

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th August, 1924.

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

QUESTION—NAVIGATION ACT, EXEMPTION.

Mr. SLEEMAN asked the Premier: 1, Were the State Government approached by the Federal Government for an opinion before the granting of exemption to the s.s. "Centaur" to trade on the North-West coast of this State? 2, If so, what opinion was given?

The PREMIER replied: 1 and 2, No.

QUESTION—UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF.

Hon. W. D. JOHNSON asked the Colonial Treasurer: 1, Have the Government agreed to spend pound for pound with the City Council on new unscheduled works which the Council may undertake for the relief of the unemployed? 2, If so, will the same terms and conditions be granted to other local governing bodies of the metropolitan area?

The COLONIAL TREASURER replied: 1 and 2, No; and no request of this nature has been made.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Mr. BARNARD (Sussex) [4.35]: As one of the new members, let me congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Speaker. Also I wish to congratulate the Premier and his Ministers on their attainment to office. At the last election it was the people's wish that those gentlemen should take office, and we have to abide by that decision. Let us hope that the people will not be disappointed in the Premier and his Ministers. It has been pleasing to hear hon. members express their willingness to help the Premier in the work he has before him. In the Governor's Speech I notice that every part of Western Australia is mentioned for assistance; so apparently the same old policy is to be carried on by the new Government. That will be gratifying to those on this side. The Premier has said that he will require at least £7,000,000 this year for the works of the country. Judging from the requests we have heard from members here it is clear that

£7,000,000 will not be sufficient to carry out all the works required. The Premier is likely to have a difficult problem in finding the money. I hope he will be able to get sufficient to carry out the most necessary works, and that hon. members' requests will be acceded to, for I am sure they are quite justified. My own have not yet been added to the list. Fortunately they are very small indeed. Of course, like Geraldton and Fremantle and Bunbury, Busselton has a harbour requiring attention. To me it seems that Busselton's claim in this respect is more urgent than any of the others. We have a jetty not equal to the business of the port. Owing to the Margaret River railway being almost completed, the timber mills erected along that line are sending timber through Busselton to Bunbury because the accommodation at our jetty is not sufficient for the berthing of the large boats that come for timber.

The Minister for Lands: Will not a lot of that timber go to Augusta in future?

Mr. BARNARD: I hope not. It is closer to our port than to Augusta, and the Augusta jetty will require a lot more repairs than will ours to be able to berth timber boats. The jetty-head there is only 600 feet long, whereas the timber boats are up to 450 feet in length. The Margaret River railway has not yet been taken over by the Government, although 1922 tons of timber have been sent through to Bunbury for shipment. Then there are some smaller requirements in my electorate. For instance, a railway station at Donnybrook is necessary and has been half-promised for many years. Yet new stations of much less importance are being built elsewhere. The most pressing question of all is that of group settlement. The Minister for Lands last night gave us some astonishing figures. Speaking of land settlement generally he said that £11,000,000 had been lent to farmers. I take it most of that has been lent in the wheat areas. The Treasurer has said that he requires one and a-quarter million pounds for the group settlements this year. It is a very large sum, but I hope he will be able to find all that is necessary to carry on the good work initiated by Sir James Mitchell. The policy of group settlement has found favour with the Labour Party. Last night the Minister for Lands told us that the party had kept the Government in power last session because they were satisfied with the group settlement policy.

The Minister for Lands: I said because they were carrying out our policy.

Mr. BARNARD: It is one and the same. I am glad the Minister is going to continue that policy of development of group settlement. Notwithstanding the criticism levelled against the scheme and against Sir James Mitchell who inaugurated it, all must admit that good work has been done. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) criticised the group settlement and the South-West lands. He said the

South-West country would take years to sweeten, and that the clearing of the land should be carried out on a different system, the bigger trees being ringbarked. Of course, ringbarked country is easier and cheaper to clear than is green country; but if we are to wait five or seven years for the country to be cleared, how can we hope to develop group settlement? As for the land requiring to be sweetened, the hon. member must know that his statement was incorrect; for it has been proved that in that country, where green timber grew last year crops will grow this year, crops including potatoes and oats. They are not grown in large quantities at the present time. A potato crop will yield from eight to ten tons to the acre. The oat crops were exceptionally good, and the best sheaf shown in the district had been grown on one of the groups that was green the year before. This indicates that the country is not sour and does not require years of sweetening. A lot has been said about clearing, and it has been stated that it should have been done by contract rather than by the group settlers. The scheme that was adopted was a good one. Although there are men from the Old Country who have never used an axe, especially the type used in Australia, they have to be taught, and this is the easiest way to teach them. In a short time they will be able to do the work as well as an Australian. I have been amongst the group settlements as much as anyone. I have seen the work the settlers have been doing, and I am of opinion that the majority will make good if they are given a chance. The Minister for Lands admitted he thought each man should have a cow upon which to practice milking, and that it was better to spoil one cow than ten. It is a good idea. The same thing applies to the men who are working on the land. If they have never done any clearing in their lives, it is better that they should be shown how to do it under supervision such as in a group. An area of 25 acres is not sufficient for one man, and each will have to clear more of his own land. The clearing methods adopted are much the same as the old type that is adopted by other people. Traction engines are being used, and these are in charge of qualified men who do the tree pulling. When a tractor is not used the ordinary tree puller is brought into requisition. Any man with common sense can use a treepuller in a very little while. That part of the work, therefore, is done in the same way as a contractor would do it. I should like the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) to take a trip to the South-West, for I feel sure that he has not seen as much of that part of the State as he should have seen. If he went through the districts and saw the clover growing there, he would know that the land was not so sour as he thought it was. Last year in the group settlements in my district 2,700 acres of clover were planted, and this is now doing

well. I am satisfied that the group settlements will be the mainstay of Western Australia. It is a system of development that we should encourage. Let us hope the Government will continue the work, and will be able to find the money necessary to enable them to carry it on. The Minister for Lands referred to the storekeepers. I am justified in defending them, particularly those in my district. It has been stated that the prices charged for goods are exorbitant, and that the new settlers are being robbed by the storekeepers. I flatly contradict that statement. Exorbitant prices are not charged in the district I represent. The prices that are current in the town are those that are charged by the storekeeper to the settler, plus the extra freight that is charged by the group settlement lorries to take the goods to the store. If exorbitant charges are made it is due to the cost of getting the goods out by the group settlement lorries. The storekeepers are doing their best to assist the settlers in every way. If robbery is being committed, it is against the storekeeper and not in his favour. We all have to suffer. That is in the game. It goes against the grain, however, for one to hear it stated that the storekeepers are robbing the men on the land. The Premier says he requires another million and a half of money this year. I hope that will be forthcoming, even if he has to go to England to get it. It is badly needed for the development of our lands. We should not stop the immigration policy that has been carried on so successfully during the last year or two. If we want to keep Australia white, we must have plenty of white people in it. It is only by means of immigration and assisting the men on the land that we shall maintain a white Australia.

The Minister for Lands: It is easy to bring men out and put them on to clearing the land, but the difficulties begin when they start farming operations.

Mr. BARNARD: Quite so. If the settlers go in for dairying they will have a good market for their produce. Associated with that industry is the pig-raising industry. I am not afraid of that part of the programme. We want to stop the large sum of money that is going out of the State every year in purchasing produce from outside. The South-West is an ideal country for this particular class of production.

The Minister for Lands: Members representing the North-West say that their part of the State is the ideal country.

Mr. BARNARD: Members seem to think that the group settlements have been established in the wrong place.

The Minister for Lands: No.

Mr. BARNARD: Some of them would like to have them in their own districts. If the settlements had been established in the wheat belt, members representing that part of the State would have been at the back of them.

Mr. Thomson: That is not correct.

Mr. Sampson: There is a good deal of antagonism shown.

Mr. BARNARD: During the electioneering campaign one candidate, on behalf of the Country Party, said that group settlements would be a failure, that the country was no good, and that it would take a settler from 15 to 20 years to make a success of his operations. That candidate was not returned to Parliament. It is our duty to assist the Government in their land development policy. I hope we shall not have as much trouble to get the money as is anticipated, and that when the agreement is known it will be found to be better for us than the present conditions.

The Minister for Lands: We have to get seven million pounds in addition to that. How are we going to do it?

Mr. BARNARD: We may have to send the Premier to England. I am satisfied he would be able to make out a good enough case to the British Government to ensure his getting the money. It is as much to the interests of that Government as it is to ours that we should bring their people to Western Australia. The Imperial Government want the unemployed out of the country. They are spending millions every year in doles and it is better that the money represented by those doles should be given to the Western Australian Government so that it may be spent in putting these people on the land. A reference has been made to a Royal Commission to inquire into the group settlements. That will be merely a waste of money. I do not think any good can come out of it, although it may clear the atmosphere a little and assist the Minister for Lands in carrying out his programme.

Mr. Sampson: It will certainly hold up the work.

Mr. BARNARD: I do not think any more good will come of it than has come of other Royal Commissions.

Mr. Wilson: You did not say that during the election campaign.

Mr. BARNARD: I did.

Mr. Wilson: You were in favour of the Commission.

Mr. BARNARD: I was not, for I thought it unnecessary. Labour candidates, however, said they were going to insist upon it and I suppose they will get it. I am sure it will not do any harm, but it will be a waste of time and money. There is no doubt the group settlement scheme will be a success, though I do not say that every settler will become a successful farmer. That is more than we can expect. Some of the settlers are not cut out for the life, and will never do any good at it. Others who are hard workers and enthusiastic will, I am sure, make good. It is easy to pick out the men who are industrious and promising. They work during every spare moment

they have in the clearing of their blocks around the homes, and they are assisted by their wives and children. Others do nothing around their homes and never will do anything. I am thankful to say the latter are in the minority. In the years to come we shall no doubt live to be proud of our group settlements, and to regard them in the same light as we regard the wheat belt—the backbone of Western Australia.

Mr. MILLINGTON (Leederville) [4.55]: Before applying myself to the question before the House, I take this opportunity of congratulating you, Sir, upon your election as Speaker. I believe from the point of view of capacity, knowledge, experience and temperament, you are well fitted to control this Chamber. I would have preferred that the Labour precedent had been followed. In your case, of course, there was no need for any adventitious aid to enable you to uphold the dignity of the position. I will not, however, deal with this contentious question, but bow to your decision in the matter. I also congratulate the Government upon their occupancy of the Treasury bench. For the past eight years I have, as an outsider, followed their work in the House. It was a strenuous work, seeing that they numbered 17 instead of 26. I believe, however, the experience they gained has well equipped them for the position they now hold. It is not, therefore, any formal congratulation that I extend to the Government. There are now two branches of the Country Party in this Chamber. I am very much interested in the Country Party. I have not yet ascertained what has led up to the division in the ranks, but I may discover it later on. I have followed all that has been printed concerning the various reasons that have led up to the division in the ranks, and the only way I can account for it is that it is due to their close association with Sir James Mitchell, who has made two Country Parties grow where one grew before. I am prepared to accept the assurances so seriously put forward by the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, and also the Leader of the other Country Party.

Mr. Lindsay: There is only one.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The other is referred to as a sprout from the old Country Party.

Mr. George: It is a very vigorous one.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The member for York (Mr. Latham) gave his assurance that he would accord his support to the present Government. Knowing the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) as I do, I am also prepared to accept his assurance, and to take it seriously. I have no doubt it will be hon-

oured and that the Government will be supported so long as such support is not needed. I also congratulate Western Australia upon having got rid of the most inefficient and profligate Government that ever controlled its destinies. Having completed my series of congratulations, I propose to refer to matters which I consider of major importance, not only those mentioned in the Governor's Speech, but also others which I regard as vital to Western Australia. First and foremost, coming straight from the industrial fields, I was much struck, during the discussion on the Supply Bill, by the comic opera motion moved by the Opposition Leader. I have seen men fighting for a 44-hour week, and they were men in deadly earnest; and I have observed the attitude of hon. members opposite who were putting up a fight for the 48-hour week. The attitude of the men fighting for 44 hours is entirely different from the desperate fashion in which the 48-hour charge was launched against the present Government. I do not propose to deal with the merits of a 44-hour week, or any other period of work. That matter I presume will be discussed later, when a measure in that connection is being considered here. Let me say that having seen the respective manners of handling the question of the 44-hour week and that of the 48-hour week, I am satisfied that the men fighting for the 44-hour week must eventually win through. As I say, I will not discuss the merits of the 44-hour week; but a matter I do propose to deal with is one that has been discussed in this Chamber and in another place, and has also received much publicity in the Press—the statement that the Labour Government have usurped the right of the Arbitration Court in altering hours given under an existing award. There would be some grounds for the charge were it not for the history attaching to the present alteration by the Labour Government. As a fact, the first interference of this kind by a Government, and the first usurpation of the rights of the Arbitration Court, occurred in the Federal arena. I know members are aware of the circumstances, but since the charge has been made it is just as well to lead up from the commencement. As far back as 1907 Mr. Justice Higgins conducted an inquiry known as the Harvester inquiry and gave a decision known as the Harvester judgment. In September of the same year he was appointed the first Judge of the Federal Arbitration Court. He was not the appointee of a Labour Government, but of an anti-Labour Government. As Judge of the Arbitration Court he devoted his time, and with some success, to a study of industrial conditions, and not only to the question of the varying wages throughout the Commonwealth. Undoubtedly, a Federal Arbitration Court judge has a tremendous task in both respects. It is as regards conditions of work that we have the greatest difficulty in impressing men who have not

had actual, personal experience in the industrial field. However, owing to the length of time Mr. Justice Higgins was President of the Arbitration Court, and thanks to the mass of evidence that was submitted to him, expert evidence by workers and their representatives as well as by employers and their representatives, he became well acquainted with the various working conditions desired by the employees and also those desired by the employers. He acted as President of the Arbitration Court for quite a number of years—from about 1907 to about 1919. During his occupancy of the position the engineers and also the timber workers each had a case before the Federal Arbitration Court. In each instance the workers were asking for a 44-hour week. Mr. Justice Higgins was so impressed with the evidence presented on this phase, that he said instead of dealing with the question of hours, which was a big question, in one case, he would conduct a general inquiry into the subject of working hours in normal industries throughout the Commonwealth. By that, of course, the Judge meant that the inquiry would not be into the hours of such an industry as mining, in which special features existed, but into the hours of ordinary, average industries. Having made this announcement, he fixed a date on which both sides were to be heard. Of course the result of an inquiry conducted in that way could not apply to any given award, except on application to the Arbitration Court. When Mr. Justice Higgins made his announcement—this is where political interference took place—the then Federal Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, launched a vigorous attack on the Judge through the columns of the Press. The strictures of Mr. Hughes were replied to by Mr. Justice Higgins straight from the Bench. Despite what was tantamount to an instruction from the then Minister that Mr. Justice Higgins should not conduct the inquiry into hours, to the judge's credit be it said that he did proceed with the inquiry. Then Mr. Hughes, having regard to those to whom he looked for support, continued the attack, and eventually sought to nullify the action of Mr. Justice Higgins—who was entitled, and indeed was by the existing law instructed, to fix hours as well as wages—by the appointment of additional Arbitration Court judges. The then Prime Minister introduced into the Federal Parliament a Bill providing for the appointment of two additional Arbitration Court judges; and the measure also directed that hours of work should not be fixed except by a full bench of three judges. The additional judges eventually reversed the decision of Mr. Justice Higgins; but let me point out that his inquiry was the most expert inquiry ever held in any court in the world. It took several weeks to hear the evidence showing the number of hours worked in industries throughout the world, and also evidence as to the effect of the various hours. I promised that I would not deal with the ques-

tion of the merits of the 44-hour week, or the principle of the 44-hour week; and I merely instance these matters to show that the Harvester inquiry was not a slipshod one, but most exhaustive; it was, in fact, recognised as an inquiry which for the time being, would settle the question of hours throughout Australia. As a result of the inquiry Mr. Justice Higgins decided that 44 hours should be the maximum working week for normal industries throughout the Commonwealth. Just at this time the three judges heard the case as to hours again, and the decision of Mr. Justice Higgins was reversed. The case in question was that of the engineers, and at the same time as these men were given an increase of four hours per week, from 44 to 48, by the three judges, they were reduced by Mr. Justice Powers by amounts of as much as 25s. per week in some cases. The men got it both ways—an increase of four hours per week, and a decrease of wages amounting, in some instances, to as much as 25s. per week. The engineers in Western Australia, realising that political interference had been responsible for the increase in hours—and, for that matter, also for the reduction in wages—went on strike. I was associated with those men during the whole of the time they were out. To show how they viewed the business, let me say that they were prepared to stay out for six months, starving themselves and submitting to all the other trials and tribulations which fall upon the men during such an occurrence as a strike or lock-out. That is the value those men set upon the 44-hour week. I venture to say that no member sitting opposite, whatever advantages he might consider attached to a 48-hour week, would be prepared to go on strike and do without his salary for six months in order to save the principle.

Mr. George: I don't think you are justified in saying that.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I have not known of any instance in which it has been done.

Mr. George: No.

Mr. MILLINGTON: For that reason I say those opposing the 44-hour week are certainly not as much in earnest as those who believe in it.

Mr. George: Nobody suggests that we should go on strike. Anyhow, what method would you suggest?

Mr. MILLINGTON: What I said was that members opposite were not prepared to make the same sacrifice in order to re-instate the 48-hour week as those men made in order to retain the 44-hour week.

Mr. George: It is only a matter of opinion.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Well, that is my opinion.

Mr. George: You are entitled to it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Certainly I am. Again, as regards the charge that the present Government have usurped the functions of the Arbitration Court, in Western Australia we have had a like experience

of the kind; and it is such experiences that have shaken the faith of the workers in the present arbitration system. It is on account of such occurrences that they have turned their eyes and thoughts to the political arena. They recognised that they could not get justice under the present method of arbitration, either Federal or State. In this State—though I understand one has to be careful what one says regarding a Supreme Court judge—it is a fact that during a railway strike just prior to the last general election but one, Mr. Draper, then a member of the Mitchell Ministry, opposed the railwaymen and conducted negotiations for the Government against the railwaymen. Indeed, Mr. Draper was one of the men who were regarded as a bar to the settlement of the strike. In any case, he took an active part in the matter on behalf of the Government. Almost immediately after the strike, and owing to his having been beaten in an election, Mr. Draper was appointed to the Supreme Court Bench, and then to the Arbitration Court. One would expect that a man appointed President of the Arbitration Court, having regard to the fact that there is a representative of the men on one side and a representative of the employers on the other, would recognise that it was very necessary that there should be not the slightest appearance of political partisanship. On that aspect of the question let me inquire what would be said if the present Government appointed to the Arbitration Court a man who had been a recent member of the Collier Cabinet. In that case I fancy a good deal would be said about partisanship. However, the fact remains that Mr. Justice Draper made it abundantly clear that he favoured the 48-hour week. The engineers who were out on strike applied for a compulsory conference, and I went before Mr. Justice Draper as one of the representatives of the men on strike. One might have expected that the employers' representatives would have put up the case for the employers, whatever case there was for a 48-hour week. But during that compulsory conference the discovery was made that the president of the Arbitration Court, the man supposed to be non-partisan, was the man to take up the cudgels on behalf of the 48-hour week. He informed us that in his opinion there was no harm in a man such as a blacksmith working 48 hours per week. In effect he said that the work of such people did not justify a 44-hour week. We pointed out that in the Old Country the iron trades were working 47 hours a week. His Honour stated that the same conditions did not apply and that in Australia we could not afford either a 44-hour week or a 47-hour week, for the conditions here did not justify it. I presume that an Arbitration Court should be one in which the parties concerned have mutual confidence. I ask hon. members if this sort of thing is likely to inspire confidence on the part of the

workers! However, an application in respect of the Public Works Department employees went before Mr. Justice Draper. For the men, an exhaustive case was put forward by the union representative, Mr. Barker, in favour of a 44-hour week. The reply on behalf of the Government was admittedly very poorly stated by the Government representative. In spite of the overwhelming evidence in favour of the 44-hour week, the court granted a week of 48 hours. As a result, a section of the men went on strike. There was, of course, justification for the action taken by those men. They considered their case had been dealt with by a partisan court, that they had not been given a fair deal, and that the decision of the court was not in accordance with the evidence. The men were employed in the Water Supply Department and were mostly engaged on the goldfields pipe line. As members of the disputes committee of the Trades Hall, whose duty it is to attempt to control strikes and advise men when they are in such a position, we advised them to go back to work—not that they were not justified in taking drastic action, but on account of the far-reaching effects that might result from their action. We had in mind particularly the people of the Eastern Goldfields who were served by the goldfields water supply, and also those living along the track. We advised the men to go back to work and I can assure hon. members it is not an easy thing to give such advice to men who have not much time for political action. Workers to-day have about as much time for political action as they have for the present arbitration system here. However, we accepted the responsibility at the time and told them that they should go back to work. We also gave it out officially that we considered they had a better chance of getting their 44-hour week restored to them by means of political action. We pointed out that the elections were to be held in a few months' time and advised them that if Labour were returned in sufficient numbers to control the Treasury bench, the 44-hour week would be restored to the employees of the Public Works Department. To those who object to the action taken by the Government, I would say, in view of the history of the case for the 44-hour week that I have traversed, that the workers had been sledged of that concession by means of political influence—in the instance of the Federal Arbitration Court it practically amounted to political interference with justice—and confidence in such circumstances will never be restored to our State court as at present constituted. After the experience we have had in Western Australia, I presume that never again will a political partisan be appointed as president of the Arbitration Court. I do not wish to give offence to

members sitting on the Opposition side of the House, but this question is sufficiently serious, in view of what might have happened had the men not accepted our advice and returned to work, to serve as an indication that the worker of to-day must be given reasonable consideration. The worker of to-day has sufficient insight into matters concerning him to know when a point is being taken along these lines and to-day men cannot be bluffed and brow-beaten as may have been possible in the past. I do not think any future Government will attempt to do what the late Government did. The incompetent manner in which they dealt with the industrial position did more to bring about the defeat of the late Government than any speeches delivered in the Legislative Council. The result of this case was the loss of the confidence of the workers in the State Arbitration Court. We determined to undo the injury that had been done to the workers by adopting political action. Fortunately, Labour was successful at the recent election and the 44-hour week has been restored to the workers. An endeavour will be made in the future, I believe, to see that industrial questions that crop up will be dealt with by a court in which the workers have confidence. I cannot help noticing that there is a disposition amongst the members of the Country Party, as well as on the part of others, to assume that the introduction of the 44-hour week will involve the State in much greater expense. I presume the agricultural industry is in nearly as bad a condition to-day as ever it was. It has always been maintained that it was necessary to work very long hours in order that the industry might be carried on. I would remind Country Party members, however, that the advance made in agriculture is not due to the long hours worked. As a matter of fact, greater progress has been made by the application of up-to-date methods than was ever achieved by the old bullocking efforts of the past. I believe the agricultural industry will be popularised and instead of men being anxious to leave that industry, we will see proper up-to-date methods attracting people more and more to the life on the farm. When I came to Western Australia first I had a job to do ringbarking at Grass Valley, which was then on the edge of the wheat belt. I remember seeing a farmer in that district who was endeavouring to eke out a living for himself, his wife and family of eight children by the aid of a two-furrow plough and two old crows. He had to work all sorts of hours in order to get a living. That was the old idea of how agriculture should be carried on. I do not know what quantity of wheat he would grow in a year under

such conditions and with the application of such ancient methods. Let us look at the reverse side of the picture. I have an interest in a farm in the Korrelocking district.

Mr. C. P. Wanslrough: The hon. member is not another St. George's-terrace farmer?

Mr. MILLINGTON: No. There was a man in that district who was about 60 years of age and he considered that he was past work. Owing to his sons going to the war, he decided to put in the crop and his wife and he cultivated sufficient land for that purpose. They had a good team and had a fine up-to-date plant. As showing a contrast with the old time bullocking days of the single-furrow plough, this man, together with his wife, took off 2,000 bags of wheat from their holding. That increased production was not due to the application of bullocking methods but to the application of up-to-date knowledge and the use of good plant.

Mr. Latham: It is no good putting up that tale to farmers!

Mr. MILLINGTON: That improvement was due to those who were responsible for the improvement in agricultural plant.

Mr. Taylor: If you had made that speech to the Primary Producers' Conference, I wonder how you would have got on with it.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I believe the farmers realise that that is the position to-day, and that instead of the demands of the workers being responsible for hardships, those difficulties are due to other forces that are operating. The same exploitation that has affected the worker is also responsible for the position in which many farmers find themselves. Regarding assistance to industry and the adoption of up-to-date methods, I have had an instance brought under my notice in the mining districts. The Associated Gold Mine, on which I was employed for some time and, therefore, know the facts, had reached a stage when it was impossible, owing to the low grade ore dealt with, to make the operations pay. One of the directors from the Old Country came out and sacked the manager and appointed a new man, who took over the management on condition that he was allowed sufficient money to enable him to remodel the plant. The plant was remodelled at considerable cost, with the result that the treatment charges were reduced from 30s. to 20s. a ton. The result, too, was that that mine, which would have been closed down 15 or 16 years ago, is still in operation and treating low grade ore profitably. When the new manager came to the mine he did not decrease wages but increased them. He also reorganised the work so that men were given additional responsibility concerning the work they were undertaking. By the introduction of

up-to-date methods that mine was kept alive and is still a going concern. It is often said that Australia cannot compete with other parts of the world. The mining industry furnishes proof that we can do so. The costs at Ripple Creek in America, where the conditions are akin to those operating at Kalgoorlie, are similar to those on the Golden Mile. The reason for this, of course, is that there has been a fixed price for the commodity and up-to-date methods have been applied to the production of gold. When machinery became obsolete, it was scrapped and new machinery installed. The result has been that with the one price ruling for the commodity we have, with white labour and reasonable rates of pay, been able to compete with other countries of the world. I do not know of any other branch of industry where our methods are sufficiently modern to enable us to compete, but here is an instance that goes to show that when we are put to it we can compete with other countries. The Australian worker is equal to or better than any other worker in the world. Therefore we have to look in another direction to find the solution of the difficulty. When those people in control of industry shall have solved the problem of directing the best workmen in the world, we shall have solved the great problem of competing with other countries. I shall have an opportunity to deal with this phase of the question later on, but I remind members that we have to look for a betterment of conditions not in the direction of cutting down wages and increasing hours, but rather to the introduction of more modern methods by those who control industry. There are a few matters that affect my constituency. I shall have a good deal in common with my friends of the Country Party, because in addition to representing a big industrial and business section of the community—the enrolment for Leederville totals nearly 10,000—my district includes Osborne Park, which is the garden of Perth. In one street not more than a mile long over £60,000 worth of produce is grown each year. It is a wonderfully prolific district and could be made still more productive. When the primary producers are stating their case, therefore, I shall be able to claim to represent a not unimportant section of producers. There is no doubt about the wealth of the Osborne Park swamp lands, and I am not sure that we have not gone too far from Perth in search of land for closer settlement and overlooked suitable land close at hand.

Mr. Latham: You may get an invitation to attend the conference to-morrow.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The Labour Party are anxious to foster primary production, just as much as are those members who style themselves the representatives of primary industry. Osborne Park is not served by railway, and its main difficulty is that of roads. Since my election we have had deputations to the Minister for Works. When-

ever any member puts up a fight for better roads he can depend upon my lending a hand. Goods can be brought to the city from Albany almost as cheaply as they can be carted over the 12 miles of bad road from Osborne Park. It costs 12s. per ton to bring produce from the outer circle of Osborne Park to the Perth markets, and that is due to the bad condition of the roads. I hope that state of affairs will soon be altered. I understand the last Federal grant was so hedged in with restrictions that members for country districts have experienced great difficulty in getting any benefit from it. It appears to be something that is dangled before our eyes.

Mr. George: Like the carrots before the donkey.

Mr. MILLINGTON: I hope the Government will be able to overcome the difficulty. Unfortunately the road board controlling the Osborne Park district is known as the Perth Road Board. I think the name should be altered, because it implies a Perth district, whereas it is really a country district, with interests that pertain just as much to the country as if it were situated 300 or 400 miles from the capital.

Mr. George: It is a very good road board.

Mr. MILLINGTON: The district should have the advantage of some of the money made available under the alleged Federal grant, and I shall certainly claim a fair proportion of it. Last year, I understand, an amount was put on the schedule for the Wanneroo-road. This is a main road; it is the road to Wyndham. Surely a road that starts in Perth and ends at Wyndham should be designated a main road. Balcatta-road that leads to North Beach should also find a place in the schedule. I am going to do my best to get them both classed as main roads so that we shall get some benefit from the Federal grant. The residents of Osborne Park have to pay taxes for the upkeep of their roads, but those roads are used largely by tourists, and the population is not sufficient to maintain high-class roads to carry the heavy traffic that goes over them, therefore the district is entitled to consideration. I hope members of the Opposition will assist me when I am putting up a fight for my district.

Mr. George: I do not think there is any opposition as regards the Commonwealth road grant.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Then we shall have to put our heads together and see whether the Federal Government will not loosen their hold on the money. At present so many restrictions are imposed that I am afraid we shall never get the money.

Mr. George: There are any number of restrictions that are silly and childish.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Money was available last year and you made no use of it.

Mr. George: I made use of all I could get.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Osborne Park produces 90 per cent. of the milk supply of Perth and a quantity of market garden produce. Outside the question of roads I have a few complaints. The main question affecting Leederville is that of water supply. I do not know how we shall get on next summer. Last summer the shortage was a real nightmare to residents of North Perth, Leederville, and particularly Mt. Hawthorn. My constituents, unlike those of the member for West Perth, have many wants and are not backward in expressing them, and they will not be satisfied unless an earnest attempt is made to give them a better water supply than they had last year. Bigger pipes are needed and some pumping may be necessary to supply the higher levels. Instead of leaving this matter till November or December we have approached the Minister early in the season. This question, of course, affects the whole of the metropolitan area, and it was with satisfaction that I noted the steps being taken to increase the supply. The bore water is positively unsatisfactory. It would be right enough for a makeshift, but a city such as Perth that is prepared to pay for a water supply is entitled to it. The Government have taken upon themselves the function of supplying water—no one else can supply it—and naturally the people look to them to fulfil their obligations. I know of no more vital question to a community than that of an adequate supply of good water, and there is no reason why it should not be provided. In the past someone apparently has fallen behind with the work, and efforts must now be made to overtake the arrears. In a city like Perth, developing as it is, there should be no slowing down in the matter of water supplies and similar utilities. The department should be continually on the alert to keep the water works up to date. Nature has done her part; the fault lies with us.

Mr. North: It is a State enterprise, is it not?

Mr. MILLINGTON: I do not say that the water supply should necessarily be in the hands of the Government, but I do say the such necessary utilities should be publicly owned and publicly controlled. Some people seem to think we are wedded to bringing everything under the control of the State. That is not the policy of Labour. Our policy is that public utilities shall be publicly owned and publicly controlled. The same argument applies to the tramways. They need not necessarily be controlled by the Government, but they should be publicly owned. I believe it would have been better had the water supply been vested in the people of Perth and controlled by a board responsible directly to the people, instead of being controlled by a Minister who may represent Murray-Wellington or some other outlandish place, and who is not so concerned about it as are the people of Perth. Had the Perth people been managing the water supply they would never have allowed

it to get into the state we find it in to-day. There is something to be said with regard to the trainway system as well. The question of local transport should be controlled by the local bodies. If this means of transit is in the hands of the people themselves, instead of being managed by the State, better satisfaction will be given. Local control is better than State control at all times in respect of utilities of this description. The people living in the outskirts of the metropolis have experienced difficulty in the way of getting the extensions they desire. We in Leederville are amongst those who consider that they have been overlooked. I do not know how it happened that the Cambridge-street line was missed. I may be that there were more active advocates in other districts. Neither can I understand how it came about that certain new lines were constructed. I would like someone to solve the mystery of the tramway extension to Claremont. So far as I can remember there was never any demand for that particular extension, yet in some mysterious way it was built, and now that it is completed, very few people appear to use it.

Mr. Corboy: It did not even keep Jock Thomson in Parliament.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Leederville is a thickly populated district, and if the question of extensions had been left to a committee of experts, I am satisfied they would have advised that the extension should have been carried out to that suburb, certainly in preference to Claremont. The reason given by the Minister for Railways for not carrying out any further extensions, for a time at least, is unanswerable. He realises that with the advance of the times motor transport is becoming a serious competitor. I recognise the Minister is perfectly justified in saying there shall be no more extensions until we have some form of control over motor traffic. But while he is right in taking that stand, I do not consider that motor services will ever be regarded as a substitute for tramway transit. When experts go into the question of constructing roads suitable for motor traffic, they will realise that it will be cheaper to put down tramway tracks. I know of course that tramways and motors cannot be run in competition. Moreover, the city of Perth is not big enough for that yet, and it will mean that the Government will have to assume control of motor transport so that the suburban traffic may be regulated. It is all very well to say that we should permit private enterprise to have a free run in this respect. If private enterprise is prepared to build roads suitable for motor traffic, we shall then very quickly learn whether they can compete with the tramways. What happens now is that motor buses run alongside the tram track; they are not concerned about giving an adequate service. They merely run at

those hours of the day when they can be assured of getting full loads. In this way, to a certain extent, they rob the tramways of some traffic, but during the hours when business is quiet, if one desires to go to the outskirts, it is necessary to take a tram. Therefore, it seems that somebody must assume control in order to ensure that the public of the metropolitan area will get a continuous and adequate service to the various suburbs. This can only be done by the Government taking charge. Regarding fares, it may be said that motor vehicles can successfully compete with the trams. Of course they can. If we are foolish enough to construct good roads alongside a tram track, and allow motor buses to have unrestricted use of those good roads, then of course they can successfully compete against the trams, and more than that, they will eventually run the trams off the track.

Mr. Thomson: They are doing that in the Eastern States.

Mr. MILLINGTON: They will do that anywhere. Take the motor traffic on the Perth-Fremantle-road at the present time. We built that thoroughfare at a cost of something like £20,000, and if we permit the heavy motor traffic to continue there, the railways may just as well go out of business, unless we devise means for making adequate charges for the use of that road by heavy motors. So far nothing of that kind has been done. In country districts already motor services are being instituted in various directions. If we build roads and allow motor vehicles to have unrestricted use of them, it will mean that the railways will not pay, and the Commissioner of Railways, being a business man, will have to increase the rates. We must, at all hazards, control the traffic which is competing unfairly. Regarding the tramway service in the metropolitan area, I do not agree with the policy as announced by the Minister for Railways, and I am still going to do my utmost to see that where extensions are justified, they will be built.

Mr. Thomson: There is no reason why you should not encourage motor traffic.

Mr. MILLINGTON: People who live in thickly populated areas are entitled to facilities of transport and these can be given only by the Government. I intend to do my utmost to see that necessary extensions are carried out, and at the same time will urge that proper control be exercised over motor traffic. I am convinced, however, that the better proposition of the two is to extend existing tramway lines. For the time being I shall leave it at that. I wish to refer to a remark made by the member for West Perth (Mr. Davy) when dealing with the debatable question of the functions of government. He said that the Government were trading in directions that were

the province of private enterprise. In another place Mr. Lovekin sought to arbitrarily determine what were the functions of government.

Mr. Davy: I accepted the definition given by the member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson).

Mr. MILLINGTON: My view is that the functions of government can be extended to include anything that the people themselves desire, and anyone can arbitrarily say, "This is the function of government and this is not." So far as our party are concerned we have no hide-bound view regarding the limitations of government.

Mr. Latham: They are very wide now.

Mr. MILLINGTON: And they should be wide. We must remember that the matters in respect of which people wish to combine, have extended. There are many things that we need to do for ourselves and there are many things regarding which we wish to be protected, many things that did not exist years ago. The idea regarding the functions of government is to conform to modern conditions, and it seems to me that with the advent of big controlling forces outside, there is the necessity to assume greater control. As time goes on it means that the people will have to exercise the powers conferred upon them if they wish to protect themselves from the various interests that are working against them. Bearing in mind the power exercised by private enterprise, by joint stock companies, and by combines, so shall we have to increase in a like ratio the powers that are necessary for good government. I thank members for the patient hearing they have extended to me on this the first occasion on which I have spoken in this House. I trust that the result of our labours will be of benefit to the State. First and foremost I represent the people who elected me; next I represent Western Australia as a whole, but I hope that my vision will not be so restricted as to be confined solely to Leederville, but that I shall be able also to give attention to matters affecting other constituencies.

Mr. George: That is what you are here for.

Mr. MILLINGTON: Yes, but I am not going to be hypocritical enough to say that I represent the State first. If we all represent our respective constituencies well, the State itself will be well represented.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington) [6.0]: I have already extended my congratulations to you, Sir, on your elevation to the Chair. I should now like to emphasise them and say I am glad to see you wearing the insignia—paraphernalia some would say—of office, which to my mind adds

dignity to the Chair. The Address-in-reply debate this year is the most interesting I have heard for long past. There has been an accession of new members, whom I wish to congratulate on the moderation in which they have clothed their views. I think it will be found that the House has gained by the coming of these new members. Naturally I feel that the new members on our side are showing rather better form than those on the Government side. However, I do think that those on the Ministerial side have displayed breadth of view, and that with some experience they should be of considerable value to the House. I find that my old seat in Opposition, which I am again occupying, is not at all uncomfortable. It brings back memories of a time when I was able to take a more active part in the debates than when I was a member of the Government. Although this side is temporarily under a cloud, that need not either daunt our courage or interfere with our aspirations. Nor are we likely to be unfair in our criticism of the actions of the Government, provided we regard those actions as beneficial to the whole of the State, not merely to one section of the people. Western Australia is a big country with a great future. It expects of every member the best he can give to its development. Whenever we are satisfied that the Government's programme is in the interest, not of a class, but of the whole of the people, we shall do nothing to interfere with the carrying out of that programme. Of course there will be some firing across the House; that is inevitable amongst members having vigour of mind. Although we may differ a little, it is all right so long as we keep clearly in view the interests of Western Australia. Let me tell hon. members that the South-West is not the out of the way place it may have appeared to some people 40 years ago. To-day it is an important part of the State, so important that the Government made use of special propaganda during the late elections. Indeed, I have it on the authority of the "Worker" newspaper that even now Labour representatives are actively engaged in acquainting themselves with the South-West. I have no objection to that. Personally I should like to see them all go down there and meet the people. I am not afraid of their influencing public opinion at the next elections. If those Labour representatives would go down there and bring to bear on the study of the South-West the earnestness they apply to their investigation of industrial questions, they would be doing the South-West and Western Australia generally a great service. The action of Sir James Mitchell in moving an amendment to the Supply Bill has been criticised. The moving of that amendment was not done with any idea of tying the hands of the Government or hindering them in any way. It was merely that advantage was taken of a specific occasion for putting forward views regarding the 44-

hour week. I make bold to say that the moving of the motion by the Leader of the Opposition, together with some of my own remarks, tended to shorten the discussion of that question during the Address-in-reply debate. I do not propose to say anything more about it at this juncture. The Government propose to bring down a Fair Rents Bill. I shall certainly regard that Bill with great interest. If it has in it the elements of fairness all round, both to the tenants and to the landlords, it may result in some good. I have had experience of household property, and I can say I do not know any landlords who at present are making anything like an ordinary rate of interest on their money.

Mr. Panton: Then you do not know many.

Mr. GEORGE: I should like to show the hon. member what I am getting out of household property. Then there is the question of unemployment. It is unfortunate that in the winter season usually there is a crowding into the city from all parts of the country. Down the South-West, partly because of the heavy winter rainfall, quite an exodus takes place. If those people can find work in the city, with perhaps a little more comfort than they would get in the bush, and a fair rate of pay, they are eager to accept it. But there should be no unemployment in Western Australia, where we have any amount of work awaiting attention. Unfortunately many who require men to work for them have not been too well endowed with this world's goods, and so cannot always find the money with which to pay employees. Again, whenever there is industrial unrest, people who have money do not care to embark in it in any but the safest undertaking. Then, of course, there is the incidence of income taxation, State and Federal. To me the Federal tax is not only an abhorrence of a thing, but almost a crime, certainly an extortion. I know instances of industry restricted to a minimum, because the two income taxes are absorbing most of what should be returned to the employer. Speaking of State enterprises, one member said he favoured a State flour mill. If the Government had entered the business of flour milling it might now have been said to have something to do with the high price of bread. That high price of bread to-day is quite unfair. If there is any one thing that should be sold at a reasonable price, it is bread. I do not know why the price has risen. The farmer does not seem to be satisfied with what he is getting from his wheat, the miller is dissatisfied with the price of flour, and the baker says he cannot make a living. There is something wrong, and we should know what it is. Certainly the staple food of the people should not be exploited as, I am afraid, is being done to-day.

Mr. Lindsay: Why do you make that statement?

Mr. GEORGE: Because I believe it. Bread at 5½d. per loaf is a crying shame in a country producing enormous quantities of wheat. The first thing we have to do is to feed our population.

Mr. Lindsay: Who is to pay for it?

Mr. GEORGE: Reference has been made to a floating dock for Fremantle. I should have been pleased if we had been able to provide it before this, but the view held by the ex-Treasurer was that we could not entertain it. A floating dock at Fremantle would serve to render the port popular. In my view the Commonwealth should pay their share of the cost. They took this State quite enough in taking money out of it, and it would be little enough if they were to assist us in the provision of a dock.

Mr. Sleeman: We are agreed upon that.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. GEORGE: Before tea I was referring to the floating dock at Fremantle. I thought it a good opportunity to draw attention to a few remarks made by the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) in the course of the speech regarding the Commonwealth dredge that had been working at Albany. That dredge was hired from the Commonwealth at a rental of £900 a month. It was a matter for serious consideration as to how long we should keep it seeing that, in addition to the rental, the Commonwealth had laid down several irksome conditions. The Albany harbour was dredged to a depth that the people required. Then money became tight, and we had no more to spend. Since that time there have been negotiations with the Commonwealth Government, and arrangements were made by the Mitchell Government for the purchase of the dredge for £45,000 or £50,000. This was a good deal for the State. Members who tilt at the late Government because of the dredging operations at Albany have very little basis for complaint.

Mr. Thomson: The only objection I had was that Albany harbour was dredged to 33 feet and Fremantle to 36 feet. I thought it was economical, while the dredge was there, that the depth should be increased to 36 feet.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member knows that the trade of the Albany harbour is practically finished, or at any rate much reduced.

Mr. Thomson: Oh no.

Mr. GEORGE: No one wants to decay the Albany harbour or to prevent everything being done for it that can be done. When, however, cash is short all the facts have to be gone into. The local people and the Chamber of Commerce were satisfied with a depth of 33 feet, and I may be pardoned for suggesting to the hon. member that those who had to deal with the matter probably know more about it than he does.

Mr. Thomson: Seeing that it is the port for my district, I am justified in dealing with it. It affects my district very much.

Mr. GEORGE: It would be silly to dredge there to a depth of 36 feet, and the people of Albany know it. Those who are responsible for the State's money have to go carefully before they spend it. In his quiet, genial, and courteous way, the Minister for Works says that when I left office there was no more money for him to spend. I admit I spent all I could get hold of. My only regret was that I could not get any more. Joking apart, I say it would be foolish for any Minister in charge of the department, finding that he had so much cash left after three parts of the year had gone, not to spend what he had. The ex-Treasurer once told me that if I had a million of money I would spend it. I replied that if I had 100 million, and could spend it to the advantage of Western Australia, I would spend it.

The Minister for Works: I had not been there many days before you came and asked for money.

Mr. GEORGE: I shall be doing so again. That is the beauty of the situation. As a private member I can go to Ministers, when they will allow me to see them, and ask them for anything that my judgment and knowledge will permit of my asking.

The Minister for Works: Notwithstanding that you had previously spent it all?

Mr. GEORGE: Yes. There is very little for me to grumble at in the Governor's Speech, but I would draw attention to the paragraph dealing with the metropolitan water supply. The Speech says—

Approval having been given for the construction of the Churchman's Brook section of the hills water supply scheme at an estimated cost of £477,000, a commencement has been made with the reservoir. The preliminary works are practically completed and a considerable proportion of the plant has been delivered. A contract has been let to Messrs. Mephan Ferguson Proprietary, Ltd., for the supply of locking-bar pipes for the line from Churchman's Brook and Canning River to Mount Eliza.

All this was done before the Mitchell Government left office. I let the contract to the Mephan Ferguson Proprietary Limited, and authorised the purchase of the plant. I also brought about the start of the construction of the Churchman's Brook section. As soon as the Treasury gave me the money, we set to work.

Hon. J. Cunningham: Your estimate was £40,000.

Mr. GEORGE: I have no desire to take any of the credit to which the present Government may be entitled, but it is a little "over the fence" to put it in the Governor's Speech that all these things were done after the advent of the Labour Government.

The Minister for Works: The less you say about the metropolitan water supply, the better for yourself.

Mr. GEORGE: I will have a good deal to say about it. According to the "West Australian," the Minister for Works made the important discovery that some 50 of the women employees of his department had no place where they could sit down comfortably and have their tea. I would inform him that a waiting room was arranged for in January last, before the Minister thought of assuming office. The matter was brought under my notice by the Acting Under Secretary, Mr. Lowe. I found the money, and the job was practically finished when I went out of office. I am sure the Government will do sufficient to deserve the approbation of the public and of this House without depriving their predecessors of their little ewe lamb in the shape of a comfortable place for the ladies to sit down in.

Mr. Panton: Was it a comfortable room when you left office?

Mr. GEORGE: Yes, but it can be improved, although it was comfortable enough then. The Government might, at all events, let me have a little credit for a thoughtful action in this particular matter. The third paragraph of the Speech deals with the immigration policy and land settlement. This could have been better framed if it had been put forward by the Mitchell Government. The remarks concerning finance are really what any business man would make. The other matters concerning mining, wheat, dairying, timber, cotton, etc., are merely statements of fact. Various railways in course of construction are referred to, and all of these were started by the late Government. The Speech says that authority will be sought for the construction of a railway from Salmon Gum to Norseman. There will be found on the files recommendations from me during the last four or five years for that work to be done. When we began the Esperance railway I stated that my opinion was a railway should have been started and carried on from Norseman, and that, in the interests of economy, it was ridiculous to start at Esperance. That was all the authority we had, however, and we had to start there. What was to become of a railway hung up about 60 miles from Esperance, with very little traffic for the first 30 miles from Esperance to feed it, it was hard to say, and it seemed rather silly to start it there. We were not able to get what we wanted and there the matter rests. If the Minister for Works wishes to build that railway, and he has the money to back him up, he can rely on me to support it, though I may offer a little friendly criticism. Concerning the breakwater at Geraldton, the Minister for Railways knows my opinion and I need say very little about it. Certain Bills are coming forward, amongst them one to deal with State insurance, which is a debatable matter. The main roads ques-

tion is not a debatable question, except in regard to details. The main roads of the State should be brought under some system by which they can be taken out of the control and purview of road boards. The income that the road boards collect on their ratings is not sufficient to enable them to deal with subsidiary roads, let alone main roads. The traffic in the country is very much greater than it used to be. A few years ago it was comparatively small, but the advent of motors has induced numbers of people to travel about the country, which means a good deal by way of advertisement for the State, and our main roads have become of the greatest importance. It had been a purpose of mine to bring in a Bill to deal with the subject. I went some way towards getting the data together and I knew how I wanted to frame the measure, but I was unable to persuade the Premier that the time was opportune for it. If the Minister for Works brings forward a Bill to cover the subject, I will give him every assistance to pass a measure that will be equitable. With regard to the Scaffolding Bill, I take it the intention is to revive the Bill that we passed through the House last session. I will endeavour to assist the Minister in regard to it. I know from practical experience how important it is that these things should not be left to chance. A Drainage Bill has been hung up from Government to Government for many years. No doubt the Minister for Works has seen the file, which is about a foot thick, dealing with the question. I was unable to get through with that matter. The drainage question is one of the greatest importance. Between Fremantle and Bunbury there are hundreds of thousands of acres of land of the finest quality, proved in every respect, but it cannot be utilised because of the huge volumes of water that make their appearance in the winter and cannot drain away. One of the things the department of which I used to be chief had to do with, one of the things I started, was to have surveys made, so far as funds for that purpose could be obtained, in order to deal with this big question of drainage. There have been many attempts at draining parts of the South-West. The objective of the engineers was to get the water to the sea; but the funds at their disposal would only allow them to give temporary relief here there, and everywhere. The result was that the water was removed from the lands of A and of B, and taken to C's land; and then more money had to be spent in order to take it on to D's land. If funds will permit, I hope a big effort will be made. What is needed is a comprehensive scheme from Fremantle right through to Bunbury. It would cost a million, or perhaps two millions, but there is no reason why a plan should not be laid down to be gone on with as funds allow, being so arranged that as one piece of work is taken in hand it will be completed without causing interference

with the rest of the scheme. The Minister for Works will find in his office good information regarding that particular matter, and I wish him every success in any effort he makes. There has been a good deal of talk about the Lake Clifton railway, but that railway will serve tens of thousands of acres of land capable of settling a large number of our people. From Lake Clifton onwards to Bunbury there are thousands upon thousands of acres that are well worth looking after. I hope and believe that it is only a question of time when we shall be able to prove to those in power, whoever they may be, that it is at least portion of their duty to look after that district, which the member for Bunbury (Mr. Withers) and I know to be good. The Governor's Speech foreshadows amendments of various Acts. Those matters can be dealt with as they come forward, and I know this side of the House will receive the Bills critically but with a desire to help them along if they are found to be necessary. If, on the other hand, they are found to be things which we cannot approve of, as applying to one section of the community and not to the whole community, we shall exercise the function of an Opposition in respect of such Bills. I notice the Premier and several members on the Government side are favourable to handing over various public utilities to municipalities. I have already said, by way of interjection, that I believe the smaller local bodies would under such conditions be swallowed up by the bigger. There was no one more opposed than the present Minister for Lands, when he was Minister for Works, to the idea of handing over such utilities until it was shown that there would be proper representation for the smaller local bodies. I gathered from those smaller bodies that they feared they would be swallowed up by the octopus of Perth. That was said to me during the mayoralty of Sir William Lathlain, and the feeling exists to-day, just as it has existed for years. If the Premier can bring forward a scheme by which he will be able to hand over metropolitan water supply and drainage and sewerage to local bodies, he will be simply carrying out the desire of all previous Governments to take from the shoulders of individual Ministers burdens which weigh them down. If the Premier can reconcile the differences between the various local authorities, or get a board to carry on the work of water supply, sewerage, and drainage, more power to him! I shall accord him all credit and nothing of envy if he succeeds in carrying out that which I should have been only too glad to do had I been granted the opportunity. Regarding metropolitan water supply some words were uttered to-night by the member for Leederville (Mr. Millington). However, I do not propose to take that in detail. As regards water

supply, it was not a matter of unwillingness on the part of either the Mitchell Government as a whole or of any individual member of it; certainly not on the part of myself, because I built the Perth waterworks in 1890 and 1891, and therefore have been associated with the scheme from its inception. The simple fact was that the Premier and Treasurer had not the money and therefore could not give it to me. There are letters of mine on the file dated as far back as 1920, asking for the necessary money and stating exactly the position in which water supply for Perth stood. The question of water supply is not one merely of recent years. There was an inquiry into the subject during the regime of the second Labour Government, which took office in 1911. The whole question has been gone into time after time. It was just as impossible to solve the question during my term as it had been during the terms of previous Ministers. Whenever I could get the money, I enlarged the mains. If I could get funds for even three or four chains of 3 or 4 in. to replace 1½ in. pipes, I put them in. Until the reticulation service can be brought up to date, which will require much money, irrespective of reservoirs, everyone will not be able to get all the water he thinks he is entitled to or desires. An hon. member remarked that I was opposed to people watering their gardens—the silliest thing I ever heard in my life. One who has spent so much money on a garden as I have at Claremont could not possibly hold such views. But I say now, and I am prepared to tell it to a public meeting at North Perth, that a condition of the original scheme of a water supply for Perth was that there should be a sufficient supply of potable water for domestic purposes. After that, any water remaining could be sold. When the people of a large city like Perth are in the throes of a water famine, any person who uses water to sprinkle a garden is robbing his fellow citizens of a prime necessity of life. The domestic water supply for man and woman and child must come first. Such water must not be used for a garden. People who would use water for their gardens, knowing that it is water required by other people for domestic purposes—well, the sooner they get out of Western Australia the better. We all have to bear criticism, and upon the fall of a Ministry the cry is, "The king is dead; long live the king!" When members opposite get to my old age they will know what it means to enter the cold shades of Opposition. Whereas people are apt to say—they did not say it to me very much—to a man who is in office, "What a wonderful man you are," once he gets out of office the same people be-

come like sunflowers and turn to the rising sun. No one knows that better than the present Premier.

The Premier: I have been on both sides of the Chamber.

Mr. GEORGE: When people have squeezed a Government like an orange, they turn that Government out of office as soon as another orange makes its appearance, from which they hope and expect to squeeze funds that the previous Government had to refuse.

The Premier: Defeated Ministers are like discarded lovers.

Mr. GEORGE: As Ministers out of power, though we have not lost our individual strength, we are becoming acquainted with candid friends. Those candid friends are not confined to this Chamber, or to any particular section of the Press. I should like those gentlemen who are playing with cogged dice to-day to be with me in a land where one could deal with them on proper lines. One gentleman has been engaged in various public concerns of one kind and another for years, and has made a holy mess of the blessed lot. I must speak guardedly, for I am aware that you, Sir, know the Rules of this House even better than I do. Without lifting the veil, I would say that inordinate vanity causes something besides a swelled head. Inordinate vanity has been the distinguishing feature of the gentleman in question all through the years that have passed. Another gentleman must have a very uneasy conscience, in view of the years that he has been mixing up in public affairs. The columns of the Press must have left him with a conscience that nothing but an open confession and a rogue elephant could possibly take any joy in. If those two gentlemen read my present remarks, I should be quite prepared, if desired, to repeat those remarks to their faces outside this Chamber and take the consequences. When we were Ministers, we got a lot of adulation from one of the big newspapers of this State, and a less fulsome, but more than adequate, measure of adulation from another portion of the Press. But, as soon as the Mitchell Government were defeated, the gentlemen in question, having nothing to do but send their money out of the State to avoid taxation turn to carping criticism and thinly veiled abuse of better men.

The Premier: This is all so ambiguous. Who are they?

Mr. GEORGE: The Premier's imagination will enable him to fill the gap. I should like to furnish the names, but I know the Rules of the House. One of these gentlemen was born here, and the other was imported. Instead of gloating over the fragments left after a disaster, they should try to help to rebuild. On the contrary, however, they are seeking to

pull down the entire fabric of the State for the gratification of private spleen. Those gentlemen should be concerned with serving the interests of the State, not for what they may get out of it, but simply from a sense of duty to Western Australia. They should adopt that course instead of acting as renegades, as they are doing to-day. Mention has been made of the Commonwealth road grant. I understand the Minister for Works does not intend to speak on the Address-in-reply, but he could give further details about it if he chose.

The Premier: It all depends on what you say.

Mr. GEORGE: The Commonwealth road grant reminds me of the old story about the Greeks. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, that there is a saying that when the Greeks begin to make gifts, it is time for honest men to look out. When the Commonwealth commences making gifts to Western Australia, it is time for the Government to keep their eyes skinned and their intellects keen to ascertain what is happening. Under the proposal of the Commonwealth they were to hand over £500,000 to the States for road construction. Out of that amount, Western Australia's share was to be £96,000. There were certain conditions attached to the grant. We were asked to send our plans to Melbourne. We did so and they appear on the file. Those plans, however, were rejected. The Engineer-in-Chief happened to be in Melbourne at the time and I sent him a telegram asking him to see the Commonwealth authorities. They would not do anything, however, but intimated that they would send their own officer, Capt. Hill, to Perth. He came to Western Australia and he told us that we could build only feeder roads to serve the railways and that we could not build a road between two places connected by a railway, nor could we construct roads parallel to such lines. We could build feeder roads at right angles to the railways. To show what this meant, I raised the case of Benger where the people were growing potatoes. Under those conditions we could spend money in constructing a road at right angles to the railway line, but we could not spend a cent. on the three or four miles between Benger and Brunswick where the people were also engaged in potato growing. The people at Brunswick had to cart their products for 1½ miles or so to the railway station at Brunswick or at Benger. We could build a road from Lake Grace to Newdegate because no railway connected up the two places, although the construction of a line had been authorised. Had the railway been built we could not construct a road between those two centres. The same silly, nonsensical, idiotic business was carried throughout the whole of the Commonwealth conditions governing the grant. What was the result? It was not until after Christmas that we could make a start to see where we were. It was only then that we could establish an organisation

to commence the work. Some of the money was spent before the Mitchell Government left office and I expect the present Minister for Works has found that the organisation was fairly complete. We are to receive further advances this year and a good deal will be spent. I hope the Minister for Works will have an easier time regarding the conditions that will be made to apply to the expenditure of that money, than I had to contend with. The Commonwealth attempted to lay down all sorts of conditions and the ex-Premier and I had to combat them whenever possible. There is much misconception as to how the money can be used and to what works the grant applied. There was also the question of the traffic fees. A deputation waited on the Minister for Works recently and expressed the desire that the metropolitan area should be extended so that those interested could receive a share of the fees. I do not think the Gosnells Road Board received any share of the fees and I confess it is rather hard for them, as they have just as much wear and tear on their part of the main road as the Canning Road Board have to contend with. I would not object to an extension of the area, but it will be necessary for an amending Bill to be introduced so that such a course can be adopted. That was the advice the Solicitor General, Mr. Sayer, gave me. From the remarks of the member for Leederville (Mr. Millington) it is apparent that he does not understand the position. Possibly others too are not aware of the facts regarding the Perth-Fremantle road. Much to the disgust of Sir William Lathlain, when he was mayor of Perth, I insisted upon Perth paying a larger share towards the upkeep of the Perth-Fremantle road because 47 per cent. of the traffic along that road originated in Perth. We proved that to be so and in the circumstances it was only right that Perth should contribute something towards the upkeep of the road. To show the absurdity of the position, the Claremont Road Board have 2½ miles of this main artery within their boundaries and they collected only one license fee amounting to 10s. The Mitchell Government took over the matter and carried on the scheme. If the Minister for Works can improve upon the arrangements we arrived at, I shall not growl. One point that did not occur to me nor to the officers of the department when the Traffic Act was being dealt with, referred to the license fees for drivers. Those fees go into Consolidated Revenue and I do not think that should be so. They should be added to the traffic fees and used in the ordinary way. If the Minister intends to introduce a Bill to extend the metropolitan area so that it shall come within the scope of the Act, I hope he will deal with this point as well. The member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) spoke about the fines. It seems to me that it is asking too much of the road boards to expect them to prosecute people and not receive the fines. The Minister is not respon-

sible for that position, however, because under legislation passed in 1906 all Police Court fines have to be paid into Consolidated Revenue. Until amending legislation is passed those fines must continue to go into Consolidated Revenue. I think the road boards should have the benefit not only of their costs, but of the fines as well, so that the money may be used for traffic purposes. I do not think Parliament intended that the money should go into Consolidated Revenue.

Mr. Griffiths: If that was the desire of the House, why has it taken you three years to find out the position? Why did you not rectify it?

Mr. GEORGE: Ministers have power to say what Bills are necessary, but it is for the Premier to decide what Bills shall be put before the House. A Minister cannot bring forward a Bill unless he is disloyal to his leader.

Mr. Griffiths: This matter was pigeon-holed as soon as I left Parliament.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member is able to talk! He does not care how much proof exists; if it does not suit his case he puts it aside.

Mr. Griffiths: You are absolutely wrong.

Mr. GEORGE: All right; I have made the statement. It is understood that the Government intend to amend the Land Tax and Income Tax Assessment Act to force people with land adjacent to railways to use those lands. In theory that sounds all right, but the matter must be dealt with carefully. Many areas adjacent to the railways are held by people, but they know the quality of the land and therefore do not touch it. However, we can deal with the Bill when it is before us. The member for Menzies (Mr. Pantou) referred to the sandalwood question. I do not know much about it, but the conditions laid down in the Act should be carried out. If they are not, and the men are being unfairly treated, I will not raise a word of protest if action is taken to deal with the position.

Mr. Pantou: It is not under the Act, but under the regulations that the damage has been done.

Mr. GEORGE: The member for Kataning (Mr. Thomson) made a sing-song about the acts of discourtesy towards him by the Mitchell Government. No one can be more discourteous than the member for Kataning. He once told me that I had the hide of a rhinoceros. Later on, however, he told me that I was the only person who showed him any courtesy.

Mr. Thomson: You are not far wrong.

Mr. GEORGE: I am afraid the hon. member's judgment was impaired.

Mr. Thomson: It was correct.

Mr. GEORGE: I regretted to hear the Premier state that so much money is owing on account of interest in connection with the soldier settlers. I know it is a matter that has to be dealt with carefully, and certainly a little more consideration should be shown for those settlers than, perhaps, for

some other people. We know that the soldiers took up the cudgels in the nations' quarrel and did their duty for us. It is up to us, therefore, to do what we can for the soldier settlers. If faults were made by the Ministries with which I have been connected, there is no harm in attention being given to those points. If there is £352,000 owing on account of interest, it seems to me that there is need for an inquiry to ascertain why this is so. If the men have gone back to that extent in a few years, it is up to the State to ascertain how they are to get on in the future. This should be done first of all in the interests of the men themselves and, secondly, in the interests of the State. It would be ridiculous to let them dawdle along getting deeper in the mire. Some steps should be taken to ascertain whether it is possible to place those men in a better position to meet their liabilities.

Mr. Lutey: Your Government knew the position, did they not?

Mr. GEORGE: I sympathise with the Premier in that he has been forced to join the Federal Loan Council. My views regarding Federation are known. Irrespective of what party may be in power, I do not think the Federal Governments have carried on in the best interests of the States. I will not say that Western Australia has been humiliated, but in my opinion the State has been treated with scant courtesy respecting her liabilities and responsibilities. Before we entered Federation, Western Australia was moving ahead satisfactorily. Had we kept our Customs duties and carried on, we would probably have a population now of between three-quarters of a million and a million people. Instead of that, Federation has made Victoria and New South Wales the manufacturing centres for the whole of Australia, and people who were here and would have stayed in Western Australia, had the position been more satisfactory, have had to go to other parts of Australia where they knew they could do better. We are patriotic regarding the Commonwealth, but we should surely get some return for our association with Federation; I do not refer to money, but rather to consideration. I know that some four or five years ago I went over to Melbourne with Sir Henry Lefroy and Mr. Gardiner, and I was the only Minister who came back with anything settled, and even that the Federal people tried to unsettle afterwards. I got a sheet of foolscap, wrote down what had been agreed upon, and got it signed, and even then they tried to get out of it. The other two gentlemen had plenty of promises, but when they got back they found there was no pie-crust. Western Australia has subscribed to the Loan Council because the Premier says we cannot help it. I am sorry for that, and I only hope he will not get his foot too deep into the Federal mire. The member for Guildford (Hon. W. D. Johnson) is to be congratu-

lated upon the very interesting speech he made. He is an old member and an ex-Minister, and is pretty level-headed. His suggestion that the case for Western Australia should be prepared as early as possible in readiness for the Federal Royal Commission, is a good one. What he stated with regard to other inquiries is a fact. The interests of the State are so much at stake that we ought to be able to find officers to consult with some of our leading merchants, manufacturers and industrialists, so that the whole case could be put together in such a way as to show what Western Australia wants and what she has a right to expect.

Mr. Lutey: We have a Commission in existence now.

Mr. GEORGE: We have any number of Commissions, but what are they? I was rather disappointed when the hon. member said of the deficit of six millions, "There is no opportunity to reconcile the position with our present population. Therefore the deficiency on revenue account must continue." I join issue with him there. The Mitchell Government were able to reduce the deficit each year during the last two years. There may be some room for criticism of the methods they employed, but the fact remains that they did reduce it. I see no reason why the present Government, if they follow similar or better lines, should not bring us out with a surplus instead of a deficit at the end of the current financial year. Of course if we got a surplus it would be devoted to reducing the accumulated deficit. For a member to get down in the dumps, however, because we have a deficiency of six millions—well, I do not care "tuppence" for such a member. The State will carry it; the State is honest and the State will pay; but we want time, and if we require time we shall be doing nothing different from every other country, even Great Britain itself, the centre of finance in the old world. The member for Avon (Mr. Griffiths) gave a long tirade about the Yorkrakin railway. He probably does not know everything. Part of the delay during my term of office was due to a proposition put up by the Federal Government. I discussed it with the Commonwealth engineer, Mr. Bell. It was suggested that the Commonwealth railway should come from Kalgoorlie to Merredin and then branch off between our main goldfields line and the Dowerin line. Had that been done, it would have saved a tremendous lot of changing at the break of gauge. If the Commonwealth line were brought from Kalgoorlie to Perth, however, and took the place of our present goldfields line, at every point where our feeder lines joined, the break of gauge difficulties would prevail. No mechanical means have been devised whereby narrow

gauge tracks can be run on broad gauge lines. Ever since I was a boy efforts have been made in this direction, but so far without success. In England efforts were made to cope with the difficulty, and eventually a uniform gauge was decided upon there.

Mr. Thomson: Where do the Commonwealth propose to run their line now?

Mr. GEORGE: They propose to follow the present line. There has been much criticism of the ex-Premier. He has been charged with not having done this, that and the other. Sir James Mitchell did what he believed to be his honest duty to the State. He made mistakes as everyone else has done, but anyone who tries to belittle him or who says he has done nothing is not familiar with the history of Western Australia. I do not think Sir James would claim that he has done everything. I do not claim that he initiated the group settlement scheme, but he certainly did take the question in hand, no matter who had it in mind, whether it was Pickering Brook or someone else. If Sir James made mistakes, he made them honestly.

Mr. Lutey: He is open to criticism.

Mr. GEORGE: I did not always agree with Sir James Mitchell. I had differences with him, but I would not admit for a moment that in what he did for the settlement of Western Australia he was animated by other than love for the land in which he lives. The way things are going now reminds me of the time when Federation became an accomplished fact. We know Western Australia voted for Federation, but now you would have to go through the State with a fine-tooth comb to discover anyone who would admit having voted for Federation. It is a pity that those people who have been pitching into my chief cannot find better scope for their energies. We have now a number of gentlemen who are trying to make out that they were not the cause of the fall of the Mitchell Government. One prominent gentleman, connected with a newspaper I believe, tries to make out that he was not responsible, and another says he did not exactly do it, though he thought of it and helped it along. Then we have a gentleman who has resigned many times from the presidency of the farmers' conference. I think he resigned two or three times to-day and still is going back. He does not quite know where he is. If members who follow him remembered their position in the House and devoted their thoughts and abilities to trying to bring us all together—

Mr. Thomson: So they did.

Mr. GEORGE: And thus help Western Australia along, they would be doing something to make this country more comfortable and prosperous. Nothing will be accomplished by the carping spirit of

criticism founded on envy, hatred, and malice.

Mr. Thomson: Had Monger's advice been accepted—

Mr. GEORGE: Who is Monger? I do not know him.

Mr. Thomson: This State would have been saved many thousands of pounds.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. GEORGE: If I could ask the hon. member a question through you, Sir, I should like to know whether Monger is the gentleman who had the impudence to write a letter to me, a Minister of the Crown, telling me that if I did not do what he wanted he would report me to the Premier. If he is that gentleman, the hon. member is welcome to keep him.

Mr. Panton: What did you tell him?

Mr. GEORGE: Sometimes I use short words.

The Minister for Works: Is your reply on the departmental files?

Mr. GEORGE: No, the letter was written to me, I suppose, in a sort of semi-private capacity, and my reply unfortunately, suffered from internal combustion and vanished.

The Minister for Works: I think I shall have to have a search made for it.

Mr. Thomson: But still we survive!

Mr. GEORGE: I think it speaks poorly for a man when others have to ask him repeatedly to retain a position after he has told them he will not do so, and after he has told the country that unless it supported what he was preaching, he would retire from the movement altogether. Yet these gentlemen try to persuade him to remain on the pedestal he should never have occupied. The question of finance was raised by the member for Guildford. He said our system was wrong. It always is wrong to the other fellow, but I expect the present Government carried out the practice of former years. The books are kept open till the 10th July for the collection of revenue. If the Government closed down on the 30th June, they would be 10 days short of a year's revenue. Instead of the year for the collection of revenue being from the 1st July to the 30th June, it is really from the 11th July to the 10th July. The statement that expenditure had been held over and that accounts had been kept back, instead of being paid, has no foundation to my knowledge. I know what I laid down in the departments I controlled; it was that bills should be paid promptly. The member for Claremont (Mr. North) made some remarks about subscriptions that members were called upon to pay. This is one of the things that strike most new members. When they join the House they discover that they are elected patron of this and president of that and subscriptions are expected of them. I do not regard it as he does, namely, that the poor man could not afford to pay and that the rich man gave subscriptions as a bribe. I have always regarded these organisations

as having a fair claim upon my Parliamentary salary. It is well known that I opposed, tooth and nail, payment to members. I did not think it right and I do not think it is right now. It is a poor country that cannot find men who have done sufficiently well to serve it for the purposes of Parliament. But as the "West Australian" did me the honour to say, occasionally I am somewhat archaic in my notions. The subscriptions are paid and I do not consider their payment as anything in the shape of a bribe. I think the hon. member will take a different view of this matter later on. The hon. member mentioned that the deficit was equal to £160 per head. I do not care a rap about that. It may take Western Australia a long time to pay its debts, but in my opinion the people are not only politically honest but personally honest, and their descendants will be the same. I am convinced that we can carry the burden and in doing so we shall make the best of it. Are we to remain awake at night because we have a deficit of six millions? It is a serious position I admit, but the State is good enough for twice that amount. There is one matter in the speech of the member for Leederville (Mr. Millington) to which I must refer. The hon. member made some remarks regarding Mr. Justice Draper. He may not know it, but I assure him that it was with very great difficulty that the ex-Premier was able to persuade Mr. Draper to take a seat on the Supreme Court bench, and nothing in the shape of instructions to the effect that he was to do so and so were issued. I am very sorry that anyone should have that idea, because we know it to be untrue. Whatever Mr. Draper's predilections may be as a private individual he had a right to them, but I am satisfied that he is an honourable and upright man, and if an attempt were made to dictate to him he would not hesitate to do as Mr. Justice Higgins did when Mr. Hughes, the then Prime Minister, made an attack upon him. I do not think this House should be used as a vehicle for pouring abuse and contumely on the gentlemen who occupy the position of judges in the State. All are as honest as anyone within the boundaries of the State, and if hon. members believe what they say about those who hold these high and important positions, their proper course is to impeach those gentlemen, and in that way they will be tried by their peers. I challenge any hon. member to take that constitutional course. If he is not prepared to do that, then he had better leave the judges alone. If the member for Leederville knew Mr. Justice Draper as I know him, he would regard him as a man whose honour is unblemished and unsullied. The same hon. member said he would like to know why the Claremont tramway extension was built. I do not know what he had in his mind. I live at Claremont.

The Premier: Quite unnecessary to ob-serve that.

Mr. GEORGE: The reason for the extension of the tramway line to Claremont was in order to afford conveniences for a number of people. During the progress of the railway strike quite a number of people who had been in the habit of using the trains walked to their homes from the existing tramway terminus at Nedlands or trusted to someone to give them a lift in a motor car. Now that this extension has been completed I travel by it and I find that it has been fairly well patronised.

The Minister for Railways: The traffic is not improving.

Mr. GEORGE: The difficulty now is the number of charabancs that are robbing the trams of a great portion of the traffic. One can get into a charabanc anywhere he likes and come to Perth for 9d., and he is dropped in the centre of the city in the space of 25 minutes; but take a tram and the time occupied in the journey is from 38 to 43 minutes. I have tried it dozens of times. Even then you are not taken right through to Perth. You go to King's Park gates and then you have to change into another tram, and if it is not there you must wait. Last night I left the House shortly after 9 o'clock and caught my tram to King's Park gates. I waited eight minutes before the Claremont car arrived. It was delayed on the road. It is always liable to be delayed on the road. There should be a through tram, and there should be connection with the Nedlands Park tram that goes by way of Mount's Bay-road. The charabancs run every quarter of an hour throughout the day. I think there are eight of them now, and they are able to maintain a fairly continuous service. Each of these cars carries, I understand, 24 passengers. If the Claremont trams were taken as far as Cottesloe Beach, there would be ample justification for them. We must give people the conveniences they want. The Government talk about dealing with the motor traffic; the Government cannot deal with it. They can get power to do many things, but they cannot interfere with the conveniences of the people unless they provide something that is equally good. When the Traffic Bill was before the House it was never contemplated that there would be an advent of motor buses, nor even heavy motor lorries which we find to-day competing with the railways, and the fees that were decided on were not fixed on the highest scale. Motor lorries are robbing the railways of a considerable amount of freight. It must easily be a couple of thousand tons a week. They should be compelled to pay a heavier tax, and I think the charabancs should also pay a good deal more than they do, seeing that they are plying for hire. When fees were fixed we had in view only private cars and the taxi cabs. There was no thought at that time of competition with the railways developing in the manner that it has done. These are all the remarks I have to offer this evening, and I thank hon. members

for having listened patiently to what I had to say. A duty devolves on both sides of the House to do everything possible for all classes of the community. If any Government—I do not care which it be—legislates for one class only, they will be doing that which they were not put into power to carry out. The Government should do justice all round. I do not think there is any need to warn Ministers, but I say to them that, having been placed in power, they should know exactly what to undertake and they should try to be fair to all classes of the community. If that be the spirit in which the Government will face their duties, I shall be prepared to extend every help to them.

Mr. LAMBERT (Coolgardie) [8.40]: After an acquaintance with you, Mr. Speaker, extending over a period of 20 years, it is only right that I should join in the congratulations that have been extended to you on your elevation to the high post you now occupy. I also congratulate some of the new members on the speeches they have made, and particularly I have in mind one or two speeches made by new representatives of the farmers, speeches that were very interesting. They emanated from men with practical minds, who know the difficulties and who know the conditions and also know the possibilities of this great State. It is to be hoped that their first consideration as representatives will not be merely to allow Nationalists or the country dwellers to direct their policy, but to keep uppermost in mind the welfare of the farmer in Western Australia, and possibly, if they do that, instead of merely acting as an adjunct to the Nationalist party, they will be doing something indeed for the farmers of the State. I do not know that any good purpose will be served by entering into recriminations in respect of past Governments. The political pendulum has undergone its inevitable swing. The previous Government made mistakes sufficient at least to demand a change of Government, or the electors made a mistake in bringing about a change. We of course naturally believe that the former prompted the people of this State when they desired to effect a change in the form of Government. Whilst I think it is always well that members should indulge in healthy criticism of the acts of this or any other Government, let me say that I will in no way reserve criticism of what I think is not right, even against the present Government, but I will not be mean-souled enough not to find virtues in the other man. I believe that the past Government were actuated by a sincere desire to see the State progress, and I wish to pay a tribute to that big and generous-hearted Western Australian who led the previous Government. I refer to Sir James Mitchell. That gentleman, like all others, made mistakes, and it is to be hoped, and I believe we can

expect, that when the inevitable change again comes about—of course I believe it will be many years before that happens—at least the same generous tributes will be paid to the work of the party now in office. It is to be hoped that Parliament will back up the Government's policy of land settlement and migration. The effective utilisation of land adjacent to railways has a direct bearing on the economic fabric of Western Australia. Considering the enormous sums of money invested in railways it is essential that we should have effective occupation of the land. Without it the State cannot hope to prosper. Some men are cowardly enough to hesitate over a sound progressive policy of land settlement. So, too, in the matter of establishing secondary industries, or the development of our great natural resources. Professor John Tindale, speaking of creative law said, "This is too great a theme for me to handle, but it must assuredly be handled when we, like streaks of morning mist, have melted into the infinite azure of the past." So we find many sections of the community with small, mean minds and a total disregard of the natural wealth of the State. It is true that with effective occupation of our lands we should have better methods of farming. It was interesting to note the remarks of the member for Toodyay (Mr. Lindsay) in this connection. With all due respect to our farmers, I believe they have not yet started to farm properly. For the last quarter of a century we have had, and have been paying for, an observatory through which to study the abstruse science of astronomy. We spend £3,000 or £4,000 per annum on astronomy, but will not spend a shilling on an agricultural college or an agricultural chemist. It is unquestionable that the farmers have not that appreciation of the practical application of science to their everyday calling that they should have. With all due regard for the study of astronomy, I say that our State, being in its pioneering stage, and so having no money to spend on luxuries as have the older States of the Commonwealth, has something more pressing to attend to than the study of an abstract science such as astronomy. There is the everyday bread and butter consideration of what we can do for all sections of the community. It is a crying shame that in Western Australia, where we have raised the wheat output to 18,000,000 bushels, we have not an agricultural chemist. The whole problem of profitable production is one of trying to harness the known sciences. To-day it is almost impossible for us to export meat to the old world because the great Argentine Republic, 25 or 30 years ago, gripped tightly the economic aspect of development. That

great republic founded the Bank of Argentina, and that bank has played no small part in the development of the republic. It is to be hoped that as banking is one of the planks of our party's platform we shall be able to follow suit. Industrial banks would form a great adjunct to industry. It is almost impossible for this State to progress unless we can get a firmer grip of the finances than we have to-day. Turning to the important question of fertilisers, I may say the Government have approached it in the widest possible spirit of helpfulness. The fertiliser companies have built up big assets in Western Australia, and have supplied the farmers with fertilisers—at a price. But apart from the commercial side of the question there is also the national aspect, which no Government can lose sight of. We have big areas of light lands almost impossible of being brought under profitable cultivation unless we can cheapen fertilisers. So, later in the session, at the instance of the Government, I will move that a select committee be appointed to inquire into all aspects of the fertiliser trade in Western Australia. In other parts of the world, in France, in Germany, in America, in Sweden, in Norway, even in England the authorities have not been unmindful of the great advances made by science. The time may come when it will be found harder for our farmers to supply wheat at competitive rates than it is to-day. Russia has raised her production to 2,000,000 tons. When Russia again enters competitively into the markets of the world, probably the whole economic position will change. And with the settlement of the economic problems between Great Britain and Russia, probably it will be found that the great Russian market will be opened and that our farmers will be standing in competition with those of Russia, who in years gone by produced wheat at a very low price. So it behoves the farmers' representatives in this House to be active and have but one single thought, namely, the welfare of the farmers. I hope that party will never again link up with the Nationalist Party, who cannot represent the rural worker half so effectively as can the rural representative. I hope that when I move for the select committee to inquire into the fertiliser question I shall have the whole-hearted co-operation of our farmers' representatives. The time has arrived when the position must be reviewed to see whether we cannot obtain for the farmers fertiliser at a rate that will enable them to compete successfully against growers of other nationalities. In Western Australia we have two sections: We have the loyal Western Australians, and we have domiciled in Western Australia people who never do anything but deery everything Western Australian.

We ought to have a greater regard for the vast natural resources of the State. We do not want a man who is prepared merely to think in threepenny bits: a man who baulks at any duty before him. Rather do we want men who will think big, and act courageously. Only by having such men can we develop the State. Many times have I spoken of establishing secondary industries in Western Australia. Some people say we ought to wait until the primary industries are developed to a greater extent, but I say the time is now that we should get a close grip of this all-important problem. To-day we should be producing many of our own requirements. We could do it if only we could evolve a policy. We cannot go on sending six or seven millions of money per annum to the Eastern States manufacturers. A Parliament or a people that would tolerate that for any great length of time would be suffering from either cowardice or laziness. There is no need for us to import butter, eggs, bacon and other commodities from the Eastern States. There is no need for them to supply us with wearing apparel, and 15 or 20 other lines of manufactures that could be produced in Western Australia, thus providing work and wealth within the State and relieving the burden of taxation. We want men who can think big, not men of narrow vision who cry wait, wait until our secondary industries are developed. Hand in hand with the development of our great rural lands we should establish many secondary industries that will ultimately play an important part in the welfare and progress of the State. I hope there will be a keener appreciation of the necessity for starting industries in Western Australia, to provide employment and opportunity for our boys and girls. We do not want our boys and girls to have to leave for the Eastern States after receiving their education here. We know this is due to Federation, the policy of which is dictated by the big Eastern States manufacturers. I hope we shall be able to evolve a policy that will have the backing of the Government. It is not a matter of monetary backing; it is moral backing we want. We want the moral stiffening that Parliament and the Government can give to struggling industries. If Parliament took up this question in earnest, the people would follow the lead. In this State we have rich lead mines. The Minister for Railways knows that in the Northampton district are large reserves of ore. Those mines have been fostered by a Government grant to the extent of £25,000. When the mine was thus placed on its feet, the directors immediately arranged to ship the output to Belgium, leaving our Fremantle smelting works idle.

The Minister for Railways: They would not do it at a fair price.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know anything about that. From an unnecessary constituent—sulphur—could be manufactured superphosphates for the farmer, and in that

way industries could be correlated and made to assist each other. It was a shame that, after the Government had found the money to back the mine, the ore should be shipped to Belgium. We have thousands of tons of timber going over the fire chutes in the timber areas every year. We have millions of tons of iron ore. In Norway and Sweden wood fuel is being used to manufacture soft iron, which is sent to Western Australia. Why is not some attempt made to grapple with the problem of our waste? I hope the farmers will realise that their great sheet anchor is the home market. Ultimately they may have to face great forces of competition with other countries more favourably situated in relation to the big markets, and may then have to rely exclusively upon the home market for the sale of their produce. This being so, they should endeavour to realise the importance of having secondary industries established within the State. It is unfortunate that some new members should be under the impression that the mining industry is played out. Gold mining raised Western Australia from a penal settlement to the proud position of one of the richest sovereign States. In a comparatively few years it produced over 150 million pounds worth of wealth, but we have never had the sympathetic policy that was necessary to develop our mineral resources. Primary producers seem to overlook the great part that mining has played in the opening up of this State, but let me remind them that while only a quarter of a million has been lent to mining, the farmers have received loans to the extent of six millions. It is a difficult matter to devise a policy that would receive the endorsement of all sections of Parliament.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: One is a staple asset.

Mr. LAMBERT: Of the total exportations from Western Australia during the last 30 years, mineral wealth has been responsible for 50 per cent., so it has played a great part in the economic life of the State. In the early days of the farming industry, it was the population of the mining areas that provided an outlet for the farmers' produce. The mining community are taxed in almost every direction. When they got a water supply they were asked to pay for it in a comparatively few years. The mining industry carried almost the whole of the burden of the non-paying railways from the inception.

Mr. C. P. Wansbrough: The position is reversed to-day.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not know that it is. Possibly the day will come when our farmers will rue their pursuit of foreign markets. They should focus their attention on enlarging home markets, which will prove more important than the phantom-like foreign markets we hear so much about to-day. If the local market be developed hand in hand with other industries, the farmers will not then have

to rely upon the uncertain markets in foreign lands. The Government intend to grapple with one of the difficulties confronting the mining industry in a very practical way. A Royal Commission consisting of a mining engineer is to be appointed to ascertain the reserves of ore in the mines in the Kalgoorlie district. It would be out of the question to appoint a Commission to inquire generally into the mining industry, because it would be years before a report could be made available. The idea of appointing a mining engineer as a Royal Commissioner could have application to only a few of the big mines in the Kalgoorlie district. The mine owners claim that they have large reserves of low grade ores. From the late Government they receive £40,000 per annum by way of a reduction in water charges in order to assist the industry, but that I consider to be merely a dole. It will be the function of the Commissioner to ascertain the extent of the known ore reserves, their value, and whether by an alteration of mining and metallurgical methods, these ore reserves can be profitably treated. I said in 1916, and I repeat it to-night, and with all due regard to the metallurgists on the mines, that some of their methods, to put it mildly, have become antiquated. The oil flotation process, I believe, will solve the problem of dealing with the low-grade ores. There are four or five million pounds worth of ore reserves blocked out that under present conditions are unpayable. Rather than give the mines a dole of £40,000 a year in the way of reduced water charges, it would be better for the Government to guarantee the interest on a fair expenditure for an up-to-date milling plant. While a reduction for water might be important to the mines, it is not the crux of the question. The crux of the question is whether methods can be devised to treat the ore reserves at a cheaper rate than in the past. The Government are tackling this problem in such a way as to reveal whether the ore reserves that are unpayable to-day can be profitably treated. The Minister for Mines is tackling the problem of mining in this State with an earnestness characteristic of him. He is formulating certain practical suggestions to assist the industry that should go far to carry out the policy so long advocated by members representing the mining industry in this House. Some of the bigger mining districts of the State are almost depopulated, although there are big lines of lodes and reefs there that should be prospected in some way. As it seems almost impossible to procure the capital necessary to take the initial steps, it devolves upon the Government to make a national question of this and go in for a comprehensive sys-

tem of boring. We indicated sufficient to the Minister during his recent visit to the eastern goldfields to make him see that this is the only feasible way of bringing some of these mines into profitable production. He also had an opportunity of seeing the experiments in oil flotation carried out in the Kalgoorlie School of Mines. This is a technical subject with which I am not going to weary members. In America oil flotation is regarded as probably the leading metallurgical process dealing with certain classes of ores that are very similar to those on the goldfields. I hope the Government will be prompted to put up a small oil flotation unit on the Coolgardie State battery. I believe that will be the means of demonstrating that some of the sulphide ores in Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie and other parts of the State can be profitably treated in a fairly big way at the rate of £1 per ton. Many mines to-day are struggling with the problem of trying to roast the whole of their products when the gold is contained in six or seven per cent. of them. If there is any feasible metallurgical treatment that will dissociate the mineral containing gold from the gangue, and render it possible to treat a similar portion of the ore, it will be the salvation of the mining industry in the State. The Government have also indicated their intention of appointing advisory mining boards. I believe a board similar to those which have done so much for the farmers, but differently constituted, would be of great advantage to the State. There are in the State many mining men and other public-spirited men on the eastern goldfields and on the Murchison who would gladly give their time in an advisory capacity to assist the Government in reviving the fortunes of the industry. If we can utilise the services of competent advisory mining boards in the State, subordinate of course to an executive body which would deal with the matter of grants, etc., I believe much good will be done. We should urge upon the Federal Government the necessity for granting a bonus upon gold. They have had everything, but have given nothing. It is healthy for them to find that members are thinking along serious lines, and are determined to see if they cannot remove some of the chafing shackles of Federation. Unless this is done, our sovereign rights will soon be taken from us. Already liberal bonuses are given to manufacturers in the Eastern States, and it is well that the Federal Government should know there are industries in this State that are also worthy of consideration. They should appoint a Commonwealth geologist. In the case of other industries established recently, experts have been appointed. This is a great mineral State, and is only in its infancy so far as minerals are concerned. It is an obligation

cast upon the Federal Government to create a geological department, something on the lines of that in the United States, and to endeavour to give us the best geological knowledge the world produces so that we may demonstrate what great mineral wealth we possess. It must not be thought that Western Australia is worked out in the matter of minerals. Both as regards minerals and metals, for which there is world-wide use, we have unlimited quantities. Our principal mines are gold mines, but there are many useful minerals and metals that could be mined equally profitably and would play a great part in the economic life of Western Australia. We went before the country with a sound and progressive policy. We are fully seized of the seriousness of the position in this State. Side by side with a full regard for our obligations we desire to humanise work and industry, make the home brighter, and endeavour to give to every boy and girl in the State such equal opportunities in life as will make for responsible citizenship, to the end that we may all share in brotherly union the great heritage and gifts we possess.

On motion by Mr. J. H. Smith, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.23 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th August, 1924.

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

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. A. Lovekin and the Empire Settlement Bill.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [4.35]: I desire to make a personal explanation, Mr. President. Dr. Saw in this House the other evening—

The PRESIDENT: I would like to remind the hon. member that his personal explanation is not to be a complete reply to Dr. Saw's speech.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: No, Sir. Dr. Saw said he would give any sum I liked to name to any charity I liked to name if I could show that Colonel Amery, in dealing with the Empire Settlement Bill in the House of Commons, rather bragged that he had made a good deal. Dr. Saw further said that nothing was to be found to support my statement. I now desire to point out what is to be found.

The PRESIDENT: Anything in the nature of an explanation is admissible, but I do not know whether the hon. member is quite in order in taking up a challenge.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: Dr. Saw stated that what I had said was not to be found.

The PRESIDENT: If the hon. member wishes to make an explanation, it will be in order.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I just desire to correct the hon. member somewhat. What I said is to be found in "Hansard" of the 1st August, on page 21, 1922-3 Volume. These are my words—

I am referring to this, because whilst Sir James Mitchell comes home and tells us what a magnificent deal he has made, Colonel Amery also takes credit for having made a magnificent deal.

And the other night I said that Colonel Amery rather bragged about the deal he had made. The passage that I wish to quote to support that, is to be found in the British Parliament "Hansard" Debates, 1922, page 578, and it is exactly the same as appears in our "Hansard" on page 21, word for word as I quoted it. Here is the passage from the British "Hansard"—

Mr. Amery then said the real difference lay in the fact that in one case they would have them (the unemployed) still with us, still unemployed, increasingly less employable, a permanent burden on the country and a weakness to the nation. As it was, they were to-day on productive work, many of them on the way to become their own masters, supplying us with goods we needed, and buying our goods, trading under laws which gave them a preference over the goods of foreign nations.

Hon. T. Moore: But you would not call that boasting.

Hon. J. Duffell: It is skiting, though.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: In view of what follows, I think it is boasting. He goes on to say—

They were now considering at that moment the Western Australian scheme, under which Western Australia agreed to settle 75,000 people for £6,000,000, provided that the Commonwealth and the United Kingdom contributed a sum equivalent to one-third of the interest for five years. This would cost over a period of seven or eight years £600,000; in other words, 10 per cent. of the total expenditure, or only about £8 per settler.