon. member's word, but "Hansard" records it as I have mentioned. As a man who endeavours to hold the scales of justice fairly between all parties, I am merely striving to defend a civil servant who has no opportunity to defend himself.

Mr. Johnston: Then why not take his advice?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is not always advisable to do that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No doubt the House will be a little interested in the matter of the working of the Traffic Act. Members were very good to me when the Bill was before us. I received the assistance of all sides of the House, assistance which I valued and appreciated very much. I learn that His Worship the Mayor of Perth and his councillors are going to sue me, as Minister for Works, because I, so far as I know, have carried out the intention of the Act, and have acted fairly towards that most august corporation. What are the facts? According to the Act the distribution of the fees subject to the deduction of the cost of collection, etc., rests with the Minister for Works, and the Minister has determined, by census, without fear of contradiction, that the traffic emanating from the district of Perth equals 45 per cent. of all the main roads traffic throughout the metropolitan area. Holding this view it was only fair that the city, which was enjoying the benefit of those roads, should, from its traffic fees, contribute towards the upkeep of those roads. Consequently, after the collection of the fees, I took that into consideration when I was fixing the amount to be paid to the city of Perth. I have not yet been served with a writ and I am working to some extent in the dark, though I think I am pretty close to the point. The city of Perth authorities object that I have taken into consideration also the undisputed fact that, unless the police of this State had taken over the point duty and control of traffic in Perth, our streets would have been congested and traffic would have been impossible. We know perfectly well that until the police did take this work in hand, the efforts of the traffic inspectors of the city of Perth were simply exerted in the direction of endeavouring to get prosecutions of people who in some way or other had infringed the regulations. The enforcing of the Traffic Act has been placed in the hands of the Commissioner of Police, and I have told the Commissioner that I hold him responsible that traffic shall be able to proceed without let or hindrance, that there shall be no danger to the people who are walking about, and that everything shall proceed properly. Is it fair or unfair that the city of Perth itself, which had failed in its plain duty of controlling its traffic, should pay some of the extra cost thus incurred? Would it be a fair thing that the other local authorities in the metropolitan area surrounding Perth should bear the share of cost which more properly

applied to the city itself? Is it a fair thing that the taxation collected from all parts of the State should be used for the purpose of keeping order in the city of Perth when order should be maintained by the council itself? I am threatened by His Worship the Mayor—

Mr. Teesdale: You will get over it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, I will certainly get over it. Is it fair that this sort of threat should be made, that the Government should be sued because their representative, in the person of the Minister for Works, who has been placed in that position by the House and, because he has the mind and courage to do it, carries out his duties? I called together the local authorities of the metropolitan area. There are 22 different local authorities. An impudent attempt was made to pack the meeting. Although only 44 people were asked to attend the meeting 53 persons were seated. There were about 20 people standing in the room, and 30 others or more out on the verandah. I would not stand any nonsense of that sort. I am not built that way. I do not stand any nonsense from anyone, neither, as a rule, do I get it. Consequently, I cleared my room. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) was there, and he knows. Whenever that hon. member meets the member for Murray-Wellington upon the platform, for the general good of the people, we have no differences whatever. There has been a considerable amount of Press work, all inspired, and rotten stuff, against the Minister for Works. He is held up as being an autocrat, and God knows what else in connection with the matter. There was laid at his door the full responsibility for everything. When the mayor of Perth impudently began his speech by saying that as a man he had the most affectionate regard for Mr. George, but that as Minister for Works he had no time for him, I told him that we were men there, that I had invited men to attend the meeting, that I was a man and not a child from a day school, and that if he would confine himself to the subject matter of the meeting we would get through more readily. The whole position as regards the main roads in the metropolitan area was set out by me to the meeting. When a vote was taken 35 persons voted for the motion and seven voted against it. Amongst the seven was the mayor of Perth and his coadjutors.

Hon. P. Collier: His offiders.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When the vote had been taken the mayor of Perth shook his fist at the meeting—it was not much of a fist to be afraid of—and said, "You have handed yourselves and your children over to the bondage of this man." The culmination of it all is that I am to be sued. We will see how we get on.

Mr. Teesdale: It is a wonder you are alive.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is a far more important matter to which I desire

to refer, more important even than the peculiar hallucinations and actions of His Worship the Mayor of Perth. There has been some trouble in connection with the taxi drivers in the carrying out of the Traffic Act, which involves a good many innovations, and which was handed to me to administer, and which I am administering as far as I possibly can with due regard to the intentions of the Act. Certain misunderstandings have occurred, but there is nothing which cannot be put right in time if people exercise a little patience. In this morning's paper there appeared a letter written by the chairman of the Taxi Motor Association. He had sent this letter to the Premier. It is astonishing what a lot of people there are in Western Australia who, when they cannot get on with the Minister for Works—mild enough mannered though the Minister for Works is—write to the Premier, or threaten to do so. It is a strange thing that yesterday morning I had communicated with the Commissioner of Police upon these very matters about which these people are crying out. My letter was written and signed before I left the office yesterday. We pride ourselves upon being a democratic people. The whole trouble arose because the taxi motor car owners are obliged to carry a different kind of label from that carried upon other motor cars, and they do not want it. I can hardly credit the statement, but they say that in this State there are people so snobbish that they do not like to be seen by their friends or acquaintances riding in a hired motor car. That is really the genesis of the whole trouble with the taxi people. They desire, if they can, to avoid any distinction between cars on the ranks and those which come from the garages. They claim that if any distinction is made they would be the sufferers. If a person owed me money and I saw him riding in a car, when I could not afford to keep one myself, and he did not pay what he owed me, he would soon receive a letter from my solicitor.

Mr. Johnston: Why not put all on the one footing?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They accuse me of not replying to their letter. Unfortunately I was ill for a few weeks. The letter from these people was received a couple of days before I returned to my office. I would have replied to the letter, but for the fact that the member for Perth (Mr. Mann) called upon me and stated the case for these people with an eloquence that I have rarely seen equalled and with a persistency that does him credit—I hope it will be recognised by his constituents—and after our discussion I did not think it necessary to send an answer. Trouble has arisen in connection with motor lorries. The speed of motor lorries was cut down to eight miles an hour, because we found that we could not keep our roads in good condition if motor lorries carrying from five to eight tons were allowed to exceed a speed of eight miles an hour. The

owners of the motor lorries said they could not go at that speed and do their work economically. It was unfortunate for the deputation concerned that one of its members said, "I bought my lorries because they are guaranteed to travel at 15 miles an hour, and unless they can do that they are of no use to me." I replied, "When your driver was brought up before the court last week on a traffic prosecution, someone from your place swore that it was absolutely impossible to take a motor lorry at a greater speed than eight miles an hour." That gentleman was, therefore, silenced. The member for Leederville (Capt. Carter) and the member for Nelson (Mr. J. H. Smith) had something to say with regard to the Minister for Works and main roads. I would not have inflicted upon the House my own remarks upon this question but that I desire to let those members know in what respect they have been misled. The member for Nelson said that at the last road board conference one of the Ministers—he evidently meant me—had said he would bring down a Bill for the nationalisation of roads, that the Government would then take control, and that this would mean that they would have taxation without representation. The member for Leederville made a somewhat similar statement. He said the measure provided for a board of three, two engineers and a skilled administrator under the control of a Minister of the Crown. I think my views are well known to the various road boards. That is not the idea I had. The idea is that the road boards should do their own work within their own borders, but that a Government engineer should be present to give them levels and mark out the roads, and generally advise them. In the event of any emergency arising in any part of a big district, the idea is that it should be in the power of the Government engineer to say to the particular road board, "I want your men because this is a case of emergency, and these men will be paid out of the funds provided for the work." There is no attempt to take away any of the duties which belong to the road board. I think when this idea is put into practice the road boards will continue to be pretty good supporters of mine. Of the traffic fees I have distributed amongst 20 local authorities a sum of £14,946 4s. 4d. Nineteen of these local authorities are spending the money from the traffic fees, in maintenance. The only local authority which has put the grant into its ordinary funds is the City of Perth, and now it intends to sue me for more money. The member for Leederville also had a good deal to say in connection with water supply and sewerage, and I was interested in reading his remarks. I should like to assure him that the Government are carrying out a policy of cautious and judicious investigation before embarking on an expenditure of one and a half to two million pounds, which might easily be, come a fiasco. Experts were brought over from Victoria, and rendered us good service and gave us good advice. They required cer-

tain investigations to be made. Upon receipt of the report and recommendations, parties were sent out to make the necessary investigations, and we are proceeding as rapidly as possible. Hon. members may ask what we are going to do for the ensuing summer. We have put down a bore at Osborne Park. We thought we should have to go from 1,200 to 1,500 feet in depth before striking a sufficient flow of water. At 650 feet, however, we struck a supply of one and a half million gallons of water a day, of a quality, purity and temperature that would cause any hon. member who drank it to think that it may have come from some creek in the hills. When I found that we had spent considerably less money than we had anticipated, we decided to put down another bore. We did so and struck water of similar quality at between 600 and 700 feet. From these two bores we shall draw three million gallons of first class potable, cool and pure water to serve daily to the people of Perth during the ensuing summer. I still have a little money left, and we are now engaged in putting down a third bore. We are also erecting a better service reservoir at Mt. Hawthorn to accommodate the surplus water, and I believe we shall be able to supply to the City of Perth all the water the people can reasonably expect to have during the coming summer. We cannot tell people how much water they can use and no Government should be able to allow people to turn their taps on and let the water to run indiscriminately during the summer months, whether it be in Perth, Leederville, Claremont or anywhere else. The hon. member also referred to the question of sewerage and I have some details which I will read to him in connection with Subiaco and that part of the sewerage districts. This shows the following details—

The sewerage scheme and drainage scheme is estimated to cost £184,000, of which approximately £12,500 has been spent on pipes and land re-sumption which are available for the work, leaving £171,500 to be found for the scheme. The sewerage scheme, even deducting the cost of storm water drainage, would cost £127,500, and the annual revenue that we can expect to raise from that expenditure is £5,119, leaving a deficiency between the income and the money to be found for interest and sinking fund amounting to £7,000 per year.

And that is not all, because the house connections in Subiaco would cost about £240,000. Let the hon. member consider the matter for a few moments and ask himself how £240,000 is to be provided by the residents of Subiaco in order to get their houses connected with the sewerage system. It may be said that the Government in the past provided the money and the residents were able to pay the amount back by instalments over a period of six years. That is quite correct, but will he say that the Government of to-day with the finan-

cial embarrassments confronting them, could face without trepidation a capital expenditure of £184,000 and the probability of being called upon to find another quarter of a million for the purposes of house connections. I sympathise with the hon. member and others in the trouble they have regarding this matter, but in times of distress we must do with our public concerns as we do in our private lives. If we cannot afford things, we must do without them, and do with only those things which we can afford. Then there is the question of the drainage of Shenton Park, Jolimont, and other places. I will not go into a lengthy explanation regarding the necessity for drainage. I have had the engineers at work on this matter. Some time ago I asked them to go into the question and give me a report together with estimates of the money required to adequately drain the metropolitan area from Midland Junction to Fremantle. The water is rising all through the metropolitan area and will continue rising more and more every year. The Jolimont swamp has risen some nine inches during this winter and the water in Shenton Park has risen to the same extent. The money required to deal with the storm water drainage problem is in the neighbourhood of one and a quarter millions. I am telling members this so that they may know what is the position. I do not want to mislead the House; there are the facts, and members can consider them for themselves. Reference was made by one hon. member to the price charged for water. Whether that hon. gentleman was misreported or not, or whether he was misinformed in connection with the goldfields water supply scheme, I do not know but his words in "Hansard" were as follows:—

Our farmers have been paying 2s. 6d. per hundred gallons for water.

I do not know who they were paying that amount to, but I have a list of the whole of the places to which water is supplied from the goldfields water supply scheme. I find that the rate per acre is 2d. with a holding fee of £5. Owing to the energy and persistence of the Leader of the Country Party (Mr. Harrison), they are allowed to take the £5 fee out in water, and the price they are charged from Baker's Hill to West Northam is 2s. per thousand gallons and the rest pay 2s. 6d. I do not think anyone could reasonably and decently object to the rates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I object to them. You should not have reduced the rates when it was a non-payable proposition.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I want to point out to those members who are sitting on the cross benches, and I want to appeal particularly to the members of the Primary Producers' Party or Country Party, whatever they call themselves.

Mr. Pickering: Primary Producers' Party will do.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It does not matter what they call themselves so long

as they answer the whistle when I call, and I will have something to say later on this evening. Governments of this State, whether they be Liberal, National or representative of any parties, who have been in power during the past few years, have been actuated with one view and have followed one policy with reference to water supplies in the wheat areas. Hon. members know, and none better than those who come from the goldfields, that the water supply in the outback areas is a matter of great importance in permitting people to live there in decency. The Government have put down in the wheat area 369 tanks and 447 wells. The capital cost of those works was £401,000. That is a fairly large amount which was not begrudged at all, for the Government recognised the necessity of securing settlement in those areas. Surely to goodness, Mr. Speaker, it is not an unfair thing for the Government to consider that, after the expenditure of so much money—the responsibility for which has to be accepted by the whole of the people of the State—and providing these conveniences for the people in those areas from which they derive benefits, some care would be exercised in the use of those wells and tanks, and that they would not be allowed to fall into a state of disrepair and thus be rendered valueless. Yet, what do we find? We find that the great bulk of these tanks and wells are left without any care at all, nor is any responsibility accepted so far as their maintenance is concerned. In regard to the tanks, which were fenced round so as to keep the rabbits out, the fences have been destroyed by people who have used the tanks simply because they did not want to go to the trouble of pumping the water into the troughs.

Hon. P. Collier: They were too lazy.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: More than that; not only were the fences broken down and cattle allowed into the dams, but in some cases the troughs were carried away.

Hon. P. Collier: What do the Country Party say to an indictment like that?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I say emphatically that this sort of thing cannot go on any longer. I have circularised the road boards two or three times in connection with this matter. In many instances the boards have acknowledged that what I have said is the case, but apparently they cannot do anything to assist in this matter. I want to tell the hon. members who are representing constituencies in the wheat belt that, so far as I am concerned, I will not put down a single well or a single tank until I have a guarantee of a satisfactory nature from people in the district that the conveniences will be kept in a state of repair and be protected.

Hon. P. Collier: They will not keep the guarantee.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They will keep it until the tanks are there.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Leader of the Opposition says that they will not keep their guarantee. Unless I am inter-

fered with—and I shall not be in this position if I am unduly interfered with—if I get a guarantee from them, they will keep it. I will see to that, because the guarantee will be on their title to their land.

Hon. P. Collier: They will go to Monger about you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Some will go further than to Monger if they go where I send them. The Deputy Leader of the Country Party made a long speech the other night and I must congratulate him upon the immense amount of ground he covered.

The Minister for Mines: He was like a traction engine.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He spoke about the responsibility resting upon the Government in connection with the civil service. In his words of wisdom, which carried weight with me, he said—

It is the duty of Ministers to tell their responsible officers that if they do not give results, it is time that they went. That is a beautiful way of putting it; it is so nice and beautiful that it might have come, if not from myself, from someone with a great deal more control over language. It has been said that we could compel the civil servants to do things. Of course, you can tell them to do things, but I can tell the House, and members can please themselves whether they take any heed to what I say, they can tell a civil servant to do something, but if he does not do it, what then?

Mr. A. Thomson: Sack him.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That hon. member does not know this: he can do in his private business what he cannot do in the Government service. If I could sack a man the same as I could in my private business—

Member: You would not have anyone left.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Of course I would. Men stick to me as I do to them if they are good men. It is those who are not men, to whom I am referring. The Act provides that before you can dismiss a man, you have to lay a charge against him. If one cannot prove the charge, where will he be? Why should a Minister be placed in the position of having to make a charge against an officer for the purpose of putting him out of his position? I recently got rid of a gentleman of whom I had something to say in the old Chamber about 25 years ago.

Hon. P. Collier: You stuck at him for a long time.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If I had found him useful where I had got him, he would have stayed even had he been my worst enemy. The personal file of this particular gentleman started about 30 years ago, and in the first two or three pages there are included a couple of foolscap sheets showing where his superior officer asked Sir John Forrest to get rid of him, because he was no good to him.

Mr. Pickering: Still going strong, like Johnny Walker.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have read a bit about university education lately and this gentleman was fine. Eventually, this gentleman did a fine thing, for he invented an additional hole in a piece of iron. Regarding the remarks of the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, I asked him if he would tell the Government how he would put responsible officers, who did not give results, out of the service, but he did not tell me. I feel that when an hon. member admonishes me in the way he did, I am entitled to ask him to show how I can get out of the difficulty. The hon. member said—

From my knowledge of the Minister for Works, if he had a man under him who was not efficient he would darn soon get rid of him.

Mr. Pickering: Cannot we amend the Act?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: So far as the civil service is concerned—I am not here to attack the civil servant; at least not unfairly—the public servants are supposed to be controlled by the Public Service Commissioner.

Member: Supposed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: How are they controlled? Hon. members will find that in effect there is no control such as we would have in private business. The Public Service Commissioner makes a classification of the public service. He goes very carefully through the work of the departments and adjusts the salaries of the civil servants as his experience suggests to him is right. And then we have the Appeal Board or something of that sort, which is now going through the whole business again. That is an absolute waste of time. If the Appeal Board is warranted, then the Public Service Commissioner should step down from his position to become a manager or foreman over the public servants. We have only to read the newspapers to see that the public servants, from the highest official to the lowliest, have without exception been seeking to boost each other up. Hon. members may talk of discipline, but there is no discipline; and if the Government brought down a measure to institute discipline, I am afraid it would not be passed by the House.

Mr. Pickering: Try it!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It would not be fitting in me to make any remarks on an occasion of this kind without showing the House and the country, in my poor way, that the deficit is at any rate giving me some concern. I know, we all know—it has been said here this evening and on previous evenings—that it does not matter very much what Government may be in power, that the situation is such that Ministers are unable to wipe out the deficit in one go. Now, a great song has been made about departmental excesses. On that subject some very unfair things have been said by certain journalists of this State, as to officers not caring twopence-halfpenny what takes place,

as to their going on spending money and Ministers allowing them to do it. I have excesses in my department this year of about £15,000. I will tell the House what they are directly. One of the first excesses was a matter that arose in connection with my furniture vote, when I had not the money to pay for £2,600 worth of furniture for London requirements.

Mr. Pickering: For the Agent General?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: When my Estimates were made up, that necessity was unknown to me, and no provision was made for it. Then the furniture had to be paid out of my vote, and I had to get excess from the Treasury. Another item that we could not possibly foresee came on us, in connection with the other Chamber. It was fortunate indeed that someone noticed the condition of the roof of that Chamber.

Mr. Lambert: Shockingly unfortunate.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: From my point of view, fortunate. The same thing might happen in this Chamber. Hon. members would not consider that fortunate. Happily, someone drew attention to the condition of the roof of the other Chamber. As soon as we knew about it, we sent an experienced man to investigate. As far as he could see into the matter at the time, without stripping the roof, he estimated that a sum of £130 would put it right. I am not an alarmist, but I am going to tell hon. members exactly how the thing stood. When work was started, it was found, in the course of stripping the roof, that the lower chord of the truss girders which carried the roof, instead of having a camber on the top side, was 10½ inches camber on the lower side, so that the full pressure was on and against the walls. Beyond that, some of the rafters had broken out; and, worse than that, on the wall plate itself a number of rafters, owing to the pressure of the tiles, had absolutely crushed the ends to pieces, and were not to be relied upon to do their work. Had that roof not been tackled before the winter rains came the whole affair would have come down. I am satisfied that no one would have been more sorry than my friends opposite had loss of life resulted. I want to tell the House the cause of that condition of affairs. When these buildings were designed, they were designed for a roof of corrugated iron. Practical men and architects like the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) will know that the pitch of a roof for iron is very different from the pitch of a roof intended for tiles. But one very important gentleman—who has now gone to his rest, and whom therefore I do not wish to name—had sufficient influence to cause the iron to be done away with and tiles to be put on a roof never designed to carry them. How the roof managed to stand for 20 odd years is a puzzle indeed to men who understand the subject.

Hon. P. Collier: Have you had the roof of this Chamber inspected?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I understand the hon. member's anxiety. I am assured that the roof of this Chamber is perfectly safe. However, I will not rest content with that; I shall have periodical inspections made, being as little desirous as any other member of this House to terminate my career through the falling of this roof.

Mr. Davies: The hon. gentleman said the estimated cost of repairing the roof was £130. What was the actual cost?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Seven hundred and fifty pounds. In connection with the Education Department we had to spend £1,800 more on maintenance than was ever thought of by that department's officers until the necessity for the repairs disclosed itself. The work had to be done. When I tell hon. members that my departmental estimates now before the Premier ask for more than £100,000 on account of maintenance of public buildings, they will recognise how far we have gone to leeward during the years that are past, by not keeping our buildings up to the mark.

Mr. Lambert: We know they are going to crack and ruin.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Let hon. members listen again. The State taxation Department require additional furniture. Not a word had been said to us during the preparation of our Estimates concerning this need, £400. It would take too long to give all the details, but my excess, of which there has been so much talk in the Press, silly, foolish talk—

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS:—is all accounted for; and not accounted for by excuses. Men of my sort do not make excuses, but deal with facts.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Let me tell hon. members what has been the effect of the rise in wages and the rise in the prices of commodities. In 1915 the cost of a building of a certain type was £500. In 1920 the lowest we could get a building of the same type done for was £870; in one instance, we were unable to get the work done for less than £1,100. Let hon. members take these points into their minds. During that period wages had risen 45 per cent., and administration, which is to say salaries, had risen 13 per cent.,—making a total increase of 58 per cent. under these two heads; that is, in labour and supervision alone. The increase in the price of timber during the same period has been 60 per cent.; joinery has risen by 115 to 150 per cent.; cement and paints, 200 per cent.; and galvanised iron, close on 275 per cent. Let hon. members for a moment consider, let the people of Western Australia for a moment consider, and ask themselves how, in the face of facts like these, which cannot be disputed, is it possible for me to give to-day the same service for a pound sterling as was given for that coin

eight or ten years ago? The older members of the House will be aware that since I left the Railways, in 1908, I have observed an almost complete silence with regard to them, and have almost entirely refrained from criticism of the administration of the department. I should not on this occasion break that rule of mine if I did not think that there is a call upon every man of special experience to place before the House and before those who consider these things any points that may present themselves to him. I have no wish to infringe, even to the slightest extent, upon the ground of the Minister for Railways, but my knowledge is at his service. On the 8th of the current month the Commissioner of Railways issued one of those comparative results statements which were instituted in my time in the department, and which have been copied all over the world.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: They convey in a concise form, to anyone who cares to study them, the whole financial history of the railways of this State. From the return in question, I gather that last year the revenue of the Railway Department was £2,720,000, and the working expenses £2,422,000, leaving a surplus of £298,000. But the interest bill was £716,000. Deducting from that interest bill the surplus of £298,000, there remained a deficiency of £418,000. Now I want the House to understand distinctly that I do not in any way desire to make an attack upon the management of the railways in any shape or form. Those who are responsible for that department have a terribly severe task before them, and before I have finished my remarks hon. members will I think recognise that a question of this sort is not to be got over by blaming the management but that it must be dealt with by our doing the utmost that lies in us to help the management along.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a pity you do not take over the railways.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Here is the point I wish to put before hon. members. Last year our railways carried 56,000 tons less freight than during the previous year. But last year the people of the State paid £242,000 more in freight. Last year there were 700,000 fewer passengers, but they paid £146,000 more in fares. The miscellaneous section produced £39,000 more last year. So that during that year there was a total of extra payments taken from the pockets of the people, for lesser service, of £428,000. Adding that amount to the loss of £418,000, we arrive at the conclusion that in respect of the Railway Department the people of this State last year suffered a total loss of £846,000. That is not the deficit on the railways, but the total loss on the year's trading of our Railway Department to the people of this State. There is another item to which I desire to draw the attention of hon. members. The deficit on our railways in 1917 was £214,000. In 1921 that deficit

was £418,000. The deficit is caused chiefly by the advance in wages—a feature which I do not attack. But the total deficit on our railways for the last five years is £1,681,218. Let hon. members just take those figures into their minds, and then they will realise that the position is not one calling for destructive or disingenuous criticism, but for the best thought that we can apply to it. If hon. members will accept that view, and if we all work together, some solution of the difficulty will be discovered. As regards trouble with the Railway Department, Western Australia's position is not singular. Hon. members will have seen from the Press that the New South Wales Government railways lost £600,000 last year. The South African Government railways also lost £600,000, and have an accumulated deficit of three millions. I speak with some knowledge of the South African railways, thanks to the fact that in 1906 I was the only Railways Commissioner in Australia who was applied to by the South African Government for an opinion on their scheme of reorganisation. I furnished an opinion, and received a vote of thanks for it. I may say that I got a very graceful letter of thanks from the Governor of the Colony; and when, more recently, a decoration was bestowed upon me by His Majesty the King, the letter conveying it to me was signed by the same gentleman who had, not so many years before, expressed the gratitude of the South African Government. As regards the Victorian railways, I do not know the exact figures for their last year; but from a speech delivered on the 8th of this month by the Victorian Premier, Mr. Lawson, the loss on those railways for last year was between £400,000 and £600,000. While I was ill I received a letter from a friend of mine in the Argentine, and it appears that the same unfortunate story is going on there. The Canadian railways have been losing large sums of money. I want hon. members, and the country too, to realise that this wave of misfortune which is sweeping over our railway system and our State is common to every country in the world at the present time. It is of no use lying down and squealing. We have to do our best to see it through. I believe it has been found in South Africa that the raising of freights and fares has diminished receipts, and that the volume of trade also has diminished. What is taking place in Western Australia is this: people who in the past have ridden first class are now riding second class. I have seen it myself, in going through the country. Members of my own family have suggested to me that they should do this and that, but having regard, not only to my position as a Minister but also as a member of the community, I have urged them not to go to extremes. While the cutting down of the railway services may be to some extent justified, yet my experience, not only of the West Australian railways but of the railways of other countries with which I had to do before coming here,

tells me that if you want traffic you have to make it, and that if you can get your trains filled it is better to take half the fares and run the trains full. It would be better to do as I did when I was Commissioner and carry the people from Kalgoorlie to Albany for £2 10s. on excursion trains.

Hon. P. Collier: Why not have a word with the Minister for Railways?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not speaking of the Minister in this respect, but I feel that any special knowledge I may have should be frankly communicated. The Commissioner of Railways is of opinion that the course he has followed is the right one. For that he must take the responsibility. If I were Commissioner again my policy would be in accordance with the teachings of my experience, which are that if you want traffic you must create it, and you can only create it by making the fares and freights so attractive that people cannot stay at home. I come now to the question of trading concerns, upon which I propose to speak out very straight. The misrepresentations which have been published in the principal newspaper of the State can only be accounted for on one theory: that the newspaper is between the devil and the deep sea. On the one hand it has its advertisers, and those advertisers are principally men who would rejoice in seeing the trading concerns scrapped to-morrow. They have the power to shape the policy of the paper, because if it does not accord with their views they can take away their advertisements. On the other hand, the newspaper must have regard for that combination known as the Trades Hall.

Mr. McCallum: Then we are the deep sea?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Deep enough, in all conscience. We know that on one occasion during the last few years the members of the union which has to do with the printing of the paper refused to print it. I say without hesitation that if the management of that newspaper had refused to publish the letter which the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) sent along the other day, those unionists would have made the paper publish it. Alternatively there would have been no newspaper next day. The member for South Fremantle had been abroad, and on his return it was by somebody thought advisable that he should express his views in regard to the deliberations of the Labour conference in the Eastern States. Of course the editor of the newspaper, who knows everything except himself, started to criticise the member for South Fremantle and interpolate words and meanings which the hon. member did not think existed.

Hon. P. Collier: An old practice of his.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The member for South Fremantle does not hesitate to say what he thinks. For a letter which contains in concentrated form his utter contempt of the criticism directed at him, I

have never seen one like it before. Nevertheless the newspaper published it. If it had not done so there would have been no paper. Everybody knows that my views are strongly against the trading concerns. I say they never should have been established. I said that years ago, when criticising the Scaddan Government. My opinion is the same to-day, but as Minister for Trading Concerns I am in duty bound honestly and earnestly to give those concerns a fair chance. The people opposed to those concerns, the Chamber of Commerce and the merchants, want to see them either scrapped or sold. I have committed to my trust trading concerns in which over a million pounds have been invested. I have not been able to give to them as much time as their importance deserves, but nevertheless I have been able to bring them on to a clear business-like footing. But this newspaper to which I refer, carrying out the policy laid down by those who support it, has never missed an opportunity for misrepresenting those trading concerns in which a million pounds of the State's money is involved. Recently the Premier made a statement about the business undertakings, showing that they were responsible for a considerable portion of the State's deficit. That statement, when published in the newspaper was headed, not "Business Undertakings" but "Trading Concerns, Deficit. No bigger lie was ever uttered by anybody." I am Minister for Trading Concerns, and a statement that those trading concerns are responsible for any portion of the deficit is a reflection upon my character, not merely as a member of Parliament but as one with an honourable career of over 50 years in connection with manufacturers and work. I say most earnestly that all this balderdash and criticism is a virus which we require to put our foot upon. Personally I should like to see the gentleman who wrote those articles brought to the bar of the House, as he should have been years ago, and made to eat the humble pie which he got out of eating on that earlier occasion. Remarks have been made in the House, and in another Chamber about the trading concerns. In my opinion the basis of those remarks has been the articles to which I referred. I find that the president of the Primary Producers' Association is reported to have said this—

Up to the present he had been unable to secure information which he regarded as essential. In that connection he wished to record his personal appreciation of the articles by "Politicus"—

I do not know who "Politicus" is, or what sort of cuss he is. I asked about him once, and I was told, "Oh, take no notice of him. His English is rocky and his knowledge is absent." The report continues—

which appeared in the "West Australian" recently. He was sorry that the information had not been available earlier. Those who had read the articles must have been surprised.

Then he goes on to ask why we do not sell

the trading concerns. He wants us to get rid of them at any cost. A few years ago I entered into negotiations with a French firm, who were backed by sufficient money at the time, to sell to them the State Sawmills for £425,000, which would have repaid the State every penny spent upon them, and given £108,000 to the good, while we should still have maintained the sawmills working in the State. But we could not sell them. Why? Because we could not carry the proposition through the House. In confirmation of that statement, listen to what the president of the Primary Producers' Association, who is so much indebted to "Politicus," had to say:—

In the past the association had supported the retention of the State Implement Works and the sawmills on the grounds that they were essential to primary production.

There are members in the House who would not deny that the view held by that party might be put this way: "We would not mind the selling of the sawmills, but if we let the beggar sell the sawmills, the next thing would be that he would sell the State Implement Works." Then an old friend of mine, Mr. Moran, had something to say, as follows:—

Mr. Moran said he did not think any balance sheet brought out under the direction of the present Minister for Works would err on the side of liberality towards such a question.

I am not here to err on the side of liberality in connection with the trading concerns. I have to deal with them on the plain business facts of 12d. to every shilling and 12 inches to every foot, and I would have no more right to err on the side of liberality than on the side of bias. So far as I know, the balance sheets I am going to give the House are absolutely fair and square. It would take too long to go through all these statements but I could prove that there is a chain-link of purpose to misrepresent the position of these concerns to pave the way for their disposal. They want us to get rid of them at any price whatever. They have Buckley's show so long as I hold the reins until the State can get a fair deal for them, and when the State can get a fair deal then they may go so far as I am concerned, but not before.

Mr. McCallum: I will put the Typo. Union on to you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There has been a great sing-song about the lack of balance sheets. This gentleman who signs himself "Politicus" states that he could not get any information. What information he has got is absolutely absurd. A seventh standard schoolboy could not make mistakes such as he has made. What are the facts? The unaudited balance sheets of the four State trading concerns that I have to deal with—the implement works, the quarries, the brick-works, and the sawmills—have been laid on the Table of the House every year. The sawmills balance sheets are shown in last year's

index, but the other three are not. It is a strange thing that when our papers came back to the Works Department from this Chamber, these three missing balance sheets were returned amongst our papers and are in my office to-day. Then it has been said, as "Politicus" said, and as a member of another place (Mr. Nicholson) said, that they cannot get any later information than the balance sheets for 1918-19. These critics did not pursue their inquiries as they should have done.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Those balance sheets were here last year.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: On the 7th February of this year a copy of the report of the Public Works Department was sent to every member of the two Houses, and attention was directed to it, so that members could have the information before the report was laid on the Table here; and it contained every balance sheet. Someone might ask why this report was not laid on the Table last session. The answer is because the printer could not let us have them. As soon as we got it—I think it was on the 28th January—I gave instructions for a copy to be forwarded to each member. In the Public Works Department report on pages 42 to 48 are shown the balance sheets for these trading concerns right up to date. Naturally, when people criticise without being sure of their grounds, trouble must ensue.

Hon. P. Collier: Monger said he could not get the information.

[Thé Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: There are a few facts in connection with the trading concerns which I wish to place before the House. A statement was made in a leading article and "Politicus" also made mention about this thing and the other thing not being there. Let me tell the House that for the three years ended 30th June, 1921, the State Implement Works, Quarries and Brick-works have paid in interest to the Treasury £37,865.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is equal to a dividend in a company.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: They have provided for depreciation £9,779; they have provided for sinking fund £1,073, or a total for these three concerns in the three years of £19,717. In connection with the sawmills I have the figures for the last four years. They paid by way of interest £62,386 and provided for depreciation £63,576. There is no other timber concern in this State that has done so well. Since the sawmills were started they have provided for depreciation a total of £100,000, and yet this critic has the face to assert and to mislead the people by saying that no such provision was made. I am not telling fairy tales; I am giving facts on which I have to stand. Of the £100,000, a sum of £24,088 4s. 1d. has been invested by the Treas-

ury and the accrued interest is £1,947. The stock we have on hand at the sawmills, I am assured by the manager—and I have no reason whatever to question his word—has been listed at cost price and a deduction has been made with regard to stock which may not at time of sale be in as good a condition as it is to-day. The brick works to 1919 had accumulated a loss of £6,700. The reason was this: I am in charge of this concern and I have insisted that every cent of interest that would have had to be paid if the money had been borrowed from a bank should be paid. The consequence was that this concern had its profit and loss account loaded with a lump of money, showed as owing, but which had not previously been shown. I believe in painting everything as black as I can in this respect. In 1920 and 1921, after paying interest, sinking fund and depreciation, and all debts, the brick works made a profit of £4,867. The debit against profit and loss, instead of being £6,700, on the 30th June of this year stood at £1,833. We have allowed in our balance sheet for depreciation £5,880 of which we paid out of our profits £4,062, which is in the Treasury to-day, and provided in assets £1,818. The stocks of bricks on hand, according to our stock book, were valued at £608 and when they are loaded on to trucks they will be charged at £800 to customers, so that we have been extremely fair in that respect. I would ask members to think over the State Trading Concerns. Let me give a few facts, even at the risk of being wearisome. Our sawmill turnover for the year ended 30th June, 1921, was over £600,000. Our output per working day from our sawmills is 260 loads. We have seven mills and a controlling interest over three others. We have eight locomotives employed in our work; 25 miles of main line; 60 miles of bush line; and 143 trucks, vans, etc. We carry all stores to supply our men with food and have a turnover of £52,000 a year. We have 210 horses and 92 bullocks, and we pay in wages and salaries £800 every working day in the year. That is what the sawmills are doing. We employ a manager and other men to the number of 1,029. Members should keep those figures in mind and they will then have some idea of what the men operating these works have to control. The plant and working capital is £350,000. We paid £18,000 in interest to the Treasury on the 30th June. This was not a book entry; the money was paid. We have 345,000 acres of land, and that is how our trade is done. To show members that we have an eye to business, last year we made £4,000 out of the sale of drafts on our receipts in London. We sell a great quantity to South Africa and India and knowing the exchange markets, as the manager does and as I do, we were able to say to people in London who wanted money, "We can help you," and we made 4,000 sovereigns out of that. Surely a big concern like this is worthy of more respect than the piffling, misleading criticism to

which I have referred. Let me show again where the nigger in the wood pile is. We have started a yard at Carlisle; we bought it from the timber hewers' people. When we bought it the trade done was a little over £2,000 a month. Now it is £4,500 a month and we have three times the number of employees who are getting along very comfortably indeed. Having that yard, we are obliged to deal in ironmongery and galvanised iron. Will members believe that the firm that supplies the biggest quantity of galvanised iron in Australia, Lysaghts' absolutely refused to supply the State Sawmills? The manager does not state the reason, but it is quite plain. He said, "You can get my iron from Millars', Whittakers', and Bunnings'." So we can; there is no question about that. The commission allowed for the sale of galvanised iron to those people by Lysaghts' is £6 a ton, but if we buy iron to sell to our customers they allow us only £2 or £2 10s. a ton. Seeing that we are able to pay cash and deal with the trade, we think we are as much entitled to the £6 a ton as Millars', Whittakers', Bunnings', or anyone else. Let me go a step further. We have to do the business and therefore we set to work to make inquiries. I have not lost touch with my friends in the Old Country. Some of my school fellows are in trade there and have not forgotten old Billy Jimmy, as they used to call me. We set to work to find out what we could do with regard to iron. We found we could buy equal quality and could sell against Lysaghts' iron. The manager of one of the concerns that sells the stuff had the impudence to go to our yard and tell us that we must not sell this to another person who was competing with the other timber people. I do not know what the manager told him so I cannot repeat it. The House knows what I would have told him. If there is any possibility of boycotting us, or interfering with our purchase of this iron, members can bet their bottom dollar that it will be done.

Mr. Corboy: Start a mill and make our own.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We cannot do that, sonny. Now take the State Quarries. We have provided on the State quarries depreciation to the amount of £1,581, of which we paid in cash out of our profits £981, and we have over £600 in assets. The stock we have in hand has been valued at £2,797, and when it goes out from us it will be charged for at £3,900. We do not try to make profits. We crush the stone because it is needed for the Public Works Department. If there is any surplus we let other people have it at about cost. This year we are going to make a profit. I have given instructions that our price shall be raised. I am not going to study anyone. If I am going to be criticised like this, then, by God, I will deserve it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is not fair to the local authorities.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I know it is not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why should the Press be the cause of their having to pay more for stone?

The Minister for Mines: You will get nothing from the local authorities that they do not make a profit out of. They made a profit of £40,000 last year upon our electric current?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Where?

The Minister for Mines: In the city of Perth. I get tired of these local authorities.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Works is addressing the Chair.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Though we have been criticised so much in connection with the Primary Producers' conference, the same gentlemen, when they want stone for their freezing works at Fremantle, have not been diffident about coming forward and asking that I should let them have stone so that they may get their work through, even if I have to rob other people. When I took the State Implement Works in hand I had a complete valuation made of the works, and went over every bit of them myself in order to endeavour to trace the assets. I have previously explained all this to the House. As I could not find £119,000 worth of assets, I put that amount into a suspense account. If the works make a profit they will have to pay the money back. It is no use overloading them with a sum of money for which there is nothing to show. During the last three years, we have balanced our affairs honestly. For the year 1919 the loss was £2,000, in 1921 they lost £1,500, and for 1920 we made a profit of £2,343. The net loss for the three years' workings was under £1,500. Those officers who have worked loyally with me and done their best in the handling of the work are certainly deserving of a better appreciation of their services than that any attempt should be made to show that they are either falsifying their stocks or are incompetent. Members will find on the Table as clear a statement of accounts as I think could be presented. I have got from my officers the three years' workings put together. Any hon. member by spending an hour or so may go through the papers, and, if he should find any error or anything that is wrong, he should let the House know. It is not right to condemn anything until a person has by his own investigations proved that he has foundation for his condemnation. The gentleman who has displayed so much verbosity, and who has written so much under the heading of "Politics," should remember that if a man is to be considered as a man, if his opinions are to be of any value, and if he wishes to have the respect of other people, he must at any rate see that the foundation upon which he is working is free from bias and inaccuracies. I do not know whether the controlling spirit of the "West Australian" ever troubles to read the leaders appearing in the paper. If the controllers of

that paper will turn to a leader appearing in the issue of the 30th June last, they will find something which will give them room for serious thought. This is how the article reads—

It is doubtful whether there has ever been such a thing as Treasury control since responsible Government was granted to the State. . . . The heads, in practice, are allowed to riot furiously in spending, contemptuous of the annual farce of parliamentary consideration of the Estimates, and votes for Departments. . . . The talk of economy is so much waste effort. . . . Permanent heads are as much as, if not more, responsible for extravagance than are political administrators. . . . When a Department prepares its Estimates, and these are accepted, first by the Government and finally, with or without modifications, by Parliament, it should be understood that the amounts voted on each item are not to be exceeded except under the pressure of an extraordinary emergency. The Treasury should rule that when a vote is expended no further money shall be made available in respect to the particular work until Parliament has made a new authorisation. The rule, necessarily, would have its exceptions, but these should be so rare as to exhibit the Treasury as a strict and careful guardian of the public cash. How recklessly the sums voted by Parliament are exceeded is apparent from the figures of the public accounts of any year. To illustrate the position the votes and the actual expenditure of the administrative departments for last year are given for comparison in the following table:—

Department.	Voted by Parliament. £	Expended by Department. £
Premier	71,034	94,926
Lands and Repatriation	49,823	60,103
Treasurer	106,186	144,814
Education	389,485	414,330
Health	183,584	240,933
Agriculture	57,201	68,410
Works	115,000	116,488
Mines, Forests, Police	212,232	241,017
Attorney General	67,577	71,760
Colonial Secretary	223,194	250,259
	<hr/> 1,475,366	<hr/> 1,703,040

I find that the writer of this article unconsciously gave me credit for something I did not deserve, namely that my excess was £1,488 out of £116,000. When I looked into the figures I found that all this argument had been supposed to have been built up on the 1920-21 figures, whereas in actual fact the figures for the previous year had been employed. If this gentleman who takes upon himself to reprove the Government, censure Ministers, criticise and hurt the feelings of

the loyal civil servants of the State, who are doing their best to help their Ministers, offers such proof of the foundation of his strictures as this, what reliance can anyone place upon his articles whether written by "Politicians" or anyone else?

Mr. Munsie: He is not to be relied upon. There is no question about that.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS. The article goes on—

Instead of departments vying with each other, as with a business and patriotic self-respect they should, to see which will have the greatest proportionate surplus of its vote in hand at the end of the financial year, they appear to be striving each to exceed the others by its expenditure in excess of the parliamentary grant.

That is a wicked libel. It is a cruel statement without any foundation. It is inconsiderate, and can only spring from a mind either diseased physically or overcome by drugs or drink.

Mr. Munsie: He deserves every word of it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have had several articles by "Politicians." About 100 years ago there was issued a celebrated publication by an unknown man. This man was rendered famous for some sarcastic and pungent criticism which he offered on matters of general interest at the time. He wrote under the name of "Junius." Hon. members may recollect that when taking a certain course at school these letters by "Junius" were held up as models of perfect English and perfect logic, and as showing how words can be put together in an eloquent and decent fashion. I conclude that "Politicians," upon whose shoulders the mantle of "Junius" has not fallen, is endeavouring to see if he cannot fill the vacant shroud. He commences an article by stating that a few years back he wrote certain other articles of importance dealing with the finances of the State. He has written them again, and has had them illustrated. There is one in which I am shown, as Minister for Works, as rather a good looking young lady wearing a mop cap and engaged in washing. If I had to wash "Politicians" I would take care that I used plenty of soap. I should only weary the House if I went into all the errors of the figures given in these articles. There is one instance, however, in which I think a crime has been committed against Western Australia. It is a matter upon which the chief administrators of the country should take a hand. The Premier of the State should interest himself in the matter, seeing that, whether intentionally or otherwise, the State has been belittled and traduced in apparently a malicious manner. The writer after talking about tramways, business undertakings, etc., says—

These business assets!—with £28,000,000 tied up in State business undertakings alone, can we convince any shrewd financiers looking out for bargains that their

value is £28,000,000. . . . Let us prick the bubble. . . . Business looking for 6 per cent. would suggest a figure between 10 and 11 million pounds for what cost us £28,258,000.

The man who would pen that is a danger to the State, and a traitor to the people who are trying to lift the State out of its troubles. With these remarks I will leave the gentleman. Statements have been made with regard to the question of audited accounts. The member for North-East Fremantle pointed out what the Trading Concerns Act says. I agree with every word, but I say it cannot be done.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We always said that before, but you would not listen.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Perhaps we may have blamed members opposite wrongfully. The balance sheet of the State Implement Works to the 30th June, 1920, was sent to the Audit Department on the 30th November of that year. We had it returned on the 26th May, 1921. The balance sheet of the State Quarries was sent to the Audit Department on the 28th September and returned on the 7th May. The balance sheet of the State Brickworks was sent to the Audit Department on the 18th August and returned on the 16th May; while that of the State Sawmills was sent on the 15th October and returned on the 19th May; How then was it possible to comply with the Act? Why cannot these people, who talk so glibly of what should be done, but who could not do it themselves if given the opportunity, make inquiries beforehand? They can readily find out what they want to know. Any member of Parliament can get any information from me that he desires, but I am not going to let my office be made a *touting or pinning ground* for any journalist who likes to stray there.

Mr. Munsie: Some of these fellows will be sliding down the water pipe again if they are not careful.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I wish to deal now with the Country Party. So far as I understand, the wheat pool, if it is not perfect, has been a step in the right direction in the way of securing for those who do the work, at least a fair value for their products. The same thing applies to the wool pool. So long as the pool is controlled by those who can prevent injustice and overcharges to the people of the State, I am prepared to support it. I say again as I said last year, that if the price of wheat in the State is such that a man cannot get enough bread with which to feed his family, not a bushel of wheat should be allowed to go out of the State until the people in it have been fed. Whatever price may be obtained overseas for produce, it has to be remembered, as I have to remember in connection with the produce I am interested in, that the first duty of the people of Western Australia and the Government of the State is to see that the people within the borders of Western Australia are properly fed. Mr. Lawson, who is

the Premier of Victoria, is engaged in a fight in his State regarding the wheat pool business. I do not know sufficient about Victorian politics to discuss that matter here, but I wish to read portion of a speech which that gentleman delivered in connection with his election campaign. The member for Perth (Mr. Mann) was courteous enough to make the copy of the speech available to me, and there are two extracts which I desire to read to the House. I commend them to the careful consideration of every member who is listening to me to-night. With reference to his opponents—they include the Labour Party and what is known as the *Farmiers' Union Party*—he said:—

Each of them is ready and willing to sacrifice the interests of the whole people to those of its section, and to barter its support to that end, and each of them is nominating candidates who, if elected, will not be representatives of the people, but rigidly pledged and fettered delegates of sectional interests.

I am not making any such charge against the Producers' Party in this State. It is necessary when the political freedom of the community is threatened, to battle against the movement, and a man, who is proud of his country and to whom political freedom is more than a parrot cry, will maintain that battle and face whatever odds may be opposed to him. There is a proposal for a fruit pool. I shall watch the movement in that direction with great interest. If the direction of the pool is not in different hands—the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., made a holy mess of it a year or two ago—I am not very sanguine of success.

Mr. Pickering: They may have learnt by experience.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I do not think so, but that is a matter of opinion. The hon. member is entitled to his opinion on that point. Let us go further with what Mr. Lawson said.

Mr. Johnston: He will get tuned up.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That may be so, but he proceeded to say—

The Farmers' Union Party proposed to substitute a compulsory pool controlled by the wheat growers themselves—for the compulsory Government pool raises an issue of a more dangerous character than that raised by the compulsory pool favoured by the Official Labour Party. The Government pool is Socialism. The F.U.P. pool is Syndicalism.

Let members think seriously in view of that expression of opinion.

Mr. Munsie: They must be Bolsheviks over there.

Mr. Pickering: And that is saying something.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The political position to-day demands full consideration and determination from everyone to whom political freedom is of more than ordinary concern and more than a parrot cry. To

some of those who revelled like I did, and I hope a good many other hon. members have also revelled in them, in the battles for political freedom throughout the world, these matters are more than simple transient things of the moment. They deal with principles and are not only of concern to people of to-day, but to those who will succeed us. Whatever may be the reasons actuating members, it is a matter for their own conscience, but we should take every care that the political freedom we have enjoyed shall descend to those who come after us. There have been various charges of inconsistency against members of the Country Party and more or less convincing protests in denial of those charges, but I am not concerned with them. Every man is his own judge. The Premier and I have always been free men, and when the constitution of the Primary Producers' Association will permit of Sir James Mitchell joining them as a free man I will be willing to do so too, but not till then. I do not believe that either the Premier or myself is wanted in the ranks of the Country Party.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think I am, but I am there.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Until the Premier and I have an opportunity of putting our views before these people, we will have to put up with all this silly nonsense that we have heard.

Mr. Johnston: Why wait for the Premier? Come right along.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I referred at the commencement to the recent election. I say that the conduct of the Primary Producers' Party who were opposed to me in the Murray-Wellington electorate during the last elections, and against Mr. Willmott in the Nelson electorate and also against the latter gentleman in the Legislative Council election, was such as to make one feel a little bit sorry for the country and the people in it. What were the tactics they adopted in the Murray-Wellington electorate? First of all, to show to what depths we are descending, the initial step taken was to send a representative of the Westralian Farmers' throughout the district to approach the residents and to preach the gospel of co-operation. Later on they sought subscribers for the "Primary Producer." They got people to subscribe and at the bottom of the small card—I have not seen one myself, but I have been told about it—there was printed the following sentence:—"We bind ourselves to adopt the political platform which is printed in this paper." That refers to the programme printed in their official organ, the "Primary Producer." Some friends of mine in my electorate asked the gentlemen if that meant that, if I stood for election, they would have to vote against me. They were told that that was so and my friends said that if such were the case, they would not subscribe.

Mr. Pickering: That is not true.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It is an absolute fact.

Mr. Willcock: Make him withdraw.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not at all. A withdrawal like that would be a darn sight worse than what he said. The next thing the organisation did was to send down their organiser.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They were after your scalp.

Hon. P. Collier: Chasing you with an axe.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Following on that they sent down the member for Katanning (Mr. A. Thomson). He went to Harvey.

Hon. P. Collier: He was the only one that would do it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The story goes that when he got there and found what support they were likely to get in that centre and heard the candidate speak, he made a non-committal speech and would not do anything further. I am not very strong on Biblical history, but members will perhaps remember that passage dealing with Elijah ascending to the skies in a chariot of fire. When he was going up, his disciple, Elisha, asked that Elijah's mantle might be cast upon him. My mantle has not yet fallen upon the Elisha of Katanning. Let me give hon. members another illustration. What chance would I have had with the provincial council of the Primary Producers' Association in my district? The head man on that council is a resident of Coolup who 30 years ago had a bit of trouble over a block of land. If the hon. members like to turn to "Hansard" of 1895 they will find that the member for Murray brought the matter before the Government and kept on at them until ultimately the Government of the day remedied the wrong and gave the man who had been robbed another piece of ground.

Hon. P. Collier: Was that man on the provincial council?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: What chance would I have had in such circumstances? The father of my political opponent there, was a heavy weight who fought me twice in the ring and got badly beaten. Then the son who was a featherweight came along like a Bantam cock intent on settling me as a Dorking rooster. Rightly or wrongly, Mr. Fairbridge thought that I was responsible for the amount he desired in connection with the children he was bringing out from England, being cut down. Irrespective of whether that was right or not, he was firmly convinced that I was responsible. Then there was another man named Hawter of Balingup, who is an alien.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He is a decent man, at any rate.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: He may be, but I do not know if he is a French Swiss, a German Swiss or an Italian Swiss, but he is not an Australian and I have no use for him. Then there was another man, Wansborough, who fell out with me because

I would not let him and Hawter bamboozle me out of fruit cases some years ago.

Mr. McCallum: Are they all in your electorate?

Mr. Johnston: No, and consequently they had nothing to do with it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: They are all in one family, wholly and solely.

Mr. McCallum: The South-West must be a pretty bad place.

Mr. Pickering: They are not here to defend themselves, at any rate.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The Deputy Leader of the Country Party gave us information as to what we should do.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He issued a threat.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I want to deal with another question, and I trust the members of the Country Party will listen to me carefully.

Hon. P. Collier: You want these Bulgarians of politics to listen to you.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I claim that I have done as far as lies within my power—I am not asking for praise—all I possibly could to give every hon. member information and courtesy when he has come to me, because I have recognised in them, the men who are elected to represent the constituents in their several portions of the State. So far as possible I have always given them what advice I could.

Mr. Johnston: You have always given us a fair deal.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: We have a new process operating in connection with our affairs. I have a letter here which I will read to members. I want, first, to refer to the Geraldton water supply scheme. I suppose there is no water scheme in Western Australia which has been so unfortunate as this one, or, I believe, so unfair to ratepayers. They have been messed and fooled about for years and the legacy came to me to deal with. It is only a few months since we had meetings at Geraldton to discuss the matter. The newspapers were full of what was to be done. The members of Parliament and everyone else interested in the matter knew what was to be done and yet I received from the head office of the Primary Producer's Association a letter requesting me to set out for their information what had been done in the district. I am a busy man and I have many men to deal with, but, knowing that the members for the district were fully seized of the position, I was not inclined to let these people, what I call "butt in." I replied saying that the matter had been attended to. Here is the letter I sent—

I have your letter of the 4th instant, with which you enclose a copy of a letter dated the 21st February, and which I do not recollect seeing previously. With regard to the water supply for Geraldton, I have to say that this has been in hand for some time. Active work is proceeding in the direction of building a dam, and the people of the Geraldton district are fully aware of the efforts the Government have

been making. I would like to say that we have every desire to show courtesy to your association, but it would be out of the question for me to extend the number of channels through which information is sought. It is recognised, as a rule, that the member for the district is the one to whom those in the district apply in regard to the material needs which this department has to look after, and I keep the member for the district fully posted with regard to the department's operations. It is an innovation for such applications to be made as the one you put before me, and the calls upon my time are so heavy that, as I have said before, I do not wish to add to those calls when, in my opinion, the district is being supplied with the information by the elected member. Of course, you will understand that in this department the Minister does not recognise any political parties. He is merely a trustee doing his best, according to his judgment, for the whole of the people of the State.

I would have thought that would be sufficient; but no!

Mr. Lambert: No fear!

Mr. Musnie: They would submit that to Mr. Monger, and he would have something to say about it.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: At a place called North Kondinin Siding a water supply is wanted. The member for Pingelly (Mr. Hickmott), whom we all respect and like, has been unceasing in his efforts to push this matter forward. Senator De Largie has made representations with regard to the same thing; the Kondinin branch of the Primary Producers' Association also. Therefore, when I got a letter signed "W. Sutcliffe, general secretary," telling me that he understands this, that, and the other, and wants me to inquire and find out things, I sent a reply as follows—

The matter referred to in your letter of the 29th June, viz., the provision of a dam at North Kondinin, is in the course of correspondence with the Kondinin branch and others. Mr. Hickmott, M.L.A., has had the subject before him for some time, and as I informed you in my letter of the 6th April last, it is out of the question for this department to deal with matters of this sort otherwise than through the member for the district. You will readily see yourself the amount of correspondence entailed would easily get beyond bounds. I may state for your information that the engineer in charge of this work has a limited staff, and present finances do not permit of any addition to it. Further, he hopes in the course of a week or so to be dealing with some 15 or 16 similar cases and the Kondinin inquiry will naturally take its turn. I hope you will take my letter in good part, as I must insist upon dealing with these matters through the duly elected representative in Parliament.

Mr. Johnston: Quite right, too.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: While I was on my sick bed—I am not blaming Mr. Monger for that—the following letter came to me, and I want hon. members to pay attention to it, and see whether they think it is the sort of thing that any man who believes in Parliamentary control is going to put up with, no matter what the result or what the cost to him may be—

Your letter of the 1st instant to the general secretary of this association relative to the provision of a dam at North Kondinin has been brought under my notice. I find that there have been one or two similar letters received from you in connection with other matters on which the general secretary has addressed you. It would appear that you are under some misapprehension as to the position. My association represents some thousands of farmers, as well as other producers. We have upwards of two hundred branches throughout the country, which deal with all kinds of matters affecting the welfare of their industry, and the public interest generally. In the ordinary conduct of business, branches find it necessary at times to place in the hands of the general secretary various matters which require to be dealt with by the head office of the association, which has been created for that purpose, and ever since the association has been in existence this method has been followed. We have at all times received courteous consideration at the hands of the various Ministerial heads of Government departments, and other sections of the Public Service, and it is somewhat of a surprise to receive the communications referred to.

The association had courtesy from me until they tried to go too far; then I stopped them. Mr. Monger's letter concludes as follows—and the sting is always in the tail:—

I trust, on further reflection, you will recognise that your attitude is not a reasonable one to adopt towards so representative a body as this association; especially in view of the fact that the infrequency of our communications to you in no sense warrants the fear, expressed in your letter, that by dealing with us "the amount of correspondence entailed would easily get beyond bounds." I may, however, say in conclusion, that as our head office is the duly constituted official mouth-piece of a large and important section of the community, it will still be incumbent upon it to address you as occasion may require, and I assume you do not desire that in future we should be put to the necessity of submitting our inquiries through the medium of the Hon. the Premier.

Members: Ah!

Mr. Corboy: Who signed that letter?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Mr. A. J. Monger.

Mr. Willcock: The thunderbolt has fallen.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: This morning I received a precious letter from this precious general secretary of this precious association, asking me about the putting in of a small water supply for a small farmer on the wheat belt. Well, I am not there as a plumber or a gas fitter, but as a Minister. Hon. members will see that there is in this correspondence a threat, a danger, to every one of them. If the association are allowed to proceed in this way unchecked—they will not be allowed so far as I am concerned—the next thing will be that at the following election, if they do not want one of us—and they are pretty catholic in their objections, as the last general election showed—they will only need to say, "Oh, So-and-so! We do not want him. He did not do anything. We did the work." The Commonwealth departments adopt a rule by which, if I address the Postmaster General about any matter, I receive an acknowledgment but have to wait for the reply, which is sent from Melbourne through the medium of the Federal member of Parliament. I am taking this stand to-day, for the protection of every member of this House and of the other Chamber as well, that I will not allow any association to step in between me and my fellow members of Parliament, who have their rights and their privileges.

Members: Hear, hear!

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It will be time enough for some outside association to interfere when these gentlemen neglect their duties. Further, it will be time enough for that association to which I have referred to interfere with me, and to threaten me with intimidation from the Premier, when I turn cur and coward and am afraid to face them.

Mr. Lambert: This is Tammany!

Hon. P. Collier: You know, of course, that the executive have been dealing with you over that matter?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes; but I think I have the members of Parliament with me. I take this stand: let the executive do their worst against me, but neither they, nor the Trades Hall, nor any other political association, shall, so long as I have my strength, intervene between members of Parliament and myself regarding matters which are entrusted to me as a Minister, as a trustee of this State. My duty to members of Parliament is to see that their requests are promptly and courteously dealt with. I am not going to let anyone get in under the lap by this piffing sort of threat of communicating with my Premier. Why, Mr. Speaker, I feel that I ought to apologise for polluting the atmosphere of this Chamber by the reading of such a letter. I have taken a good deal longer than I expected, but I have dealt with the subject fully. I have stated the facts; here are the files; he who runs may read, and my critics may do just as they darned well please.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. SIMONS (East Perth) [9.42]: As a new member I have listened with a great deal of interest to what the veterans of our Parliamentary life have been uttering since this session opened. According to what one gathers from the remarks of the various Government supporters, it is accepted as a fixed principle that we are such a good, nice, tame, meek set of members that the whole session is going to continue without any criticism, without any correction, and without any attempt to keep the Government in check. If that delusion is finding shape in the hearts and minds of those who are supporting the Government, they are going to come up against a very severe disillusionment before many weeks have passed. I am bound to say that to-night I listened with amazement to the revelations made by one of the fathers of the House, the Minister for Works. We have heard a good deal of the control of the Parliamentary life of this State by outside bodies, but after reading "Hansard" for many sessions back I doubt if any more damning statement has ever issued from a responsible source regarding outside executive control than that which has fallen this evening from the lips of the Minister for Works. When we find a party machine sending its agents out through an electorate to hunt down, as though he were a criminal, a man who has grown grey in the service of his country, as the Minister for Works has, and when we hear documents read which disclose that, practically, a pistol is aimed at his head, and that he is threatened with having the power of 200 branches arrayed against him, we ask who are these agrarian Prussians, these agricultural Kaisers, that they want to marshal the forces of 200 battalions to bring a Minister to his knees? I do not know of anything more amazing than the statements made by the Minister to-night. A letter from the chief of this new organisation states that other Ministers have extended to it courteous consideration.

The Minister for Mines: He did not say that.

Mr. SIMONS: That is what the letter stated, as read by the Minister for Works.

The Minister for Mines: No; the letter does not say that. The letter says "other Administrations."

Mr. SIMONS: "Courteous consideration" were the words; I took them down. The writer might have said, with equal correctness, that the other Ministers had meekly submitted, had responded to the threats, had come to heel with the crack of the whip. We have to dwell on this question of control by outside executives, because every member on this side of the House had to fight his case on the hustings, had to meet the charge that we were controlled by outside bodies.

Member: So you are.

Mr. SIMONS: When I hear members on the other side making these inane interjec-

tions, I wonder whether they are correctly called primary producers, whether they should not rather be called Moulton's magpies, birds who are periodically taken into the aviary to be taught the tune which they are to pipe for the next six months. After what we have heard to-night I am inclined to think that, instead of their being termed primary producers, they could more correctly be spoken of as primary seducers, members whose business it is to seduce Ministers from their legitimate duties—from the primary principles of responsible government. I believe every member of the House is prepared to give the Government all reasonable support in the financial crisis through which the State is passing. It has been refreshing to note in the speech of practically every member who has spoken the assurance that the Government will not be harried on behalf of the various electorates to meet anything but the most vital interests. I believe that the Leader of the Opposition, in giving to the Premier an assurance that financial disabilities would not be made a matter for party contention, was speaking for every member on this side of the House. We believe that finance is a subject which at a time like this should not be used for party advantage. I hope that when the wheel of politics turns, and the present Leader of the Opposition will be leading the Government, the same courtesy and consideration will be extended by Ministers and the primary producers when they come to sit on this side of the Chamber.

Mr. Willcock: May it be soon.

Mr. SIMONS: Every student of the condition of the State's finances must be impressed with the relationship of the railways to our deficit. No relief, no reform, no lessening of the burden of finance, can be brought about until we adopt some policy by which every acre of land adjoining existing railways shall be brought into productivity. The Premier has said that a new policy of railway extension will be carried out in some parts of the State. The policy of the State should be, not for more miles of railway, but for more traffic for the miles already in existence. No Government can ever hope to solve the financial difficulties of the State unless they are rigidly pledged to, and act upon, a policy which will bring in an unimproved land tax, or some other means of breaking up the big holdings fronting the railways. I will stoutly oppose the construction of one extra mile of railway until we have brought into use the lands already served by railways. It has been computed by an officer of the Agricultural Department that between Toodyay and Coolup, along the foot-hills of the Darling Range, is to be found 200,000 acres of the finest vine-producing land in any part of the world. This amazing statement can be borne out by facts. In no other part of the world is there land bearing such wonderful vine products as are to be found along the Upper Swan. I

have seen exhibits from that district placed on view in Sydney in the presence of experts from California, and I have heard those experts concede that in no part of California can be produced raisins and currants of the same degree of quality as those from the Upper Swan. And what is being produced there is also being produced as far south as Coolup; and between those two points lies 200,000 acres of soil of equal value, much of which to-day is held up by large holders. Near the pretty little hamlet of Pinjarra is a block of 60,000 acres held by one owner. Pinjarra, as we know, is built on the banks of a beautiful river and is surrounded by a most fertile area. Yet its population has not increased during the past 30 or 40 years. We must try to find some solution which will throw that land into use, and thus make of it a feeder bringing fresh traffic to the railways, which to-day represent the deficit under which we are staggering. Take the remarkable example of Toodyay. According to official figures, there was under cultivation in that district last year an area 2,000 acres less than that cultivated five years ago. Does that represent true progress? Every member of the House is in favour of a sane immigration policy. But hand in hand with that policy there should be a plan under which we can make those lands available to would-be settlers from abroad and also to our own people, in preference to sending families 160 miles to the wheat belt where the rainfall is not nearly so certain as in the districts nearer to the coast line. Something should be done by a practical Government to throw open those big areas already held up before attempting to build any fresh lines of railway. It has been represented that members on this side, without qualification, are opposed to the bringing of new people into Australia. There is not a single thinker holding any position of importance in the Labour Party who would say that Australia, with $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions of people, is over-populated. There is no man who could say that Western Australia has sufficient people. It is an unalterable law of economics that the more people we bring in, collaterally with the development of our primary and secondary industries, the more work will there be to supply the needs of those already settled here. I remember that as a boy at Fremantle one of my first impressions of a public meeting was gained at a gathering convened to protest against South Australians and Victorians coming here. The State, then with fewer than 100,000 people, was regarded by that meeting as being over-populated. It was thought that Western Australia could not carry more than 100,000 people. Although that was 20 years ago, the same type of objectors still exist in Western Australia. We are not going to say that this great State, which a few years ago was importing pumpkins and wheat and the crudest forms of agricultural produce, and which last year produced nine million pounds worth from the soil, is in-

capable of absorbing tens of thousands of persons per annum. We believe that the man who writes abroad to prevent people from coming here is doing us all a wrong, and that the man who goes abroad like a cheap-jack, and paints the attractiveness of Western Australia in too vivid colours, is also doing us harm. We have to strike a happy medium and represent the conditions of Western Australia truthfully. At the same time we have to control immigration on such lines as will prevent the dumping of industrialists by the thousand into this country to reduce our social conditions. The Labour Party as a whole is in favour of immigration, provided it is not used as an instrument to lower the social conditions which we have been able to build up; because the higher we keep the social conditions of our country, the more attractive will the State appear to the man from abroad. I believe we are somewhat wrong in confining our immigration ideas to Britishers. After all, a mixed population, so long as the mixture be a right one, is a population which brings stiffening, idea, new thought, and variety, into a nation, qualities which make for greatness.

The Minister for Railways: And for trouble.

Mr. SIMONS: With a population of $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions we are going to have more trouble in keeping out the Asiatic than if we could increase our white population to 10 millions. When it comes to the final show-down, it does not matter from what part of Europe a white man has sprung, he is going to fight side by side with the Britisher in keeping out the Asiatic. I have never yet seen a little trouble in which a Britisher and an European will not take the side of the white man against the Asiatic.

Member: You never know.

Mr. SIMONS: I do, because I have seen it; and what happens in regard to the individual gives an index of what will happen in a big community. If we survey the history of Australia, we must be surprised at the contribution men from continental Europe have made to this country. Provided that the immigrants bring families with them, or are married couples with the chance of founding families here, we should not be so narrow as to restrict our policy to Britishers; because so long as they are white we have security for the future. And since we have in Australia $5\frac{1}{2}$ million people with British instincts, we can safely bring in a small percentage of whites from other parts of Europe. Some of us have admired Canada, where they have to stall-feed the cattle for nearly six months in the year, where the country is frozen over for half the annual period and where, notwithstanding, the population is increasing by 200,000 or 300,000 per annum. It is not done by restricting it to one nationality. It is because Canada extends her arms in welcome to every decent white man from any part of Europe. We might well take

pattern by Canada and adopt a broader view of immigration.

The Minister for Railways: Would you give these Europeans financial assistance?

Mr. SIMONS: No, I think it would be wrong to assist them, but we ought to exercise a greater spirit of toleration of white men who do not speak our language upon arrival. I would not assist them from State funds, but I would make it known to decent people in Europe that there are opportunities for building up homes in our country. We have with us the question of industrial unrest. I was interested at hearing members of the Primary Producers Party urging us on this side to go out and induce the industrialists to work for lower wages, saying "Accept any kind of conditions, but for Heaven's sake, give us peace." I, for one, am prepared to go out on that mission conditionally on an equal number of members from the Primary Producers Party coming along to urge farmers to reduce the price of wheat for local consumption.

Mr. Latham: You are misstating facts.

Mr. SIMONS: I am doing nothing of the kind. Why preach to us about asking our people to work for a lower wage unless you are prepared to advise your people to take a lower price?

Mr. Latham: We set an example last year, you know.

Mr. SIMONS: It must have been a horrible one, for I never heard of anybody following it. There are some people who contend that the price of bread does not represent very much to a community. Bread in itself does not represent much, so far as its relationship to prices is concerned, but in every part of the civilised globe the price of bread furnishes an index to the cost of the other commodities of life, and so much is said about bread because bread is the great staple and basis of our existence, and it has its reflex in every degree in everything needed for human consumption. In a sporting spirit I make an offer to go out in the country as has been suggested if an equal number of members from the other side will do the same to bring about a reduction in prices.

The Minister for Mines: I think you weighed it up well before you made the offer.

Mr. Lambert: The Minister apparently knows his friends well.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Nothing doing.

Mr. SIMONS: I was very pleased that the member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) was added to the list of members returned at the last election. If members of the Primary Producers' Party will only be candid, I think they will admit that he is not such a monster as they thought. I know from a knowledge of inside workings that, though he has been called a strike promoter and a strike maker, for every strike in which he has taken part, he has helped to prevent at least five strikes. It is, therefore, good to find members on the other side brought into contact with the member for South Fremantle in his capacity as a legislator. I take

it that every member concurs in his remarks with regard to the arbitration courts. We have heard a great deal about direct action on the part of labour and a desire to wipe out the arbitration court. This may be the wish of a section of labour, but we must not be impatient. We have had criminal courts for nearly 2,000 years endeavouring to wipe out crime, but no one suggests sacking the judges and burning down the courts because crime still exists in our midst. We did not expect the arbitration court to wipe out all strikes and discontent in 20 or even 100 years, but we did expect that arbitration would prevent some strikes and lead to more peaceable conditions. This it has done. It would be as sensible to abolish the arbitration court because a strike occurred as to burn down a hospital because there was an outbreak of disease. Wisdom should guide us, not in the direction of wiping out the arbitration court, but by making some contribution from both sides of the Chamber to render the court more elastic, enable it to give more prompt decisions, and save the long drawn out delays which have brought the principle of arbitration into disfavour during the last few years. In coming to the basic principle in connection with strikes, this great point is generally missed. If we go back to the later stages of the war when industrial unrest became so pronounced, we have to ask ourselves what was the first kind of strike brought on. During the first three years of the war, there was hardly a strike of importance in Australia, but finally the position became unbearable, conditions became insufferable, not because the industrialists were striking, but because there were strikes of another kind. The landlords had struck against the old rent figures; butter sellers had struck against selling butter at the old price; jam makers had struck against the old figure for jam; shipping companies had struck against the old freights and fares. These, however, were not called strikes or direct action; they were simply called trade adjustments.

Mr. McCallum: There was no arbitration, either.

Mr. SIMONS: No, it was all direct action; no seven days' notice of intention to increase freights or fares. There was no saying "May we?" It was done without question.

The Minister for Mines: That is wrong. This applies to the whole world, and we fixed prices.

Mr. Munsie: The Prices Regulation Commission could not regulate freights.

Mr. SIMONS: That is what I am complaining about. Outside influence has made it impossible for the Government to bring down the price of wheat to a proper figure. The Government have been rapped over the knuckles by the Minister for Works to-night because they did not do their job.

The Minister for Mines: I am not talking about that.

Mr. SIMONS: I am. We have to accept this principle, that an industrialist whether a tramway man, railway man, lumper or clerk, has a commodity to sell, and that commodity is his or her labour. It is certainly not put in a tin like jam, or wrapped up like butter, or sold by the yard like calico, but for all that it is a commodity. Each industrialist is a merchant with something to sell, and that something is the product of his brain or his hands. When men selling that commodity get together and say they want an increase in the rate or an improvement in the conditions of labour, it is called direct action or a strike. But we have never heard of a strike of butter sellers, or a strike of jam sellers, or a strike of bakers or anything of that kind. In such cases they are not called strikes, but commercial adjustments. When we go back to the beginning of the disturbances which brought about the strikes, we must not look purely to the industrial sections of our social life to find the cause. Something has been said by different speakers about revolution and about the industrial classes of Australia hungering for revolution. I do not believe there is one responsible leader of the Labour Party in Australia to-day who is in favour of revolution. I will admit that there are some extremists of the type so vigorously denounced by the Premier of Queensland the other day who would, if they could get the power, take hold of the steering wheel of the ship of Labour, but we have not yet got to the stage when they are anywhere near the wheel.

Mr. Teesdale: The Premier of Queensland is coming off now; he supported them a few years ago.

Mr. SIMONS: He never did anything of the kind. That is an utter inaccuracy. There has never been a time in the history of Labour in Australia when any Premier or leader has flirted or finessed with the direct actionists.

Mr. Teesdale: I will give you an instance.

Mr. SIMONS: The hon. member will have an opportunity later on, and I do not mind how loudly he voices it. There has never been a period when any responsible leader of Labour has endorsed direct action. We have on the fringe of the social movement which our party represents, a certain class of men who are not Australian, who are imported from abroad and who know nothing of our conditions, of our sentiments, or of our aspirations, men without soul, patriotism or country, who are represented by the Press opposed to Labour as being the voice of the Labour movement of Australia. I had the privilege of being on the Sydney Domain a few Sundays ago and from 14 different platforms I heard a so-called new social doctrine enunciated, and in no instance was it enunciated in the Australian accent.

Mr. Angelo: Quite right; I was there.

Mr. SIMONS: Not one of those men had any controlling voice or guiding hand in the destiny of the Australian Labour Party.

The Minister for Mines: They are the people you are asking us to bring to Western Australia.

Mr. SIMONS: No, I can give the nationalities of these men. There were two Irish, two Scotch, two Americans; and the rest I should describe as Whitechapel cockneys. There was not one with a continental accent among the whole 14. I admit that a certain section of the Press, for propaganda purposes, has been representing to the people of Australia that these wild-eyed, mad-headed extremists represent the voice of Labour. They do not.

Mr. Munsie: They are not even members of it.

Mr. SIMONS: And they are fighting us as viciously as any other political party in Australia. I fought them in East Perth; the Leader of the Opposition fought them in Boulder, and the member for South Fremantle fought them in his electorate; we fought them everywhere, but we cannot choke them off because some of them, I fancy, are being subsidised by the other side.

Mr. McCallum: They are in Queensland and New South Wales. There is no doubt about that.

Mr. SIMONS: I know there is nothing that the legitimate leader of Labour in Australia fears more than the idea of revolution. We recognise that any principle won by revolution cannot be retained in a democracy unless backed up by a majority of the citizens, and where is the sense of resorting to force unless a majority of the people are prepared to agree to it? Every leader of Labour recognises this fact. Only within the borders of the Australian Constitution and of the State Constitutions can we hope to fight for those things we are seeking to attain. We realise that our hope is in ballots and not bullets.

The Minister for Mines: Are you occupying the late Ben Jones's seat?

Mr. McCallum: I was not aware that he was dead.

Mr. SIMONS: I do not think Ben Jones ever made more stupid interjections than I have been getting from the Ministerial benches to-night. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) and other speakers have been deploring that Western Australia is in the Federation.

Mr. Angelo: No, I deplored the treatment we were getting from Federation.

Mr. SIMONS: We are getting everything we deserve from Federation. It is a judgment upon us for sending the type of senator whom we have representing us to-day. There are at least three of the six senators who are drawing £1,000 a year from the public revenue who would not be qualified for a yardman's job in a fifth rate hotel.

Mr. C. C. Maley: Who are they?

Mr. SIMONS: The hon. member knows them; if he does not he has not enough sense to be occupying a seat in this House. The people who sent members like these to Mel-

bourne to represent them are complaining of the kind of deal they are getting.

Mr. A. Thomson: We had it before those men were there.

Mr. SIMONS: But there was a chance of getting rid of them, and the opportunity was not taken. If we send representatives like these to Melbourne, why blame the system? To come down to matters of more local concern, as a metropolitan member I must express regret that in the whole of the Cabinet there is not one Minister representing a metropolitan constituency. I do not think there is a precedent for this in any part of Australia. This explains in a great measure why during the summer we were famishing for water. We were unable to wash decently or to drink decently, if I may so describe it. The member for Gascoyne deplored the fact that some ladies went to a hotel at 11 o'clock in the morning for cocktails or something of the kind. This probably is a habit that was contracted last summer when they were unable to get water. It indicates to what desperation the neglect of the Government has driven people because a decent water supply has not been provided for the city.

Mr. Angelo: They must have become very thirsty early in life.

Mr. SIMONS: It is no use criticising a scheme unless we have some remedy to apply. The Government for the past three years have been neglectful in not bringing the water from Mundaring into the metropolitan area. In 1903, when the scheme was established, with the idea of supplying water to Kalgoorlie and Boulder, there was an increase in the population of those cities of about 30,000 people. With the flow of years the position has undergone a change, and these areas are fast becoming de-populated. The State is now saddled with the capital expenditure on this tremendous scheme. We have in Perth people who are famishing for water, while there is this huge quantity at Mundaring not being used.

Mr. A. Thomson: Millions of gallons are going to waste every year.

Mr. SIMONS: Apparently the hon. member agrees with me at least on one point. We have this peculiar contradiction. The people in the metropolitan area have money ready to hand over to the Government, which is suffering from a condition bordering on beggary. The Government, on the other hand, have water to spare which they could exchange for real money, but they have not had sufficient business acumen to cause them to make the necessary provision for so doing. Mundaring is about 22 miles from Perth. The outlet from the Weir is about 80 feet above the level of Mt. Eliza. By the mere force of gravitation the water could be delivered to Mt. Eliza through a single line of pipes and thus not only bring revenue to the State but relief to a famished city. I tremble to think what will happen during the next summer unless the Government very quickly do something to relieve

the position from which we suffered so intently last year. This cannot be too strongly emphasised. We have large and thickly populated areas which are not sewered within three miles of the Perth Town Hall. This indicates that our system of sanitation in these quarters has harked back to the time when men roamed about in tribes and had not enough intelligence to carry out a system of sanitation. That sanitation is absent because we have not sufficient water to enable us to operate the sewerage system already installed. It is all very well to be care free and say that all will be right and in the future pay for these disabilities with some severe epidemic. The mosquito pest is becoming more aggravating each year. People may say that is only a small thing but when mosquitoes come along in battalions it is no small matter. If I do not do something in East Perth to shift the mosquitoes they will certainly shift me. No one has any conception of what I shall be expected to do before the end of the session in fighting mosquitoes.

Mr. Mullany: You can't get them away from East Perth.

Mr. SIMONS: There is no such word as "can't" in relation to the eradication of mosquitoes. Something could be done by the Government in this direction. Lazy Ministers will say that it is a municipal function and that it is too small a job for them. I can well imagine them saying that. When the influenza epidemic broke out the Government did not say it was a civic or a municipal function to deal with but they faced their responsibilities and footed the bill out of the funds of the State. The people as a general body paid the cost of stamping out the epidemic. We have been warned by scientists who know their business that there are in Western Australia mosquitoes capable of carrying the germs of malaria and other diseases. It is therefore necessary that the State should take steps to meet the trouble beforehand. If an outbreak does occur as a result of mosquito infection the State will have to foot the bill. It is surely advisable, therefore, that the State should take the action necessary to prevent an epidemic from this source. The act of preventing an epidemic would be a great deal cheaper than that of stamping out an epidemic after it had occurred. I have lived in communities where the land has not been worth twopence an acre because of the mosquito pest. In ten years' time the same land has had settled upon it 60,000 people, although previously it consisted of mosquito-haunted peninsulas. The mosquitoes were got rid of because there were men there who did not know the word "can't." There was also the tremendous zone of uninhabitable lands along the Panama Canal route. Scientists on the spot did not say the mosquitos could not be eradicated. They set to work and wiped them out. In that part of New Guinea which we have taken from the Germans, although it is near the Equator and the climatic and

atmospheric conditions are not nearly so favourable as they are here, the mosquitoes have been eradicated to the extent of reducing the danger of the pest to a minimum.

Mr. McCallum: That system has since been improved upon by an Australian doctor.

Mr. SIMONS: That is so. In the fight against the mosquito the Germans even went so far as to fill up with cement the hollow forks of trees where any water might lie. What the Germans did we can do. The half-bred nigger republics in South America have also wiped out the mosquitoes in their region, and surely we have as much intelligence as they have. I hope members will realise the seriousness of this problem.

Mr. Johnston: Do you advocate that the Government should wipe out mosquitoes all over the State or only in Perth?

Mr. SIMONS: They might experiment first in East Perth. If the measures taken there prove successful they can then be taken to Williams and Narrogin and other country centres.

Mr. Angelo: You will have a vermin tax put upon your electors.

Mr. SIMONS: It does not matter what the tax is so long as we get rid of the mosquitoes. We let it be known abroad that Western Australia is a great place to live in and that Perth is a wonderful city. I know of a family who came from New South Wales last January with £15,000 to invest in Western Australia. They spent three nights in one of the leading hotels in the city, but could not get a bath because of the lack of water, nor a wink of sleep because of the mosquitoes. There is a cash value in making Perth more habitable, and in making Western Australia more habitable. The first impressions of the new-comer are generally lasting impressions. This is a business proposition, a commercial consideration. Something should be done before the ensuing summer to wipe out this terrible pest.

The Minister for Mines: Many people go East because of the mosquitoes, and spend their money there.

Mr. SIMONS: That is so. I remember reading a debate which took place in another place where criticism was offered to the expenditure which had been incurred on the Agent-General's residence in London. While we are all pledged to economy, I do not think anyone, who paused for a moment to consider the importance of Western Australia being properly represented in London, would question the expenditure incurred by the Government in this way. The only thing I marvel at is that the Agent-General was able to procure a residence for such a small figure. I believe in the dignified representation of Western Australia abroad.

Mr. McCallum: What about the furniture?

Mr. SIMONS: That is the property of the State and will be used by successive Agents-General. If we are to have a representative abroad he must be able to fill the

position with impressiveness, and dignity, otherwise there is no use in having that representation.

Mr. Teesdale: It will not affect the price of railway iron.

Mr. SIMONS: The Agent-General is expected on behalf of the Government to entertain visitors, financiers and others. If he brings them into an apartment costing £3 or £4 a week, which is a poor apartment in London, the impression gained by visitors from the atmosphere of the Agent-General's residence is likely to be the impression they will carry away of the importance of the State. To send the Agent-General round in a cheap fashion and expect him to invite guests into a cheap apartment, would be like sending a commercial traveller out in dungarees and moleskins and expecting him to bring in business. Our representation abroad must be in keeping with the importance of this great State. In a sense the Agent-General is an ambassador. He represents a country with great ambitions, which hopes to attract a great amount of capital.

Mr. Johnston: And to borrow money.

Mr. SIMONS: Unfortunately that is so. There may be two or three financial magnates abroad on whose advice will depend whether or not we get one million or two million pounds. The Agent-General should be so equipped as to give a good impression of the State that he is representing. On the other hand I cannot pass over the subject without saying that the Premier should communicate with the Agent-General and ask why he should show such bad taste as to call his home "Westralia." There is no such place. It is a vulgarisation of a very fine name, "Western Australia." If the Agent-General is called upon to represent Subiaco some day, and follows that rule, he will place upon his house the name "Suby." I hope the Premier will do something to cause the Agent-General to abolish that sign of bad taste by wiping out this vulgarisation. The term "Westralia" originated in a Sydney paper which did nothing for 20 years except write down this State in ridiculous language.

Mr. Pickering: It was not the "Bulletin"?

Mr. SIMONS: It was the "Bulletin." This State is entitled to have its full name given to it and not a nickname. With regard to our road system, I do not believe the Government are fully seized of their responsibilities in regard to the construction of highroads. With the development of motor traffic it is important that our roads system and our method of constructing roads should be entirely revolutionised. We have not altered our plans of road making or brought them into keeping with the requirements of motor traffic. We must adopt some system under which we will recognise that highroads are just as important as railroads. When that is recognised fully the State should declare certain lines of highroads

leading out in different directions, and these roads should be constructed on a uniform plan, carried out by the same engineers, and the ratio of expenditure on the mileage basis should be charged to the different local bodies through whose territory the highroads may pass. It would be impracticable to carry on a railway system between here and Albany by allowing each road board and each council to construct and maintain its own particular mileage. We would get nothing but railway chaos, just as to-day we have nothing but road chaos. Transportation between here and Albany by road is practically impossible owing to the condition the highroads are in for four months of the year. The Government must address themselves to the adoption of a uniform policy of road building in co-operation with the different local authorities between Perth and the outside centres. There is no mention in the Speech of any highroad policy. There is another matter to which the House should give considerable attention during the session. Some steps should be taken to commemorate in proper and fitting form the services rendered to the State by the late Lord Forrest. It is rather strange that such a suggestion should emanate from this side of the House. It strikes me as one of the most miserable commentaries it is possible to make upon any people to say that steps have not yet been taken to commemorate the life of this great father of the West. I hope not many months will elapse before some suitable scheme is urged in this Chamber by which the country will be able to express in a commensurate and suitable manner the undoubted gratitude and deep veneration we have for the life of one of the great fathers of our wonderful State. There were some on this side of the Chamber who did not agree with the political activities of the late Lord Forrest, but I do not believe there is any citizen, no matter how purblind politically he may be, who will not agree that in Lord Forrest we had one of the greatest men Australia has so far produced, not only from an Australian point of view but from the broader standpoint of the British Empire. When we come to think that the grave of this great statesman remains unmarked by the public and that no line has been written by the public to commemorate his wonderful life, we commence to wonder whether sentiment has left the hearts of the citizens of Western Australia. Perhaps a suitable way to perpetuate the memory of this great Father of the West would be to have some kind of building erected on the highest point of Mount Eliza overlooking the Narrows, where we could place the ashes of this great statesman. It could be erected on a position in the Park, to secure which he did so much for the people, and at a point from which the city he loved so well could be seen. Some scheme of this description might be worked out with the concurrence of the relatives and under the direction of, possibly, a Parliament-

ary committee representative of all shades of political opinion in this Chamber. The longer we, as a Parliament, allow his life to go unrecognised, the longer will we leave ourselves open to a charge of neglect of the memory of a very wonderful man. I do not think there was ever a greater act of vandalism perpetrated in this city than when "The Bungalow" was torn down and "The Bungalow" were thrown over to commerce. That historic property should have perpetuated for all time, the memory of the late Lord Forrest, as a part of the city which could be pointed out to visitors from abroad as the home of the greatest man we ever had in this or any other part of Australia. In conclusion, I want to say one or two words on a couple of matters which have been referred to during the course of the speeches on the Address-in-reply. Some speaker on the Government side of the House mentioned that it would be wise, before a strike was commenced, if the wives of unionists were given the privilege of voting on the issue. I believe we, on the Opposition side of the House, are inclined to consider that question—

Mrs. Cowan: Hear, hear!

Mr. SIMONS: Conditionally. If the members of the Primary Producers' Association will bring their women—

The Minister for Mines: We do.

Mr. SIMONS: I mean if you bring your wives—

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order!

Mr. Angelo: You want petticoat Government.

Mrs. Cowan: I made that suggestion. I did not want the Primary Producers' Association only. I spoke for all women.

Mr. SIMONS: I am speaking regarding women, too. If the Chamber of Commerce will alter their constitution and bring their wives along, and if the Chamber of Mines do likewise, then we will consider it. Then, too, if the members of the Pastoralists Association, before determining to oppress the poor shearers any more, will get their wives to participate in the discussion as to whether consideration of the shearers' requests is to be given or not, we may think of it.

Mrs. Cowan: Hear, hear! Why should they not?

Mr. SIMONS: If it is fair that the wives of the workers should be given that right, why should not the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Mines, and these other bodies, bring their wives along and let us have the whole thing on a basis of equality? I believe some of us could be converted to the idea.

Mr. Johnston: You would let the wives know what meetings their husbands were attending.

Mr. Munsie: How would your wife get on?

The Minister for Mines: Many of our wives would not go with us.

Mr. SIMONS: Regarding the Civil Service and the housing of the several Government departments, no one can fail to be impressed by the extraordinary

lack of foresight or co-ordination in the plans for Government buildings erected throughout Perth. Each building is a monument to very bad and very imperfect architecture. We have Government departments distributed all over Perth, and we have some departments with different offices in different parts of the city. A man from the country coming to the city to transact business with several Government departments, has to ramble all over the metropolitan area before his quest is ended. Before the State advances any further, we should adopt some co-ordinated plan and develop a great building scheme to meet all the demands of the future. If we take the rents that have been paid to private owners of property and ascertain what that represents in capital value, I believe it would be possible to erect a huge block of administrative offices which would be sufficient in capacity to house practically the whole of the Government departments, with the possible exception of the Railways. Take, for instance, the position where the old post office is situated, and take that block bounded by St. George's Terrace, Barrack Street, Hay Street and Cathedral Avenue, and concentrate on that as the site for an administrative block. If foundations were put down to carry eight or ten storeys, we could have a scheme under which each successive Government could add to the structure as the State developed, until in its eventual form, it would represent not only the embodiment of co-ordination, efficiency and economy, but would stand as a magnificent reminder of the confidence we have in the future of our great State. I believe such a scheme would have a practical value. I believe, although some may question the advisability of having an immense edifice, that it would pay. It would be an inspiration to the people to do bigger things, and stir in the souls of the younger people a spirit of emulation. Who can conjecture what the inspiration of the late Sir Winthrop Hackett represents to Western Australia? I suppose there were times when he was moving among the inspiring buildings and traditional reminders of his country. Who can say what was in the mind of that gentleman when he moved among those surroundings? I believe that in those days Sir Winthrop Hackett was absorbing the inspiration he gained from his surroundings, and in the fulness of time he was able to come here and endow Western Australia with 'practically everything we have which represents cultural attainments. When we see one life inspired in such a way, think what it must mean if that spirit were inculcated more generally among the people. When we consider that Sir Winthrop Hackett came to what was then practically an unknown State, with hardly any ambition to go forward, it is inspiring to realise that his name is associated with the Public Library, the Art Gallery, the Museum and very closely with the dedication of King's Park, the finest heritage any city has in Australia.

When we realise this, we begin to understand what it all means.

Mr. Angelo: Then there is the University too.

Mr. SIMONS: Yes, I am sorry I forgot to mention the University as well. From a contemplation of the work of the late Sir Winthrop Hackett, we see how one life radiates goodness over all and comes as an inspiration for the citizens of this State. Some materialists will say: "Does it pay?" They will ask: "Will it not cost too much?" One can never say what the results of one man's work will mean to the period in which he lives, provided that the man's mind is moulded in the proper atmosphere. We have to face another position seriously or accept the reproach of being one of the most backward States in the British Empire. I refer now to the question of improving the University facilities. The present institution furnishes another reflection upon us when it is realised that boys and girls who are fired with an ambition to become great in some line of thought or study, have nothing but a mere collection of tin huts and shanties to study in; insufferably cold in winter and swelteringly hot in summer. That is no atmosphere in which a youth may cultivate a great mind. It is not the atmosphere which stimulates study, or helps to higher thoughts, or inspires to greater things. I know that in the present condition of our finances it is useless to say that we have £100,000 to spend on our University; we have not. But I am one of those who believe that the University has been installed on the wrong side of St. George's terrace. It should be installed in Government House. There is a wonderful location there for a University, a location which would do us for the next 20 years. We have there 14 acres of the most beautiful land in the city of Perth.

Mr. Johnston: Why not make it a park?

Mr. SIMONS: On that location of 14 acres there are 15 people living—in the heart of the city, one person per acre. Without any reflection upon the present distinguished occupant of Government House, a man who, I believe, has already won the hearts of the people of Western Australia, and a man who has won the admiration of every citizen of this State, and also without in any way detracting from his dignity or from the dignity of the position of Governor, we could, I believe, house the whole of the staff in a less commodious building on King's Park-road, or possibly on the Observatory grounds, even if we erected for this purpose a new building at a cost of £5,000 or £6,000. Thus we should have Government House free for educational pursuits. The building is magnificent, and the surroundings are wonderful, magnificent grounds for the students to walk in when in contemplative mood. Between the water front and the enclosure there is a fine playing area; and the river is there for the boat sheds.

Mr. Johnston: The area is too small for University grounds.

Mr. SIMONS: Possibly; but it is 30 times bigger than the present University enclosure, which we shall be committed to for the next 20 years if the present condition of our finances continues. Some unwise men have suggested Crawley as a University site. They cannot understand what a modern University means, or they would not want to banish the students two or three miles out. The matter of transportation means a great thing to poor students, going backwards and forwards perhaps three or four times a day. Especially does this apply at night. Crawley as a University site is impossible for evening students. In modern Universities, such as those of Canada and the United States, and other countries to which we look for patterns, it is a common thing to find the young mechanic, the young clerk, and the young lawyer interleaving their time at the University with their time of business occupation. That condition is going to arise here just as surely as our civilisation is advancing. Now, for students desirous of alternating their university studies with business occupations during the day, Crawley is right out of bounds. As a University site, Crawley is impossible for the modern student who wishes to carry on his studies collaterally with his work. Such students will be working in an area bounded by Milligan-street and Bennett-street in one direction, and by the river and the railway line in another direction.

The Minister for Mines: Not at all!

Mr. SIMONS: To put the University area at Crawley means pronouncing a death sentence upon the student who has to work collaterally with his studies.

The Minister for Mines: What about the Fremantle students?

Mr. SIMONS: We could have a University at Fremantle too, if we had a properly progressive Government.

Member: What about the Midland Junction students?

Mr. SIMONS: However, there is no question at all about Crawley being unsuitable as a University site, first of all because it is low-lying—

The Minister for Mines. It is not.

Mr. SIMONS: The Minister has no sense of altitude if he says that. Secondly, because Crawley is too far removed from the arteries of traffic connecting the different metropolitan points. There are many other subjects which should have been covered, but just let me express the hope that this Parliament, before it is very much older, will see this House reduced to half its present number. Fifty members are altogether too many for this State to carry in the Assembly, besides the 30 members of the Upper House, and 11 Federal members—a total of 91 legislators. I never knew of any community of 300,000 people which could produce 91 statesmen. We can carry on much more expeditiously and much more efficiently with 25 members in this Chamber; and I am in favour of cutting the membership of the House in half as speedily as possible,

and sending us all back to the country to let the thing be fought out on the basis of the survival of the fittest. With regard to the future of the State, I do not believe that any of us can have any real misgivings. We certainly have an overdraft; but against that overdraft we have some wonderful assets. Western Australia is gifted with practically everything that God has given man in any other part of the globe. I believe there is only one thing we are deficient in, and that is the confidence of our own citizens in our own State. As heart-breaking a thing as one can come across is to go over East and hear some libel concerning Western Australia, which, when you ask where it originated, you find comes from some Western Australian visiting Victoria who has apologised for being a Western Australian. Not infrequently it is former members of this Chamber who have been the sources of such libels. It is a thing I have always failed to understand, why some people should take such delight in apologising for Western Australia, and in defaming the land from which they are drawing their sustenance. I travelled not long ago with a financial adviser from London, the representative of one of the large institutions of that city. We were travelling between Adelaide and Port Augusta, when he told me that his job was to go around the world reporting on various countries. He mentioned that he had made the circuit of the globe eleven times in fourteen years. I was curious to know what kind of report he gave out with regard to Western Australia, and he told me the equivalent of the following: "My report has been, 'Don't touch Western Australia with a forty-foot pole.'" I asked him, "Why do you give advice of that kind?" Let me explain that the institution which he represented performs the function of giving advice to people with trust funds to invest. Say a man dies leaving money for three or four children, to be invested in their behalf until they reach the age of 21 years: then the trustee or the solicitor who has to invest the money would apply to such an institution as this for advice. If a Western Australian or a Chilian proposition, or a proposition from any other country, were put before the trustee, he would refer it to this kind of institution, which advises in what directions money can be invested with safety. I asked this man why he warned his institution against Western Australia, and I said, "Don't you think Western Australia has everything that nature has given to any other country?" His reply was, "As regards the gifts of nature, you are superior to any other part of Australia." Thereupon I asked again, "Why do you warn your institution against us?" He said, "Because of the carping, criticising, fault-finding spirit of some of your citizens, which would damn the best country in the world." I said, "That is only a general assertion; give me an experience." He then said,

"I was educated as an engineer, and I was taught that the greatest water scheme in the world was your Coolgardie water scheme. I had read tributes to its efficiency in almost every European language. I never heard it condemned or run down anywhere except in Western Australia. The first thing I did on arriving at Kalgoorlie was to go to the water scheme office there, to see one of the engineers. I approached the engineer with these words, 'I have come to see your magnificent water scheme.' This fellow said, 'Magnificent! Where did you get that word from?' I replied that I thought the scheme was a magnificent one. He retorted, 'It is not; it is a rotten failure, and it is going to bankrupt the State.' I said, 'Are you telling me the truth?' He said, 'Yes. Come to-morrow and I will prove it to you.' And the next day, when they went along the pipe track together, the engineer had a navy with pick and shovel proceeding in front to expose various portions of the track in order to convince this visitor from another country that the pipe line was rotten and was going to drive Western Australia to bankruptcy. The visitor's comment to me was, 'In any other country they would have had a navy going ahead to cover up the bad points. If ever you put up a monument to typify the spirit of the West, model it on that man with the pick and shovel: he would be emblematical of your citizens.' That man with the pick and shovel exposing the faults of our land to a stranger is, I fear, typical of only too many Western Australian citizens. I believe that the proper spirit is that of healthy optimism, for which I heartily commend our Premier. With that optimism and this wonderful land of which we have been made the guardians and inheritors, everything is possible for Western Australians, and our over-draft need not worry us too much. But we have to be more optimistic, we must have a stronger and more abiding faith in this great State of which God has given us the guardianship.

On motion by Mr. Wilson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.50 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 24th August, 1921.

	Page
Questions: Old Women's Home	365
School Teachers' Strike Pay	365
Committees for the Session, additional Member ...	365
Address-in-Reply, Fifth day	366

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

QUESTION—OLD WOMEN'S HOME.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is there an official visiting committee to the Old Women's Home at Fremantle? 2, If so, who are the members of the committee? 3, Is a report furnished by the committee to the Minister? 4, If so, on what date was the last report furnished?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, No, but some weeks ago steps were taken to reappoint a committee, and the following organisations were each asked to nominate one member:—Labour Women's Organisation, Women's Service Guild of Western Australia, National Council of Women. 2, Nominations have only just been received, and the new committee will be appointed forthwith. 3, The last report of the previous committee was in November, 1920.

QUESTION—SCHOOL TEACHERS' STRIKE PAY.

Hon. A. H. PANTON asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is it a fact that the full deduction of strike pay was made from the salary of the deceased school teachers, Miss Mullet and Mr. Prisk? 2, Is he aware that the Teachers' Union refunded the amount to the relatives of the deceased teachers? 3, Does he consider rigid insistence in such cases in the best interests of the Education Department? 4, Will he issue the necessary authority to prevent future deductions in similar cases?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, Yes. 2, No. 3, In no case has the decision of the Government that advances made against wages lost during the strike period must be refunded, been departed from. 4, The refunds will be completed next month and an anomaly would be created by issuing the authority suggested.

COMMITTEES FOR THE SESSION.

Additional Member.

On motion by the Minister for Education, Hon. J. J. Holmes was appointed to act for the President on the House Committee.