

for the East Province since 1894 proves that where there is the harmony of a common motive, a common allegiance to conscience, and a common love of country, personal respect and esteem will survive all differences as to the means of fulfilling a common end. May that harmony long continue to adorn the proceedings of this Council. This Council has sustained a heavy loss, and the sympathy of every member will go out to the bereaved home.

Question passed, members rising.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned accordingly at 4.59 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 23rd July, 1907.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Treasurer: 1, By-laws of the Municipalities of Perth and Mt. Morgans. 2, Amended Regulations and Schedule of Charges for the Broome, Carnarvon, and Port Hedland Jetties. 3, Return of Members of Industrial Unions, etc.

QUESTION—FACTORIES REPORT.

Mr. BATH (for Mr. Troy) asked the Premier: Why has not the annual report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for 1906 been published?

The TREASURER (for the Premier) replied: The report is not yet completed, but will be presented to Parliament as soon as received from the Chief Inspector.

QUESTION—SCHOOL ACCOMMODATION, NORTH PERTH.

Mr. VERYARD asked the Minister for Education: 1, Is he aware of the overcrowded condition of the School at Hawthorn, North Perth, in consequence of which a number of children are unable to be received in that school? 2, If so, does he propose to provide suitable accommodation, and when?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. F. Wilson) replied: 1, Yes. 2, Approval was given some weeks ago to the anticipation of an item to be provided on the draft Estimates for the erection of a school, and the Public Works Department has been asked to prepare the plans and estimates so that the work may be put in hand at an early date. It has been impossible to proceed before as a site had to be purchased, and considerable delay was caused by the impossibility of finding the owner of the land required. The land in question is now being resumed.

QUESTION—PERTH FORESHORE RECLAMATION.

Mr. HARDWICK asked the Minister for Works: Has the Minister any intention of continuing the reclamation works along the river frontage? If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The work referred to will be continued when Parliament has granted the necessary monetary authorisation.

OBITUARY—C. E. DEMPSTER, M.L.C.

The TREASURER (Hon. F. Wilson): It is my very sorrowful duty to call the attention of the House to the fact that Western Australia has lost one of her most esteemed citizens in the

death of the Hon. C. E. Dempster, member of the Legislative Council. I shall conclude by moving—

That this House places on record its profound regret at the death of the Hon. C. E. Dempster, and its deep sympathy with his family; also that the terms of the resolution be communicated to the widow of the late gentleman by Mr. Speaker.

As members are aware, Mr. Dempster was a native of Western Australia. He was one of the earliest settlers on the Swan River, being born at Fremantle so far back as 1839, and lived ever since in this State and took a lively interest in the affairs of the State. He was for the better part of his time engaged in agricultural pursuits in the Northam district, and held important posts both in a public and a private capacity. He was one of the members of the Legislative Council when it was formed into an elective Chamber in 1894, and he took a seat in that Chamber for the East Province, which he represented at the time of his decease. He was a man, as members I am sure will bear me out, of most upright character, one who was full of energy and determination, not only in carrying on his private affairs but also in attending to the affairs relating to his public position. He was highly esteemed by every person who enjoyed his friendship in this State, and I think it goes without saying that Mr. Dempster's desire was that he should serve his native country and advance the interests of the State in which he lived. I think his name will be cherished—I hope it will—by all as one of the most highly esteemed men of the district in which he resided. Hon. members perhaps are aware that he leaves a family behind him of three sons and three daughters; and perhaps it is gratifying to some extent to know that the whole of his family were enabled to be at his bedside at the time of the decease, with the exception of one daughter who is at present in the old country. I hope we shall be able through you, Mr. Speaker, to convey to the widow and the relations of the late Hon. C. E. Dempster the deepest

sympathy of this House in the motion which I now beg to propose.

Mr. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): In seconding the motion, I regret the melancholy nature of the occurrence which has made it necessary. I can only say that as one who has for five or six years been connected with this House, I have had many opportunities of meeting the late member of the Legislative Council; and although we differed on probably every political principle which might be brought before us, I always found the deceased gentleman courteous and kindly in his nature, and of a most gentlemanly disposition.

Question passed, members rising in their places.

Mr. SPEAKER: I will communicate to the widow the purport of the resolution.

DEBATE—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth day.

Resumed from the previous Thursday.

Mr. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): I have pleasure in joining my congratulations with those which have preceded them to you, Mr. Speaker, on your reappearance with us at the beginning of this new session. I have no intention this afternoon of traversing the Governor's Speech paragraph by paragraph, nor of attempting to deal with the various matters which it is proposed to make the subjects of Bills during the course of the present session. I desire if possible to avoid the tendency to deliver on the Address-in-Reply a speech having length without breadth or depth, and to confine myself simply to one or two points that appear to be of superlative importance to the State at the present juncture. And undoubtedly the matter that is paramount just now is the question of our State finances. It is entirely above all party issues, because after all the question of finance is in State affairs the one that governs all other questions. We are endeavouring to secure the development of all our natural industries and to establish a certain number of artificial industries; and from time to time appli-

cations with these objects are made for Government aid in different directions. Such applications can only be met, if we are to extend reasonable assistance to our different industries, first by putting our finances on the soundest possible footing by so adjusting our expenditure that it shall fall within the limits of our revenue, and secondly, by keeping down at all times to the very lowest figure, compatible with efficiency and fairness, the cost of our administration. During the past few years in Western Australia every Government holding office has been faced with the fact that revenue has been continually falling while demands for new expenditure have been unremitting. Since 1902-3 each year has seen a diminution in our revenue without a sufficiently diminished expenditure. In that year Western Australia received perhaps its highest revenue. It received then under the new Commonwealth Customs tariff, with the assistance of a local State tariff, a total revenue of £3,630,238, as against four years later, in the financial year just terminated, a revenue of £3,401,353, representing a reduction for 1906-7 as compared with 1902-3 of no less than £228,885. In the meantime the large majority of our sources of revenue show increases; in fact the only direction in which a decrease is shown in 1906-7 as compared with 1902-3 in the production of revenue is in our mining division, which returned in 1902-3 £47,532 as against, in 1906-7, £34,068, a decrease of £13,464; in our railways and tramways, which showed last year a decrease as compared with 1902-3 of £38,834; and in the surplus returned from the Commonwealth, which showed a diminution from its high-water mark in 1902-3 of £1,255,731 to £780,166, or a total diminution of £475,565. It will therefore be seen that the principal trouble that has confronted our different Administrations has been this loss in the surplus returned to us from the Commonwealth, and that the net reduction in revenue received during the last financial year was entirely due to the reduction in the Commonwealth surplus. Had it not been for that reduction, the revenue last year, in-

stead of being lower, would have been higher than in the year 1902-3. The cause of this reduction in the surplus returned by the Commonwealth appears to have been due, first, to the gradual and expected diminution and final disappearance of the special local tariff, which operated alike against the Eastern States and the outside world; secondly, to a loss of Customs revenue due to the importation of goods from the Eastern States of Australia instead of from the outside world, which importation was the natural effect of the gradual diminution in the local tariff; and thirdly, to an increase in the Federal expenditure chargeable to the State of Western Australia, which expenditure rose from £365,039 in 1902-3 to £414,514 in 1905-6, showing a difference in those three years of £49,475. The figures for the last financial year are not yet available, and therefore it has been impossible to make a comparison in regard to them; but the tendency on the one hand has been, so far as our revenue collected by the Commonwealth is concerned, to show an annual diminution, and so far as our expenditure is concerned to show a distinct upward tendency. In 1902-3 our population contributed through the Customs Department a revenue of £1,396,002 as against, in 1905-6, a revenue of £1,030,813, showing a difference in those three years of £365,189. The important question to us, and the point I wish to submit for the consideration of the House, is how much of that £365,000 is in the pockets of the consumers of Western Australia, and how much of it is represented by increased charges to the consumer of Eastern products as against English, American, or German products which were formerly in our market; in other words, how much is this State paying to build up the Eastern production of both manufactured and natural products? It seems to me the whole basis of our relation to the Federal Government rests on the answer to that question, whether our community is gaining correspondingly by retaining in the pockets of its members the £365,000 extra that was paid in 1902-3 to the Customs, the bulk

of which sum found its way into State revenue, and was available for disbursement on various developmental works—how much of that, I say, is still in the pockets of the consumers, or how much of it has been lost in a double sense to the State—been lost, first, in that the money is not available as revenue for expenditure on developmental works, and secondly, in that it has produced no corresponding gain to the people who are called upon to pay it. Now it is difficult indeed to get a direct answer, a clear and decisive answer, to this question. We know that the public of this State complain now of their inability to bear farther taxation, complain that it would be wrong to impose any additional taxes on the community; and yet, so far as I can judge by the eleven months of 1906-7, £400,000 less is contributed by our State community to the national revenue than was contributed four years ago. Now if that money be in the pockets of our people, then undoubtedly Western Australia is in a happy position with respect to any additional taxation proposals. Western Australia is well able to bear a slight increase of taxation, if that money be in the pockets of the people; but if on the other hand the money is not in the pockets of the people, but is in the pockets of either the Eastern manufacturers or of a small body of middlemen, then unfortunately Western Australia is contributing still for its commodities as it was four years ago, without getting by a reduction of Customs imposts that benefit which it should be obtaining. And I am afraid that position represents largely at all events, although not entirely, the true circumstances of to-day; I am afraid that living is not appreciably cheaper now than it was four years ago, but that the bulk of that money is still contributed by our people, while our State is getting no return whatever for the contribution. In that case Western Australia is not only losing the money which should be available for public works of a developmental character, but is losing in the second and possibly even more important way by the fact that its local industries are

being crushed out of existence by the unrestricted competition of the stronger Eastern States—a very important fact indeed for this Chamber to consider, but still a fact that, I am afraid, there is no means of getting over. It is not only the industries that have been in existence in the past and that may be suffering a considerable diminution in the volume of their productiveness, but likewise the local industries we should have, those industries we might expect to-day to have had established here building up prosperous townships, but which it has been if not impossible at least very difficult to establish because of the operation of this inter-State free-trade, brought about by the introduction and adoption of the Commonwealth Constitution Act. In reply to the argument put forward, notably by members of the Federal Parliament, that our industries are increasing—and we know our industries are increasing and have increased since the Commonwealth was established—I may cite the fact that it is easy, when dealing with figures without closely analysing them, to bring forward a case that might appear on its general statement to be absolutely conclusive. You might bring forward a statement of the total number of industries; one might include in that statement all sorts of industries that necessarily must exist in a State of any size. For instance, one might number as “factories” all those places where slop clothing is made up; you could number as factories other places where a man and a boy are employed—[*Mr. Walker*: Making lollies, for instance]—no matter in what description of work they may be engaged—[*Mr. Illingworth*: A blacksmith-shop is a “factory.”] Every blacksmith-shop is, of course, a factory, and every coachbuilder-shop; every little room where, shall we say, a few shillings’ worth of lollies are turned out per week is a factory; and so we might go on multiplying the number of factories and the number of employees in industrial establishments, giving the increase in lolly-shops and blacksmith-shops from 1901 to 1907. But there are two industries which were

here existent, and which were, for the size of the State, flourishing in Western Australia in 1901, when the Commonwealth Constitution became operative—I refer to the tobacco industry and the boot-manufacturing industry—two typical industries which we can take as a means of gauging the exact effect of this inter-State free-trade upon the present and the future of industries in Western Australia. In the tobacco industry there were made in Western Australia in 1901, 115,855lbs. of tobacco; in 1905, the latest date for which statistics are available, there was no tobacco made here. Cigars were made in Western Australia in 1901 numbering 1,140,611, and the number in 1905 was 587,200, a reduction of more than one-half. Cigarettes made here in 1901 amounted to 4,206,000; in 1905 there were none. [Mr. Johnson: It would be a good job if cigarettes were never smoked.] That is outside the question. While they are smoked, is it well they should be made in the Eastern States? We lose the advantage of the employment of labour in their manufacture, and probably lose also the advantage of the excise duty; for in this connection, I do not know whether we have an absolute assurance that Western Australia gets the full benefit of the excise. In regard to locally smoked tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes produced in the Eastern States; I do not know whether the check is so satisfactory that we can be assured we get the full advantage we should reap from the excise under the provisions of the Constitution Act. But in any case we do know that we have lost and are losing the benefit of the circulation of this money contributed by our own people through our own wage-earners; and the only benefit we do know has accrued is that it has built up a very wealthy tobacco monopoly in the Eastern States. Then in regard to boots, another typical industry; in 1901 there were made in Western Australia 264,768 pairs, in 1905 there were made 186,703, and in 1906, 198,918 pairs were estimated as likely to be made. Now we see, taking about 200,000 pairs as made in 1906, a reduction of no less than

64,000 pairs of boots and shoes, while our population all the time has been increasing. [Member: That explains Victoria's prosperity.] That is the point. Undoubtedly the benefit we are losing to our workers is a benefit we are conferring on residents of other States. Much has been said during recent months in regard to the depression which exists in Western Australia. So far as I am able to judge, that depression is mainly a town depression; and how can we expect anything but town depression when, instead of industries growing, we find that industries are vanishing? You cannot build up a big metropolitan population consisting solely of employees in the building trade or of persons engaged in the business of exchange. You must have town industries; you must have artificial industries, if you are to have a thriving town population. And the tendency in Western Australia during the past few years has been to diminish rather than to increase the number of artisans in our towns; because by the mere fact that work possible to be done in the towns is year by year falling away, naturally the people in the towns feel the pinch due to the withdrawal from circulation of the money previously spent in wages in their midst. I think we can fairly and safely state, without fear of successful contradiction, that the effect of the adoption of federation as propounded in the Commonwealth Constitution Act has been to prevent town prosperity, at all events in Western Australia; the effect has been to create a metropolitan depression in this State. But when I say this has been the effect of federation under the Commonwealth Constitution, I desire to qualify the general statement by expressing the opinion that it was quite possible to have adopted a form of federation, ample perhaps for all existing requirements, that would not in any way hamper the building up of industries in this or any other individual State. Therefore what may be taken as a condemnation of the Commonwealth Constitution Act must not necessarily be assumed to be a condemnation of the principle of federation itself, must not

necessarily be assumed to be an attack on the principle of Australian nationality. I do not, however, desire to go far into that question : this is not a fitting season, and no definite end to such a discussion is to me apparent. I have been induced to make a few remarks on the question because of the fact, first of all, that the result of the Commonwealth Constitution Act and its adoption here has been to materially increase the difficulties of the State Government and the State Treasurer, and in the second place because the Premier chose to enter on a discussion of the federation question when delivering his policy speech at Bunbury recently. In that policy speech the Premier trod on very thin ice, and gave an excuse for the attitude of the Government and for his own attitude in regard to a motion which was discussed in this House last session, explaining that he voted in favour of the Commonwealth Constitution Act as a matter of etiquette, and implied, as all his speech did imply so far as it touched on federation, that his views were entirely opposed to the vote he gave on that occasion. I have no objection to any member of this House discussing the question of federation on the public platform ; but I think that the Premier, when speaking as the mouthpiece of the Government of this country, should bring forward some definite proposition when dealing with it. We are entitled to ask that of him, as Leader of the Government and Leader of the House ; we are entitled to ask that he shall put considerations affecting the welfare of the State somewhat above considerations of political or Ministerial etiquette ; and that if the welfare of the State demands a movement in favour of secession, that movement should receive the support of the Premier and members of his Cabinet. We are justified in asking not only that he shall vote in favour of it, but that he shall himself initiate it as Leader of this House and of the country. With regard to that, I desire to urge on the Government to put aside all abstract considerations when dealing with this question of federation, and if they are prepared to

attack the principle of federation as embodied in the Commonwealth Constitution Act, if they are prepared to criticise it, they should go farther and openly attack it by parliamentary action ; unless indeed they are convinced by the highest legal advice, and by consultation with the Ministries of the other Australian States, that the compact made between this State and the Eastern States is indeed for all time indissoluble. That is the point on which mainly I complain of the Premier's remarks in regard to federation. So far as I am able to judge, we entered into a contract with the Eastern States which we knew, in the words of the Commonwealth Constitution Act, to be a union that should be indissoluble. We agreed when we entered that our act in doing so should be final and irrevocable ; and so far as I can judge, the only way to get a release from the federal bond—if we do desire to get a release—is by a dissolution of partnership by mutual consent. I have very grave doubts, in fact I am convinced, that secession by Western Australia is not practicable, is not within the realm of practical politics ; but if it be, then I ask the legal advisers of the Government to advise this House on the question ; and I ask the Premier, convinced as he is that federation has not worked well, has in fact worked ill for Western Australia, to accept the responsibility of that conviction, and to bring before the House and explain the way that may have been devised for severing the federal tie. But if there be no way of getting out of the federal bond, what use is there in railing at that bondage ? Is it wise for the head of the Government or for members of the Government to waste time, to induce people of this community in the different parts of the State to likewise waste their energies in working up a useless secession movement ? If there be a way out, we are entitled to be shown it by the Leader of the House. If there be no way out, railing should not be practised by the Premier or any Minister ; but we should all recognise the necessity of making the very best of the circumstances in which we are placed, of doing

the best within the limits by which we are shackled to develop the State for which we are acting. I trust that the energies of our people will not be wasted on useless movements. If there be a practical way of dealing with this question I should be very glad indeed to hear of it. [*The Minister for Works*: Would you support it?] I have not altered the opinion I held in 1900. My opinion then was that Western Australia was not ripe to enter upon a partnership in the terms laid down in the Commonwealth Constitution Act; and I still hold that opinion and still think a lighter federation, a less burdensome federation could have been devised than that embodied in the Commonwealth Constitution Act. But I do not think it is wise for me to get up on a public platform to fight the old battle over and over if there be no possible result to accrue from that battle. I ask the Premier to give us a correct reading with the aid of his constitutional legal adviser, and with the aid of such legal advice from outside as may be available to the Government, to show whether there is a possibility of altering the circumstances in which we are bound to the rest of Australia by this federal compact; and if there be a way, let the House not satisfy itself by passing declaratory resolutions which are ignored as soon as passed, but let it go practically into the matter with a view of taking the definite steps that may be necessary to secure the end aimed at. [*Member*: What about the member for Swan?] I have assured that hon. member that I am not going to help him to pass useless motions, but I am willing to help him if he will bring forward any scheme, failing such action on the part of the Premier. The Premier having failed to do such a thing, if the member for Swan steps in and undertakes to do this, then I will be perfectly willing to follow the hon. member in his action. That perhaps is somewhat of a digression caused by my reference to the Commonwealth surplus and to the effect of the Commonwealth union on our industries. I desire to point out that while every year since 1902-3 we have seen a

reduction in revenue, we have not seen a sufficiently corresponding reduction in the expenditure. In 1902-3 we had a contribution per individual in Western Australia to revenue, State and Federal, of £16 18s. 9d., which fell in 1906-7 to £12 19s. 2d., representing a total fall of £3 19s. 7d. per head in that term of four years. But during the same term our expenditure per head only fell £3 2s. 9d. as against £3 19s. 7d., representing a fall from £16 8s. 8d. in 1902-3 to £13 5s. 11d. in 1906-7. In every year since 1902-3 the revenue and expenditure figures have shown a greater expenditure per head than revenue received per head, and as a consequence in three of those years; 1904-5, 1905-6 and 1906-7, we have had the unpleasant circumstance of reporting a deficit. Speaking the other night, the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Horan) complained that a great deal too much was being made of our deficit. I could not exactly understand the point of the hon. member's remark. It was alleged, I think by him, that if we took into consideration our contribution to the sinking fund we had no deficit at all, and other members in one place and another have shown a tendency at times during the last few months to regard this sinking fund as a sort of incubus on the State that should, if possible, be thrown off, but at all events should be reduced in size. I hope the Government are not going to take what would be the most popular way out of its difficulties—most popular with a large portion of our population—a course of reducing expenditure by reducing the sinking fund. To me the establishment of a solid sinking fund is our only justification for borrowing money. All the time of our prosperity we have been praising the wise statesmanship that induced the leaders of political thought in Western Australia at the outset to establish a substantial sinking fund in connection with every one of the State's loans; we have been boasting of the fact that we were so much in front of the other Australian States in our financial affairs, in our financial knowledge and in our application of that knowledge, as was evidenced by the establishment of

our sinking fund and our maintenance of it. Now, at the first breath of adversity, after advertising ourselves all over the world as far as we possibly could as a people who were determined to give evidence of our *bona fides* in borrowing, of our *bona fide* determination not only to pay back but to pay back by a return of pounds sterling from the State to the borrower, instead of paying back by a redemption loan, in other words paying back one lender by borrowing from another ; after advertising ourselves all over the financial world as a State that was determined to provide with every loan a sinking fund to redeem that loan, and to redeem it as near as possible at maturity—already there have been one or two loans redeemed, small loans it is true, by the operation of the sinking fund, and we have not been slow either to advertise that fact in our Budget statements and in other ways, and we have rightly taken a large degree of pride in the fact that we were prepared to make certain sacrifices in order that our loans might be redeemed at maturity, or that the bulk of them might at all events be redeemed when they did mature—but now, I repeat, at the first breath of adversity I hope the Government are not going to change that policy which has been established in Western Australia. It is only by means of the contributions to the sinking fund that Western Australia has of recent years, even with its increase of population, kept down its indebtedness within reasonable limits; and undoubtedly if any interference with the sinking fund took place it would be necessary that a corresponding reduction in our expenditure of borrowed money should take place at the same time. Otherwise it would mean keeping on our present expenditure, and year by year the loan indebtedness of the State per head would be going up to a considerable extent. The advantage of our sinking fund is that while we have borrowed and have been spending our borrowed money, we have managed by the operation of that fund to keep down so far, in fact to reduce for the last few years our total indebtedness per head instead of increasing it by our added loan

expenditure. Now, coming to the question of expenditure, I find as I say that our expenditure has not decreased to the extent it should have in order that we might live within our income. Hence the accumulated deficit of about £208,000. The principal savings that have been effected during the past few years are to be found in one or two departments, and the largest of them, if I can call it a saving, is in public works expenditure. That of course does not represent an actual saving, it represents a sacrifice on the part of the people of the State, it represents some want not met by the Government, some need unsupplied ; it does not represent an actual saving, because the delay in spending the money that may be required for any particular work does not do away with the necessity for that public work, but allows the necessity to remain, to be met, to be coped with at some later date. Postponement therefore does not represent fulfilment—a very obvious truism, but one it appears necessary at times to state in order that it may be realised that this reduction in expenditure, so far as the Public Works Department is concerned at all events, does not represent a tangible saving. The only other department showing a very large saving—and in this case it is a saving in administration—is the Railway Department, in which there is a reduction in expenditure for 1906-7 as compared with 1902-3 of no less than £114,226, although during the same term there had been a considerable increase in railway mileage. It will therefore be seen that in one department at all events a substantial saving has been effected in the four years that have transpired. Dealing with the public works question—and I desire to lay a little stress on that—I find that in 1902-3 we spent through the Public Works Department from consolidated revenue the sum of £428,051, whereas in 1906-7 the expenditure was £192,977. [Mr. Johnson : It would be better for yourself to compare 1904-5 with the present year.] I am going to say a word about 1904-5 presently. This represented a reduction of £235,074.

It is a reduction however which represents a delay in meeting public wants in some instances, and which represents in other instances a transfer from consolidated revenue to loan account. Here again, so far from a saving being effected by that transfer, there is a distinct State loss involved in the action. We will take as an example that a building or work of a nonproductive character has to be erected at a cost of £10,000, and that it has been customary we will say in erecting such a building, whether it be a printing office or a museum or half a dozen State schools, to meet the expenditure from consolidated revenue ; but it is decided, in order to relieve the consolidated revenue, to spend the money from loan account. The effect of that is that we pay first of all £10,000 for the erection of the building or buildings, and then as the one per cent. of our sinking fund will take 46 years to repay the loan, we shall be paying during the 46 years the interest on the £10,000. Ultimately, before the loan is redeemed we shall have spent for that building in the shape of interest £17,250—computing the interest at $3\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.—in addition to the £10,000 cost and value of the building. In other words, that one building constructed from loan account costs the country altogether before the loan is redeemed £27,250, instead of £10,000 represented by its value. That is the effect of transferring expenditure of a nonproductive character from consolidated revenue account to loan account. I contend that these figures only need to be stated to show that the country is paying altogether too highly for the luxury of getting buildings constructed immediately, and of transferring expenditure to loan account in order perhaps to save the pockets of the taxpayers a little less taxation in the immediate present. I desire to say a word or two in regard to the expenditure on public works for the financial year 1904-5, and I trust the House will excuse me in doing so. I claim as an excuse for mentioning the matter that I was, in that financial year, probably the most criticised man in Western Australia, owing to what was alluded to as the

“mark-time” policy. This was denounced I think in about 95 per cent. of the newspapers of Western Australia ; denounced in Parliament by those members of the present Ministry who were then in Parliament, and also, I believe, by a number of my friends not in the Ministry but sitting on the Ministerial side of the House at present. I desire to say that I give these hon. members credit for having criticised that policy with the very best intentions, and with the full and certain belief that it was an altogether fatal policy. I believe that they honestly thought there was no need for it, but I want to ask members to listen to a word or two which gave that policy the name it had, and then to consider whether in the light of subsequent State financial history the policy and the words with which it was initiated were not absolutely justified. The words which gave the policy its name are these:—

“At the moment, party politics are less important, and a recognition of the need for economy and a courage to insist upon it are vital requirements you have a right to expect from your Ministers. This Ministry is prepared to handle firmly this financial problem. We recognise at present that a spirited public works policy so advantageous in former years, so popular at all times, must be abandoned. A period of financial rest and recuperation is required by the State. It is hoped we shall require only to mark time for a short period, and that a forward march may then be resumed. It is natural to anticipate that a delay in carrying out those public works which are needed—some already authorised by Parliament—will not add to the popularity of the Ministry. That section of the public directly affected by a policy of economy will always dislike those who inaugurate it. Our satisfaction will be in the reflection that we are in power to serve the public, and not to gratify them, and our vindication in the future we regard as assured.”

I do not know whether there could be any more striking example of the justi-

fication of those remarks, and perhaps I may say the foresight that prompted them, than the Estimates submitted to Parliament year after year by succeeding Ministries. In that year with the "mark time" policy, which was so strongly denounced, we provided on the Estimates £387,000 for public works, and we actually spent £337,927 as against £192,977 spent last financial year. Therefore, the "mark time" policy with regard to public works disbursements represented an expenditure of £144,950 in excess of that carried out by this Government, with its "spirited public works policy." I do not desire to make these remarks altogether as a criticism of the present Ministry, for I am more anxious to see the finances placed on a sound footing than to see any Ministry thrown out or any other Ministry put in. I am anxious to help the present Government in any difficulties of a financial nature they are confronted with, and I recognise that they have grave financial difficulties to face. My only complaint is that the same recognition was not extended to those associated with me in office and myself at a time when difficulties likewise existed. I was anxious to say these few words relating to the "mark time" policy in order to justify those associated with me and myself in the attitude we then assumed, and to justify the words I then uttered, and the policy I then inaugurated. I desire no farther justification than that which is afforded, as I have said, by the history of the State finances so far as it has proceeded since the date when those words were used. In regard to our expenditure I find that there is not that reduction in administrative cost that we must have. I recognise that the Government will have to secure more effective economies than have resulted up to date. At the same time one can readily credit them with having been endeavouring since their introduction to office to effect economies. In that connection, too, we must recognise the fact that in some directions at all events there has been a diminution of expenditure. A greater reduction must take place in the immediate future. In a

large number of departments we have increases of revenue; but as to increases of expenditure, except in one instance—that of the Lands Department where increases in revenue and expenditure are about proportionate one to the other—the increases of revenue and expenditure are disproportionate. [Mr. Johnson: It is questionable whether the increased revenue from lands is sound.] I am going into that directly. In a department which is doing a larger business at present than it has done before, there should not be an increased expenditure corresponding to the increased revenue. Naturally it is easier to do larger business without a proportionately larger staff. If you have only a certain amount of business you must retain a skilled staff, but it does not need to grow to the same extent as the increase in the volume of business. In the Lands Department the cost and size of the staff have grown step by step with the growth of the revenue. In the Mines Department, where the revenue has not been increasing but rather falling, except in regard to that revenue derived from public batteries, the expenditure has been increasing. I cannot separate the public batteries from the mines expenditure generally, for I have not the figures of the public batteries alone; but I find that the total revenue from public batteries *plus* mines generally in 1902-3 was £101,727, and in 1906-7 £121,607, the increase being £19,880; the expenditure in 1902-3 was £119,962 and in 1906-7 £163,718. There was an increase in revenue therefore of £19,880, and an increase in expenditure of £43,756. I am not able, neither do I suppose is any other member, to put a finger on the exact spot where economy can most readily be effected; but the Government must face this problem boldly and fight it until they achieve success, and a strong and vigorous effort must be made during the present financial year to effect economies and increase revenue, or do both—and I think it is absolutely essential to do both—so that we shall, at the end of the financial year show a credit balance which will go a little way at all events to wipe off the

accumulated deficit. I desire to recognise the difficulty that has faced this Government, as well as its predecessors, in regard to the annual increase in the bill for sinking fund and interest. In 1902-3 it was £692,692, whereas our expenditure in this respect last financial year was £864,964, showing an increase of £172,272. That means that we have year by year a sinking fund and interest bill that, in so far as the past four years are a guide, represent an average annual increase of £43,000. This financial year the Treasurer is beginning with a deficit of £208,000. He has an expected increase for the sinking fund and interest of, say, £43,000, assuming the average of the past four years is maintained. He has to face the possibility of a reduction in the Commonwealth surplus, again in this instance following the precedent of the last two years, and necessarily there will be a reduction, because this financial year is the first in which the Treasurer will receive nothing from the local State tariff, as there is a possibility of a larger Commonwealth expenditure, and for the farther reason, too, that, in the revised Federal tariff it is certain that the direction of the revision will be towards an increased protection, and that increased protection necessarily will have a tendency to encourage the use of Australian products in the place of oversea products. Here again year by year the State Government will lose the benefit more and more of the customs revenue derived from oversea goods. We will probably feel a marked revulsion immediately the new tariff is introduced, because I believe that even Mr. Reid himself has admitted that the new tariff must be in the direction of increased protection—increased protection from which we as a State can receive no gain, increased protection for which we as a State shall have to pay in the shape of a farther reduction of our surplus from the Commonwealth. Assume that the reduction in the surplus returned by the Commonwealth amounts to only £50,000 for this financial year, then the Treasurer will be faced by the need for farther provision to the extent of £93,000 for sinking fund and interest, and to meet the de-

ficiency in the Commonwealth surplus: this added to the already existing deficit of £208,000. In connection with that state of affairs we have to consider the possibility of some new arrangement being made for distributing the Commonwealth surplus; a circumstance for which until the question is definitely settled the State Treasurer must be prepared; a circumstance which may result in a farther annual loss in the near future to this State. In view of this fact it is more than ever urgently necessary that the State revenue and expenditure should at the earliest possible date be made to balance; that the accumulated deficit should as quickly as possible be wiped off. [*Mr. Johnson*: You have been supplying apologies for the Treasurer.] I have been anxious as far as I could to depict the exact position of affairs as it appears to me at the present time in Western Australia. I have been trying to speak without any regard to party considerations; neither as a friend nor as a foe of the Government, but as a representative of the State all the time. The Treasurer will then have, in addition to establishing new economies, in addition to reducing the cost of administration, not only to propose but to ensure the imposition of some new taxation; and in this connection I should like to urge, assuming any portion of the amount we have ceased to contribute through the Customs remains in the pockets of the people of this State, they cannot be alleged to be at all heavily taxed. Western Australia has now but a very light direct taxation, a direct taxation that practically does not fall on the great body of the population. I find that for the last financial year the total amount shown as revenue from taxation was £266,151, or about one pound per head. But if we analyse that revenue we shall find it is taxation that does not fall on the great bulk of the people. Take the first item on the list—licenses, which bring in £43,510, a tax that falls on a small number of people, a tax that can hardly be called a tax at all, because it consists of payments made in return for concessions given, and the payment is in the major-

ity of cases much lower than the value of the concession ; in fact the payment of £43,510 represents something largely in the nature of presents made to the persons who contribute the greater portion of the tax. Then we come to dividend duties, £116,916 ; and the bulk of these duties are paid by people not resident in the State, a very large proportion indeed, and I regret it is impossible to ascertain the exact figures ; but in any case the contributors are persons who are drawing wealth in the shape of these dividends from the State. Even if the contributors resided in the State they would only be paying an income tax of not undue amount if we compare it with the income tax imposed by the mother country. Again, stamp revenue amounts to £63,634. This is the principal item, practically the only item, of direct taxation which falls on individuals in the community. Probate duty brought in £34,308. This duty again is paid on property which has never belonged to the people from whose pockets the duty comes ; on property left by will or otherwise by those who have passed away ; and farther, it does not represent a direct contribution from any person who has previously held the property in respect of which the duty is paid ; and therefore it inflicts no hardship on the individual. The last item, the totalisator tax, realised £7,781 ; and this again is not a tax on individuals at all ; it is a tax purely on certain clubs, the individual members of which do not feel the contribution made. Western Australia is therefore in the happy position of making practically no contribution in the shape of direct taxation to the maintenance of the State, and I urge that the Government may well not only introduce their land tax again, but may couple with it an income tax which shall fall on incomes not earned from the land itself ; and in that connection I would repeat what I have urged previously : if you impose a land tax alone, you impose something largely in the nature of a class tax ; you fail entirely to reach the persons, such as Foy & Gibson, and I could mention a number of others, who, because they are not registered as limited

liability companies, carry on business here but pay no dividend duty, although they take out of the State very large annual profits. They spend nothing in the State except what is necessary for carrying on their businesses ; and under the land tax such firms will make but a small contribution to the State revenue. It may well be urged that they, in common with professional persons, merchants, and others, should, as well as the rank and file of the community, make a direct contribution in the shape of an income tax which shall balance with the contribution of those who will be called on to pay the bulk of any land tax that is imposed. But here I may perhaps be pardoned for expressing the hope that another place will probably this session recognise what, in my opinion at all events, is the will of the people as to the land tax. I have heard certain gentlemen who, when they reject Bills submitted to them by this Chamber, express their perfect willingness to take the responsibility of rejecting certain measures. But they are never required to do so at all. They simply reject a measure, pass on to the consideration of the next business, and are utterly irresponsible for the result of their action. I should very much like to see an alteration of the Constitution so as to remedy that, and to make both Chambers equally responsible for their actions. I should like, too, until such an alteration is made, to see the practice adopted of not penalising one Chamber because the two Chambers disagree, but of getting the direct will of the people by means of a referendum, a far more satisfactory way of ascertaining the will of the people than that of a dissolution of either Chamber ; because in that dissolution all sorts of personal as well as sectarian questions, all sorts of party questions too, are liable to arise ; party questions that may be altogether outside the scope of the question in dispute between the two Houses. I should like to urge the Government, should they fail to pass their taxation proposals this year, to adopt the principle of taking an Executive referendum with a view to ascertaining the will of the people ; and

I believe that is the only satisfactory way in which that will can be ascertained; that is a way far more conclusive than a dissolution of either Chamber. As the member for Guildford (Mr. Johnson) mentioned just now, a word or two may be said as to the revenue derived from the Lands Department. It is impossible on the figures published to decide how much of the revenue is derived from licenses and leases, and how much from the sale of Crown lands, either on deferred payments such as the conditional purchases or by auction sales. But I desire to point out that as soon as the finances of this State are put on a proper footing, in my opinion the Government should adopt some new principle in dealing with the surplus Crown lands revenue. When there is a balance of revenue over expenditure in respect of the Crown lands, the Treasurer should capitalise the proceeds of Crown lands sales instead of spending those proceeds from year to year; because after all this is not an annually recurring revenue, it is not a revenue that will at all events be perpetually an annually recurring revenue, but it represents the proceeds of the sale of the assets of the State; and we are parting with our assets year by year, and are using the proceeds of those assets for the payment of working expenses. In other words, under the present system we are year by year living on our capital. I venture to say that as we dispose of these Crown lands, disposing of them as we do for all time, we should at the same time make such a provision that, apart from the cost of our lands administration, the balance will be capitalised so as to be the nucleus of a fund that may likewise be available for all time to those who come after us, and may be used for developmental works in exactly the same fashion as we now use loan funds. As that capital account is operated on, the money drawn from it and expended should be treated as if it were borrowed money, treated as money borrowed from this fund, to be repaid by the establishment of a sinking fund, in like fashion as a sinking fund is established in respect of our loans; that interest at the same time should be paid on

such moneys, and the moneys so used should be treated in all senses as if they were loan moneys. The fund should be a loan from the State to the State; in other words the asset should be made a perpetually-existing asset that should for all time benefit the population of this State. And I believe that in course of time, if the fund were so treated, it would, it must, become so substantial that it would in time absolutely dispense with the need for our going for money to a foreign creditor; it would enable us to provide our own loan fund, and to develop the country, at our own expense, without introducing any heavy burden at all, even temporarily, on our own taxpayers.

Hon. F. H. Piessé : Would you make it available immediately, or defer its use ?

Mr. DAGLISH : I should make it available immediately, but treat it as capital that might be lent to different works.

Mr. Gordon : Would you debit against it cost of surveys and of administration ?

Mr. DAGLISH : Undoubtedly.

Mr. Gordon : Would there be anything left ?

Mr. DAGLISH : The hon. member should look at the figures, which I can give him if he will not look them up. The figures for the last year show a balance of approximately £70,000 of Lands revenue over expenditure; and if the rush of settlement continues from year to year, the amount of that balance may be increased, especially if administrative economies be found practicable; and the Premier has assured us that although he has already made certain reductions in that department, others are possible and will be carried out at a very early date. In regard to the reform of the Legislative Council, I hope the Government will introduce a measure going at all events as far as household suffrage, and not making any distinctions whatever between different sections of householders in the community. I believe if a measure of household suffrage were introduced there would be no more difficulty in passing it through this Chamber and another place than there would be in

getting a reduction to £15 or £10. At the same time, it would give a far greater degree of satisfaction to the electors of the State. I should like to see an entirely different second chamber from that which we have at present in Western Australia. In every State where there is an elective House on a restricted franchise there have been disputes, difficulties, and differences, and sometimes deadlocks between the two Houses. A far simpler and more satisfactory method of working our Constitution seems to me to lie in the adoption of the nominee principle, particularly as it is urged that the second chamber is intended as a chamber of revision. Surely in a chamber of revision, it is necessary that there shall be on the part of its members the possession of some higher qualities, some greater knowledge, some wider experience than are enjoyed by members in the chamber whose work it revises. If the members of both Houses be only equal in knowledge, be only equal in experience, be only equal in intelligence, then the second chamber with a smaller number of members is necessarily not qualified by personal capacity to review the work of the first chamber; and the fact of the restriction of the franchise does not add to the intelligence of the members, especially as the members are elected from the same class as are the members of this Chamber; in other words, any individual qualified for membership of the lower chamber is equally qualified for membership of another chamber. There is no restriction as to the membership; the only restriction is as to age, and that is so slight that it is usually fulfilled in this Chamber as well as in another. If we are to have a chamber of revision, that chamber should be so constituted as to be able effectually and efficiently to carry out the revision. The mere rejection of measures from time to time because they are obnoxious to certain members of the community does not mean revision. A class House cannot possibly be entitled a chamber of revision because of the mere fact that a class House must necessarily look at any question not from the broad point of view that is requisite in a re-

viser, but from the class point of view that affects the members. I urge if we are to have a second chamber and that second chamber shall be representative solely of property, it is absurd we should pay from the consolidated revenue any salaries whatever to those who are the representatives of the propertied classes. If we are to have property representation, it is reasonable that property should bear the cost of that representation. But the existence of any class chamber is entirely opposed to the functions of a chamber of revision. I have been unable in my reading of Australian history to discover any serious difficulty that could occur or last for any time between the lower Legislative Chamber and an upper Legislative Chamber, where that Chamber was a nominee body. There is always the power in the Governor to increase the chamber by new nominations, and in that way the will of the people can always be obtained; but in legislative bodies with restricted franchises, not only is revision difficult, it is often impossible for public opinion to make itself felt, especially if there be no periodically recurring dissolutions. I urge the Government, so far as revising the franchise is concerned, to do it effectively and introduce a proposal for household franchise; and I would at the same time advise the Ministry that they should take into consideration, should that measure be defeated, the wisdom of proposing such an amendment of the Constitution as will lead to the establishment of a chamber of revision different from that which is existing at the present time. [Mr. Johnson : Is it necessary at all?] I am arguing on the basis of a second chamber being necessary; and assuming a second chamber be necessary, then that chamber should possess on the part of its members experience, knowledge, and capacity, greater than is possessed by those members whose work it reviews. If there were a purely nominee body, then in my opinion certainly legislative capacity in the lower chamber should be the sole passport to the upper house. There should be experience on the part of the members, before they are able to gain

admission to that place where experience is necessary if the work done is to be valuable. I do not desire to touch on any other matters dealt with in the Address-in-Reply. I shall be very glad indeed to deal with them when they come forward in the shape of definite legislative proposals, but I wish to urge on the Government the need of doing its best at the very earliest to place the finances on a more satisfactory footing. I will wind up as I began by stating that this question of finance is entirely above party politics. It is one in which party politics do not, and should not, intrude. All alike in the House should render the Treasurer what assistance we can, in discharging his onerous duties; at the same time I should like to point out that there is a large amount of misconception in the minds of the public particularly, and I think sometimes in the minds of members of this House, in regard to the cause and effect of State deficits. It will be well to bear in mind that the existence of a deficit in our Treasury does not represent necessarily depression in the State; that there may be a deficit when everything is prosperous in the State. A State deficit represents merely the fact that expenditure has been allowed to exceed revenue—nothing more and nothing less. Even a falling revenue in Western Australia does not necessarily imply depression. (Interjection.) The experience in each State I would remind members must be taken on its merits. We have to take the fact that our deficit has been doubly accounted for by the reduced Commonwealth surplus alone. [Mr. Johnson: By the "ifs" of the present Ministry.] I concede to members that in a community where the main source of revenue is an income tax, a falling revenue represents commercial depression, but where that is not the case, where there is no direct taxation, there can be a fall in revenue without depression, and there may be at times too an increase of revenue due to an alteration in tariff, for instance, without representing any actual increase or accession of prosperity. We are often inclined, I think, to entirely gauge our prosperity

as a State by the condition of our public finances, and if we do so we are very liable to err. We may have deficits in the most prosperous years if there should be difficulties like those which have occurred during the past five or six years since our connection with the Commonwealth. We have parted with our power to control what has been in the past our principal source of revenue. Having parted with that power, the nature of our tariff may be varied during the present financial year and our revenue necessarily must be affected by the change. If protective duties be increased, the Eastern Australian manufactures may be stimulated thereby and our importations from the East will be increased consequently. This increased importation though materially affecting revenue does not imply a reduction of prosperity, or an increase of depression on the part of Western Australia at all. I desire to say that because I think we should as far as possible disabuse the public mind that the mere existence of a deficiency represents a degree of instability, a lack of confidence, a degree of depression, on the part of the community. I thank members for the patience with which they have listened to my remarks.

At 6.15, the Speaker left the Chair.

At 7.30, Chair resumed.

Mr. W. B. GORDON (Canning) : As I recognise that during the debate it has been the desire of hon. members to curtail their remarks as much as possible to the point, I shall endeavour to follow that example. There is an unusual feature in regard to this debate, that is in regard to the complimentary remarks that have come from Opposition members who have spoken. Each and every one has complimented, some in a larger and some in a lesser degree, the administration of the Government; and of course in consequence of that, the criticism they have put up has been naturally weak. But, after all, can it be wondered at that the Government of the day, having taken in hand the works that they have, should be subjected to

the complimentary remarks made ? The works I refer to are the Pilbarra Railway, the Fremantle dock, the Kalgoorlie abattoirs, the lighthouses on the North-West coast and the stock-route from Sturt Creek to Wiluna. These are works which during my six years of Parliamentary experience have been considered every year. They are works absolutely necessary for the advancement of the State, yet each year they were passed by ; but with a revenue depleted as compared with that of years gone by, the Government of the day have taken these works in hand, works which have been put by by previous Governments because perhaps they were not popular with some people or perhaps not so good for catching the eye of the public, though after all more beneficial for the advancement of the State. So I say, after all the Opposition are perfectly justified in the complimentary remarks made in regard to the administration and the proposals of Government. The principal attack made up to the present is in reference to the loan the Government propose to make to assist in the establishment of freezing works in the North. The argument put up in opposition to that loan being made are first, that it greases the fat sow, and second that it will create a monopoly. In answer to the first, the Government are practically hawking this proposition, and it has not been availed of at all. [Mr. Bolton : It is all pre-arranged.] Of course, the hon. member knows everything ; he knew all about that railway matter, but it did not come off exactly as he thought. If the loan is taken advantage of, the Government of the day will be very fortunate. In regard to the second argument advanced, that it will create a monopoly, there can be no monopoly created in Western Australia in regard to its meat supply any more than there can be a monopoly created in regard to its wheat supply ; because in the matter of price the market to-day in beef or mutton is commanded by the London market on the one hand and by the market in the sister States on the other hand. There is not the slightest doubt about that.

Therefore, if there is no monopoly existing to-day there can be no monopoly if these freezing works are established. Members of the Opposition, of course, refer to a local monopoly. They refer to what they call the beef ring or the meat ring, which has never existed in Western Australia. I have been in the business for the last seventeen years and should know it. And anyone knowing the retail meat business in Western Australia will know that where one has survived the other 99 have gone down and turned insolvent over it. Some members talk about the meat ring, but they know no more about it than about other questions. If we do not establish these freezing works is it not natural that the sister States will eventually send as much as they can of their beef and mutton to us ? The primest meats reared in the Eastern States are sent to London, and beef is selling at 3½d. per lb. and mutton at not much more. [Mr. Scaddan : Where?] In London. Therefore, it is only a matter of time, when the competition is keen enough, that the price of meat will be reduced in the London market by other countries competing with Australia ; and so it is only a matter of time whether the other States will dump everything on Western Australia or not. As a matter of fact, to-day, according to the *Australasian*, lambs are selling in the East at from 15s. to £1 per head ; yet they are landing lambs here from Victoria and selling them at 10s. How is that accounted for ? It is simply that everything they can dump of an inferior article on Western Australia they are dumping here now. So without naming any of the advantages to be gained by the establishment of freezing works, I maintain that in self-defence we must establish them to fight the opposition of the Eastern States on its own merits. In this instance, unfortunately, the Government cannot offer any bonus, but they are doing the best they can by offering to pay pound for pound at a low rate of interest to endeavour to establish the industry. That is the only hope we have of competing against the Eastern States. I may mention the ad-

vantages that may accrue to the State through the establishment of these freezing works. In the first place, the importations of meat to this State have been mentioned by members who have previously spoken, especially the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) when he referred to the amount of foodstuff coming into the State to-day that is practically squeezing all our factories and doing away with the chance we have of competing with the Eastern States, that is in the cities. It is one matter on which I blame the Labour party, that when they were in power they made no attempt to reduce the cost of living. Probably now they realise that the Government of the day are taking the matter in hand they are a little bit jealous, and probably that is the reason for their absurd opposition. Last year (1906) we imported of meats, namely cattle, beef, and tinned meat, nearly £300,000 worth. We imported over three million pounds weight of tinned meats which are so essential to the extension of our goldfields, because they are the meats the prospector must have with him. And we imported in frozen beef 217,000 lbs., and of mutton and lamb over 4,000,000 lbs. There are also potted and concentrated meats; but these are questions which do not trouble members sitting on the Opposition benches, because they are earning their money so easily they do not care what they have to pay for meat. I worry about the prospector; that is the man I am worrying about. Of course, it is all very fine to laugh, and I could laugh at most of the objections the Opposition have taken in their attacks on the Government, but this is a mighty serious subject. In addition to saving this matter of £300,000 annually for these meats by establishing these freezing works, we will also assist the small holder. That is an argument put up not only by me but by others. The small man, if he wants money at all, is bound to sell his stock to the man who can afford to fill a ship, so that with the establishment of freezing works up there it will be only natural that the small man will have some encouragement, and will be able to get cash without having to go

on bended knee to the capitalist who can charter a ship on his own account; and he will get better prices. The establishment of these works will also tend to give encouragement to the men who are called the "fatted sows." It will also encourage them to improve the breed of their stock. To-day the market for beef in the North-West is very limited. We cannot consume all in Perth; and it is a matter of fact, and members of this House know it, that we have to send away overland to Queensland this year something like 19,000 head of cattle to be tinned there and brought round here and sold to the people on our goldfields. This is the position. It would be an encouragement to the small and the large holders of stock in the vicinities in the North-West where the freezing works would be built to improve their breed of stock. In the first instance, for export, they must improve their breed; then it is a well-known fact that they cannot send any animal down to market that is not in the finest condition when it leaves the station. The beast cannot stand shipping unless it is in the prime condition. In reference to the cows on a station from which beasts are bred for the market, in the North-West now these cows are bred from until they die instead of being sent down to market after they have become four or five years of age, and the breeding operations continued from younger stock. To-day, with the tinned meat we are importing, we are actually eating the old tinned stuff from the other States and they are improving the value of their stations and stock at our expense, as in place of the old cows they are able to produce cattle from younger stock. They are able to cull out the old cows and send them to the factories. There is no reason why the cattle in the North-West which are four or five years old and past their prime should not be treated in a similar way, and it should no longer be necessary for us to eat the poor tinned stuff which is obtained from the Eastern States; we get quite enough dirt from them already. There are plenty of good sound cattle in our North-West country which would make excel-

lent concentrated meat, but would not be suitable for sending down to the coast alive; they would serve to make good extract of beef up there and this we would be able to send to the prospectors in the back blocks who to-day have to take American tinned and concentrated meat, made from horses and goodness knows what. Is there any reason why, with Government supervision at the freezing works in the North-West, we should not be able to prepare there good concentrated meats for the prospectors of Western Australia? I hope the Government will be able to take a hand in this matter, and that outsiders will accept the Government's offer because, if they do, we shall be assured that under the proper supervision of a Government, and especially of that in power to-day, we shall have good tinned meat and good clean extract of beef prepared from the cattle which at present are in the North-West. [Mr. Angwin: Why not have it under Government control?] I have studied this question and find that we have quite enough Government control in the Railways and other departments at present without having any more. We do not want any more, and it is better to have a dash of the Government and a dash of the speculator. There is another question that has caused trouble in connection with the industry, and that is that the holdings are not properly stocked. There is no outlet for the stock in the North-West to-day, and there is no encouragement for a man to increase his herds; but if these freezing works are established and the markets of the world are opened to the squatter, then there is no doubt that he will fulfil the stocking conditions and the regulations under which he took up his country. If the Government do not force him to fulfil these conditions, then without doubt, someone else who is looking on will take action as soon as he fails to fulfil his conditions, and will secure forfeiture of the lease. The establishment of works will improve the position all round enormously. The Government will be able to put more inspectors up there and these officers will

see that the country is properly stocked, and altogether a better arrangement will be made for the control of the industry. Another advantage which will be gained by the establishment of the works is that there will be many more trading steamers running along the coast. These steamers will have plenty of refrigerating space, and the position will be very different from to-day, when a man who desires to send down ten tons of fish from the North-West or to consign a shipment of say 500 lambs, is unable to get the necessary space. In good seasons lambs and meat generally could be consigned down here in large quantities, and hundreds of people would gain the benefit. Fish and game could also be sent down and these articles I have not included in the £300,000 to which I have previously referred. All these articles and delicacies could be brought down and sent out to the prospectors in the back country. I like referring to the prospectors when talking to the members of the Labour party because they do need reminding, not only of their own interests, but of those which they are supposed to represent. As I say, the establishment of these works, with a consequent improvement in trading facilities, would benefit the coast line of Western Australia for hundreds of miles. Another advantage would be that the heavy mortality among the cattle shipped from the North-West would be done away with. Under the present system very great loss is incurred, and I do not suppose I would be very far wrong if I said that the meat lost owing to the mortality among stock and sheep shipped and the loss of weight during the voyage, would feed Perth for six months. Not only is great loss experienced through the decrease in the weight of the animals, but the meat when supplied is inferior in quality. The cattle shipped in the holds of the vessels at present are so heated that very many of them naturally contract heavy colds, which eventually develop into pneumonia. This occurs frequently, not only in the North-West trade, but also in the big shipments from the Eastern States. Recently there have been complaints as

to cattle from the North-West being in a very bad way. People might be reminded that pneumonia does not really get into the system, but is only an affection of the lungs which does not result in the deterioration of the meat to any extent; at the same time, however, it is just as well that these beasts should be sent down from the North-West in a chilled state. By this means there would be more nutriment in the meat, and it would therefore be much better from every point of view to establish the freezing works up there and bring the cattle down in a frozen condition. There is one other reason to be advanced in favour of the scheme; that is that it will mean the settlement of the tick question. With the opening up of the stock route by the Government from Sturt Creek to Lake Way, and the establishment of freezing works in the North-West, this great difficulty will be overcome altogether. Therefore it will be seen that by the establishment of the works several vexed questions, which have caused considerable controversy and trouble in the past, will be settled, and that we are going to have a cheaper and better supply of meat for the people of Perth and Western Australia generally. I am afraid that this is the very bone of contention upon which the Labour party are splitting in their dealings with the Government—the question of cheaper living. When in power that party never put forth one effort to relieve the working man and decrease the cost of his living.

Mr. Underwood: Do you say “no effort to establish the working man?”

Mr. GORDON: You know nothing about the establishment of work.

Mr. Angwin: The Government by their actions have relieved the men from work, because they cannot get any.

Mr. GORDON: You are like a lot of Muscovy ducks, in fact the Opposition form a poultry yard—always cackling.

Mr. Speaker: You must not reflect on hon. members.

Mr. GORDON: I withdraw the remark. There is one other department I would like to refer to, and that is the Agricultural Department, and I will make

special reference to the Agricultural Bank which is supervised by the Honorary Minister. Mr. Mitchell was very severely criticised for his action in suddenly selling certain stock from one of the experimental farms. It was said by certain members that this stock was sold in an underhand way, and that the prices received were not so high as they should have been. I contend that the action of the Minister was quite right, for, if any business man realises that any proposition with which he is connected is not a good one, he closes it down at once, and takes the least loss immediately. The Honorary Minister, when he found out how things were going, decided to shut down the establishment at once, and refused to allow any farther loss to be occasioned by it. [*Mr. Taylor:* The farm is not shut down now.] There is another item, that is with regard to the importation of certain cows for which from £8 to £9 was paid. In referring to this matter several hon. members suggested that the price was too low. Reference was made to the result of a visit to the Eastern States made by an expert from Queensland, but hon. members in referring to this matter knew nothing whatever about it, and they evidently know less about what is essential in a dairy cow. Experts all realise now that for dairying purposes the pure bred cows are not the best. They should be three-parts pure bred, for otherwise their constitution is not sufficiently sound. In last week's *Australasian* there was an article by an American protesting against the fact that people nowadays were utilising both for beef and dairying purposes cattle of too high a breed. He pointed out that this was not a payable proposition, and argued that the constitution of the pure stock was sound enough for either of the purposes indicated. An instance of this may be provided by the fat cattle exhibited at shows which, people will realise, are altogether too fat for eating purposes. Dairying cows are much the same, and the best milkers do not come from the pure breeds, but from the cross-breeds in nearly every instance. The argument has been advanced that the people here should

go in for nothing but pure bred stock. As a matter of fact anyone knowing anything about the position must realise that in a country like ours which is just beginning the dairying industry, where proper facilities are not afforded, where the most suitable feed is not obtainable, where the stock cannot be properly housed, it would be a great mistake to go in for pure bred stock. I do not know where the stock which we are importing is coming from, but I am pretty well certain that the man who is buying knows well what he is doing, and that the cattle which are to be imported here will eventually prove a very paying proposition for the men who purchase them. Of course all the arguments of the other side have been trivial; but the most trivial of all are those used in reference to the establishment of butter factories. Opposition members state clearly that to establish a butter industry we must have a butter factory in every centre, the factories being within a few miles of another. [*Member: Creameries.*] That is still worse. To-day in the Eastern States the trouble is, too many butter factories in the country districts. Take South Australia, where the farmer, provided with new separators, sends his cream direct to the metropolis. Sandfords are making the largest quantity of butter in South Australia. In districts where butter factories have been established, farmers are driving past them every day and sending their cream to Adelaide. That is only natural, because when the cream is consigned to one man who makes the butter, he makes it better and at less expense than several men could make it and the farmer gets the benefit. I do not wish to be too severe on members of the Opposition who talk about butteries and creameries, which they say should be established within twenty miles of every farm; but I should like to ask them, before they make remarks about such matters, concerning which they know nothing, to take up a number of the *Australasian*, which they can easily procure, and read the remarks on dairy farming, and they will not come here to make such absurd charges and accusations.

It is highly gratifying to me to be able to endorse many of the remarks made to-night by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish). I attacked him and his Government principally because they did not endeavour to make it easier in this State for those who were establishing factories, and those working in factories, and compelling against the other States. To-day his figures have proved that my accusations, unanswered until now, have been answered by the hon. member himself pleading guilty to my charge. If I could compliment myself for nothing at all I should compliment myself—[Interjections by Labour Members.] Well, that is a bit of Irish. Sometimes one has to digress from ordinary language to please members in Opposition. There are two things on which I pride myself: the advocacy in years gone by of freezing works in the North, and the advocacy of a policy which will eventually result in cheaper living for people in Perth. I hope the Government will continue as they have commenced, never minding the little criticisms of the Opposition. These have not done harm until now, and I hope the day is far distant when the Government will take any notice of such light charges.

[*The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.*]

Mr. J. VERYARD (Balkatta): While I can give a general support to the Government, there are one or two matters on which I intend to take an opposite view. I do not purpose to deal at great length with items in the Speech. The first paragraph that occurs to me is that referring to the opportune rains. Ministries in the past have always elected to take credit for everything which directly or indirectly benefits the State. I do not know whether the present Government have in any way induced the opportune rains, but I do remember that the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) was some years ago Minister for Lands, and that he retired from the position a little later in the season, I think, than at present, and possibly his retirement had something to do with the prospects of the farmers at that time, which were not good. However, we are all thankful

for the present rains which are a blessing to the State, and are disclosing prospects which we hope will be fully realised, knowing the full benefits that will accrue from a good harvest, which will assist our other workers and business people as well as our farmers. And those farmers who will this year be reaping their first harvest must, if they secure good crops, be encouraged to proceed next year with renewed energy to extend their operations; and remembering that success begets success, we all know good harvests will greatly assist the Minister for Lands in attracting settlers. I congratulate the Minister (Hon. N. J. Moore) on his successful efforts to induce land settlement. It is gratifying to all who have been in the State for many years to know that we are at last about to grow sufficient wheat for our own consumption. This I think is about the first year in which we have reached that stage. Some preparations have already been made for the exportation of wheat. The Agricultural Bank will, by assisting the farmers, undoubtedly play a great part in future land settlement. Most members know that for several years I had some experience in the flour trade, though not as a miller. With my experience of Western Australian wheat I know that it is equal to the best grown anywhere else: but unfortunately, the milling in my time did not do justice to the wheat grown, with the result that the bakers, instead of using local flour as they would have done in other circumstances, were compelled to import a large proportion of the flour they used. This undoubtedly had a serious effect, by preventing farmers from extending the areas under cultivation. But now that we have up-to-date milling and a large number of mills established, bakers are and have been for some time past willing to use nothing but the local article. It will be well if other people in the State patronise local industries to a larger extent than in the past. The other evening the member for Katanning (Hon. F. H. Piesse), replying I think to some remarks in reference to a State flour mill, clearly defined the relative positions of miller and farmer. Before I heard his speech

I thought there was something in the remarks from the other side; but I think the hon. member has made it clear that State mills are needless. The price of flour is not regulated by local bodies, but by the ruling price in the East and in the old country; and it is impossible for our millers to alter that price. Last year I supported the land tax, and will naturally support it this year. Last year the Bill was practically rejected in the other House. The great trouble was over exemptions. If the Government bring in a Bill with exemptions, and the other House see fit to reject it unless the exemptions are thrown out, I would urge the Government to accept the Bill without exemptions. Opposition members have clearly demonstrated that the workers do not require exemption for their small blocks. If that is so, we can let the exemptions go. The farmers are to my mind amply assisted by the numerous railways through their districts, and I think can easily afford to pay the small tax that will be demanded. I am sorry I cannot see my way to support the establishment of freezing-works in the North. I have heard the remarks of the member for Canning (Mr. Gordon), but my impression is the matter has not been sufficiently considered by the Government; they have not made sufficient inquiry as to whether the effect of establishing such works would or would not be beneficial. I have made some slight inquiry, and a person who has an intimate knowledge of the cattle trade both in the North and the South advises me that the scheme is at least five years in advance of the time, and that if the freezing-works were established, something like a thousand head of cattle would be needed every week to keep the works in operation. If that is so, I think it would not be long before the surplus stock would be frozen, and then the machinery must of necessity lie idle. The freezing works would be of one advantage: they would get rid by export of the surplus stock. That would mean simply higher profits to the capitalist, and thus he would profit by the exportation, and would also profit by getting a higher

price for meat sent to our own coastal markets. [*Mr. Gordon*: What about markets in the other States?] Notwithstanding the hon. member's assertion, frozen meat is not of the same value here as fresh meat. I do not know whether the hon. member is fond of frozen meat, but I am not, and I think the majority of the people of the State would prefer to pay a higher price for fresh meat than have to eat frozen meat. The stock would have to be sent away as frozen meat from the State, because the consumption here is so limited that it would result in an increased cost to the consumer by limiting the supply of fresh meat. It seems to me the scheme can only have one effect, that of benefiting the pastoralists in the North. If frozen meat works were likely to be a paying proposition the pastoralists of the North are sufficiently wealthy to build the works themselves, and I am sure would do so if they thought the industry warranted the building of them. If the Government are determined to go in for a scheme on the pound for pound basis I would urge on the Government not to give the money away as a subsidy or a grant, but to retain it as a share in the concern so that the Government would be represented on the board of directors, and thus be able to see that the small pastoralists are properly treated. My object is to give the Government a controlling power with a view of seeing that fair play is dealt out to all those who would use the works. In lieu of the freezing works I suggest that the money should be expended in another form. In the Eastern States they have markets, abattoirs, and freezing works near the capital, and if the Government were to erect markets, abattoirs, and freezing works, say at North Fremantle, as near the North Mole as possible, I feel certain that these would result beneficially to the pastoralists as well as to the consumers. The pastoralists would be able to ship their stock to the markets with the advantage of obtaining cash for their sales, and it would lead to an open market being established for the butchers, who at the present time have to deal from five wholesale people, and in that way

the small butcher cannot get on. The markets would have a tendency to reduce the price of meat, in the metropolitan districts at any rate. I think the advantages of freezing works at the port would be great, as they would give an equal opportunity to the trade to buy. This is not so now. In the second place if the market were glutted it would give the owners an opportunity of putting their cattle through the slaughter yard and freezing works, and the meat could be exported at will. The small pastoralists could then secure a ready market for their cattle, and there would be a great advantage of exporting the meat from the port of Fremantle where deep sea ships would be close alongside to take it away. My opinion is if the freezing works were established in the North-West, in a short time they would become nothing short of a white elephant. I strongly urge on the Government to abandon the proposal in this respect, and if necessary I would urge the Government to subsidise shipping with a view of giving the small pastoralists better facilities for getting their stock to market. At present the small holders are not treated as fairly as they should be, and I am given to understand that they have to wait until opportunity arises, and when the large stock-owner has only a limited supply on hand, then only will he take the small man's stock. [*Mr. Angwin*: Run their own steamers is the best.] I would not object to that either. The proposed works would mean that the consumers would have to pay their portion in taxes of the £35,000 to assist people who are well able to take care of themselves. In addition the consumers would have to pay a higher price for their meat. With regard to the franchise proposal for the Upper House, I am pledged to a reduction from £25 to £15; but on farther consideration I think we could dispense with the money qualification and reduce the franchise to a household qualification, for I do not think the Upper House at all times represents the will of the people. [*Mr. Bolton*: You are too democratic for that side.] I also think that if household suffrage were

granted it would have a good effect on the Upper House. I prefer a very liberal franchise with a view of retaining the second House, which I think we need, and I think the term of six years for which members of another place are elected is long enough. An Electoral Bill is to be dealt with this session. The object of this important measure is to secure the purity of the rolls. I would like Ministers to consider the advisability of compelling the people to vote. The history of elections in the past shows that we do not get more than 50 per cent. of the people voting at elections. This is not satisfactory to the country, and something should be done with a view of compelling people to exercise their undoubted privileges. With regard to the amendment of the Mining Act, the object of which is to give greater security of tenure, I think the Government should be very careful in any extensions on this line, but I do not profess to know anything about mining, still I have noticed with considerable regret the number of accidents that have occurred since last year, several of them resulting fatally. Legislation should, if possible, minimise the accidents. [*Mr. Johnson* : Check inspectors.] I do not know if these accidents are the fault of the supervision or the fault of the law, but something should be done with a view of affording more protection to miners. [*Mr. Johnson* : We gave you an opportunity last session, and you voted against it.] There is one thing I wish to compliment the Minister for Mines on, and that is his being prepared to consult with the Leader of the Opposition in regard to amendments of the Mining Act. I think that question is large enough to be considered from a non-party point of view. With regard to the liquor traffic and local option reform, this matter has been before the Legislature of the State for a number of years past, and I hope that the present Government will successfully carry the matter through this session. It has been said there are something like 40 members pledged to local option in this House, and if that be so I trust these 40 members will see that an Act

is framed worthy of the object in view. I am in favour of compensation. I know there are reformers who are opposed to compensation in any form, and they urge that the license being only an annual one, consequently the holders have no right to compensation. But it is recognised that once a house is licensed the license cannot be forfeited unless for a breach of the Act, and I have no hesitation in saying that no bench of magistrates would dare to revoke a license without some breach of the Act being committed. My idea is that licensees should be fairly treated by some form of compensation. The Premier is not prepared, I do not know if the House is prepared, to give cash compensation, but there is a tendency to give 10 or 12 years' notice. I think that term a lengthy one, and if reduced to eight or ten years it would give satisfaction. The Attorney General has come in for a good many remarks from members on the Opposition side, and I think he is likely to meet with some from this (Government) side if the report of his speech made at Kalgoorlie some time ago is correct. The hon. member declared himself in favour of opening hotels on Sundays, of exempting licensees from fines, and he was also in favour of fining unfortunate drunkards every time there was an opportunity. We have heard it repeatedly said that the Daglish Government had a "mark time" policy and the present Opposition say that the Moore Government have a "stand still" policy ; even that name in this respect would be too good for them in this case. Many years ago in this State hotels were opened on Sundays. The people fought hard for years and succeeded in getting the hotels closed on Sundays, and I think it is a backward movement to try and bring forward the question of re-opening hotels on Sundays. The only excuse I can see on behalf of Sunday trading is that a few drunks are locked up and fined on Monday morning. It seems to me that that argument would hold just as well if the holders of grocers' licenses were to sell illicitly on Sunday, and customers were fined on the Monday. One might just

as well argue that the grocers should have their premises open on Sunday. I do not think the fact of a few being fined on a Monday morning for having been drunk is any excuse whatever for the opening of these hotels on Sundays. To my mind the suggested exemption from fines is cruel. The publican having no restrictions would lay himself open to enticing the poor unfortunate man with a thirst to his hotel. He would not be fined, but the unfortunate man would, and the real culprit in the case would go scot free. It seems to me that the publican and his customer may in a sense be likened to the receiver and the thief; for if there were no receiver there would be no thief; and consequently if there were no publican selling on Sunday there would be no drunks. The people in our State have the unenviable reputation of being the largest consumers of drink in the world. I do not know whether it is the object of the Attorney General to give facilities to increase the supply or not, but I certainly think the House should endeavour to reduce the average rather than extend it. The liquor reform party have been looking for a long time for an Attorney General with a backbone to administer the laws of the State as they stand. I am not referring to the present Attorney General, because others have been just as slow, but we want one who will enforce the laws as they are. Had they been enforced in the past we would not have heard so much of the cry for local option. I think that if the practice that after the third offence at all events publicans should have their licenses forfeited were strictly followed out, in the near future there would be no Sunday trading. When the three mile limit became law some years ago the State was not in the same position as it is to-day. We had no hotels between Perth and Fremantle and none between Perth and Guildford, so really the three mile limit did not apply. Now we have hotels all along the line, and it seems to me that the limit might very well be increased to eight or ten miles. At the present time, so far as I can ascertain, there is no fixed scale for Government grants

to roads boards. The Minister for Works informed us the other night that the grant was £45 to the £100 expended by the board. [*The Minister for Works: The reverse way round.*] The railway proposals of the Government deserve every consideration from the House. I pin my faith to the policy of having one Railway Commissioner, but his powers should be curtailed so that the Minister for Railways can exercise sufficient authority when required. With regard to the late Commissioner, I think it is fair to say that in my opinion he deserves the appreciation of this House for the efficient state to which he brought our railways and for the conscientious manner in which he discharged his duties. To my mind, he tried to carry out his duties on business lines, but the policy of successive Ministers for Railways somewhat interfered with him at times, and I believe he has attempted to screen one or other Minister by taking the blame on himself. Whoever the new Commissioner may be, I do not think the State need stint itself in the matter of salary. It may be much better to get a gentleman to fill the position at £3,000 a year than another at £500. We want the most expert man and the most experienced we can get. The Commissioner will be entrusted to look after a revenue of many hundreds of thousands of pounds, and it naturally follows that the position must be filled by a man of extraordinary ability for the work. Some comment has been made on the Fremantle dock. Last year I supported the scheme, and of course I shall support it this year. The site seems to me a most convenient one for shipping. However much the nature of the country may lend itself to the construction of a dock, I think the shipping deserves great consideration at the hands of the Government. My opinion is that the Fremantle Harbour will not be complete without a dock and that we should have one erected at the earliest opportunity, which I hope will accommodate the largest steamer afloat. I am very glad the Government in reply to a question of mine the other day informed the House

that they intended to amend the Factories Act. I hope that the report of the select committee on sweating will have favourable consideration in this matter. The report of that committee was unanimous, and as three out of the five members of the committee were supporters of the Government, I hope the committee's report will have a very favourable effect on the amendment of the Act. The work of the select committee was an extensive one. The investigations led to the examination of a large number of witnesses and to the inspection of a large number of shops and factories about Perth and Fremantle, and the recommendations were based more or less on the expressions of employers and employees who were examined. Perhaps the chief recommendation was that two workers instead of six should constitute a factory. I attach a good deal of importance to that, because I think the larger employers are not fairly treated in this matter. They are open to the inspection of factory inspectors and have to provide better accommodation for their employees, which all admit is proper, but the employer of one or two hands can do just as he likes; he is not subject to inspection, and can give what wages he likes, and may carry on his business to the detriment of the health of those working for him. Consequently the committee strongly recommended that the number should be reduced from six to two. I wish to most emphatically protest against one matter. Recently the Commissioner for Railways acted in a manner at which I was surprised. He departed from one of the principles adopted by the present and past Administrations for some years past. I refer particularly to the clause in all contracts which specifies that the contractor shall give the standard rate of wages. That clause has been omitted in a recent contract in connection with the railways. I do not mind acknowledging and even admiring the sentiment which caused the Minister to take the step he did in omitting this clause, but I do not think sentiment should govern matters of this sort. It is said that good intentions lead to a certain direc-

tion; I hope the Minister will be able to avoid that direction. It is acknowledged that once a principle is departed from it is very difficult to say where it is going to lead. The contract I refer to was in reference to the tender for laundry work for the railways, and the object was to allow the charitable institutions of the State to tender for that work. While one can admire the object, one cannot agree with wrecking a principle which has been carried out for so many years. I should like to remind the Minister and the House that these institutions are supported by the public and by Government grants. It is unfair to tax the people for the purpose of granting money to these institutions, and at the same time deprive poor people of their work, because that will be the result. It is unfair to the employers of labour who are under the Factories and Health Acts and have to pay decent wages. I hope the Minister will reinstate this clause in the immediate future. I do not think he has given the matter consideration as he should; otherwise I feel certain he would not have done this. At the expense of being thought uncharitable, I say that in my opinion these charitable institutions are wrongly named. In my opinion they are not charitable institutions but exist only for church profits; consequently they are church enterprises and not charitable institutions. I do not mind admitting that the inmates get some benefits from them, but that is not the object; the object is to get profits for the different churches. There are several denominations carrying on this work now. If these institutions were of a charitable nature only, I fail to see why thousands of pounds should be spent in machinery and plant in connection with them and why the authorities should solicit for farther trade; because in doing so they solicit for work more than the women can do and consequently they seek work for the machinery; so that they are doing the work by machinery instead of by women, and therefore to my mind this is not the proper work of a charitable insti-

tution. If the charitable institutions are allowed to tender and succeed in obtaining the contracts, as they must do having no wages to pay, a number of poor women will be put out of employment, and I am afraid in some cases will be forced, owing to lack of work, to go into those very institutions. I hope the Minister controlling the department will take steps immediately to try and remedy the existing state of affairs. These institutions are not under supervision such as those that come under the Factories and the Health Acts. The authorities who manage the institutions pay no wages, and there is no knowing what might happen to the health of the inmates, considering that no official visits are paid to them by representatives of the Government. I am not pointing to any particular church in referring to this matter, for there are several denominations carrying on the work; but the public would, I am sure, be more satisfied when they make contributions to these institutions to know they were fully justified in granting aid to properly managed institutions. The Imperial Parliament has just passed legislation dealing with such institutions, also several Australian States have acted similarly. I think I am correct in saying that in this State they were governed by Acts until comparatively recently. While I filled the position of mayor of Leederville, I had an opportunity of visiting the Home of the Good Shepherd. The mother-superior showed me all over the premises, and it was a revelation to me to see the manner in which the establishment was conducted. Everything was arranged as nicely as it could be, and the inmates seemed to be quite satisfied with their position, while the mother-superior was proud of the institution, and had reason to be. By the manner in which I was shown round the establishment by that lady, I feel sure this institution at least would welcome any supervision on the part of Government officials. All the charitable institutions would benefit largely by being brought under those two Acts, and I think therefore the Minister con-

trolling the department, when amending the Factories and Health Acts, should bring forward an amendment dealing with them.

Mr. T. WALKER (Kanowna): I must admit that I rise with a considerable sense of depression, having listened to the debate that has preceded. While I am compelled to admire the excellent matter brought forward by some speakers I must admit I have felt that there has been very little, if any, real earnestness in the course of this debate. The speech delivered by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) seemed to me, apart from its excellence in construction and in the arrangement of the figures, to be more or less a patting of the Government on the back, and a going, so to speak, one farther. It was a policy speech which seemed to me to carry out that speech outlined at Subiaco, which appeared to say, though not in the exact language, that, after all, the Government have nothing particularly wrong with them; that they are doing everything that is right, that they only want one or two others to help them, and that if we could only get that species of government—the Government as it is with its imperfections, improved by the perfections of one or two chosen leaders from this side of the House—then the country would be a “Mother Goose-land” in perfection. Then, if that were so, all that was required in a Government would be obtained. I cannot take that stand. Between this side of the House and that there is a great line of demarcation. And first of all wherein that line of demarcation lies is in the point of earnestness. This Government, by the acts it has committed, by the course it has taken, has shown itself to be one of the most insincere of Governments that ever held the reins of office. It has not the skill even to disguise its failures properly. In order to provide a cloak for its conduct it has even placed falsehoods in the mouth of His Excellency the Governor in the Speech which he delivered at the opening of Parliament. “It had been my intention,” he said, “to call you together

earlier in the year, but owing to the absence of many members of Parliament from the State, and the necessity for Western Australia being represented at the recent Conference of Premiers, I deemed such a course impracticable." That is clearly a false statement put into the mouth of His Excellency, and it makes the Governor look especially ridiculous in view of the Speech which he delivered at the close of last session. In those words I thought I read the statement of the Attorney General in that of His Excellency the Governor when he said, addressing the President and hon. members of the Legislative Council, "My advisers regret exceedingly that your honourable House did not see fit to pass the Land Tax Assessment Bill, as they are convinced that it is absolutely necessary that additional revenue should be obtained through this medium of taxation." And then, addressing also Mr. Speaker and the Legislative Assembly, the Speech goes on, "Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly—As my advisers are of opinion that farther consideration should be given to the question of taxation at as early a date as possible, it has been deemed advisable to hold another session in the early part of next year, and I therefore now prorogue this Parliament to Friday, the first day of February, 1907." Thus, by making His Excellency say these words, the Government cause him to look ridiculous. Instead of opening in February the session has opened in July; and what a paltry excuse it is. Is it a just excuse, a truthful excuse? What members of Parliament were away? Who were they that were away in February last? [Mr. Taylor: The Treasurer was in Japan.] Did he wait till February before he went away? No; no sooner had this House closed than the luggage of the Treasurer was being carried to the wharf to be placed on the steamer for the North-West. Did the Treasurer go to Japan in spite of the fact that taxation was urgently necessary? Did he go in spite of the fact that he was the Minister who had charge of that measure? Did he go in spite of the fact that it was really he who had

put in the mouth of His Excellency the Governor the words to which I have referred? Surely they were the Treasurer's own words, more so than the words of any other Minister, because it was he who was responsible for the new taxation that had to be introduced so that the revenue might meet the expenditure. He had charge of that measure, and therefore they were his words put into the mouth of the Governor. Yet, no sooner did the House close than he was off. Either he defied Cabinet and this House, or he told a falsehood to the House and the public. I cannot say which. Did the Treasurer know when he left that there would be no session in February; and did the rest of the Cabinet know it at that time? What kind of a farce is it that they have been acting? Just before the time for the meeting of the February session, Government supporters were brought together in order to discuss the question. Are the Government playing with this Parliament; are they playing with this country? Are they playing with their duties and their responsibilities? [Mr. Johnson: Why should they not do so; they have a big enough majority?] Are they fit to hold office for one moment? Are they fit to rule this land? I say no. No Government are fit to rule the land who will not take responsibilities. The Government are put in office to take those responsibilities, and they should be ready to bear them. The Treasurer, who was in charge of these land tax proposals, goes away on the stormy deep or to flowery Japan, having left the country the moment the House rose. Was that a proper way to deal with the affairs of the country? He knew, and all knew, that there would be no February session; and they arranged, in order to hoodwink the people and blind the electors, to summon a meeting of their supporters to decide whether or not there should be a February session after all. I am not quite sure that they did summon them; but in a sort of round-about way, by conduct which I was going to describe in words which would be unparliamentary, but which I will call a sneaking and cowardly method, the Whips went round suggesting

that members should approach the Government and tell them not to meet in February. That is the conduct of sneaks and cowards.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The hon. member must withdraw the word "coward."

MR. WALKER : I withdraw the word "coward." Anyhow, I submit it was not the course of a dignified Government, an honest Government. The charge I make against the Government is that they are not sincere, and that they are governing the country by means that are despicable considering the high position and the high duties which they have to undertake. The farce was played, caucus met in due course and told the Government that they had better not go on with that session because the Treasurer was away in Japan, Dr. Hackett was away in Paris or somewhere else, and therefore it would not be wise to go on. It makes one's blood boil with indignation when one reflects that all this great farce was played by the Government. Are they fit to carry on? Is there not a day in your memory, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when a Ministry would have scorned to permit itself to be dictated to in that manner as to the policy it should pursue? Do you not know of Ministers who would rather resign immediately than have to suffer the indignity and the dishonour of being told exactly when they should hold a session of Parliament, what measures they should bring forward or refuse to introduce? What is the whole spirit of government? What is its whole purpose? Why have there been attached to it in the course of history so many men with the highest sense of honour? Certain persons are entrusted with the duties of responsible Government because of their knowledge, their experience, their courage, their high sense of honour. For these reasons they hold responsible positions under the Crown, as administrators. But where now are any of these qualities? Where is the knowledge, the courage, the sense of honour? What governing are Ministers doing? What administration are they carrying out in this country? Every Tom, Dick, and Harry can get his railway, his freezing

works, his butter factory, or his milking cow from the Government. That is government! Ministers told by everybody and from every side just what they are to do, and earning the honour and renown of doing what they are told! Is not that degeneracy? No wonder people outside are sick of government, sick of Parliament, sick of everything connected with this institution, which stinks in the nostrils of the people—why? Because those on the Government bench, I hesitate not to say it, are absolutely degrading it in every respect, with all this breach of promise, this absolute falsehood, this deception of the people. I do not object at all to the statement that it was wise and necessary for the Premier to go to the East—I admit it may have been: but there have been occasions when we could meet in accordance with the solemn pledge to the public, when we could meet without the Premier. We could have an Acting Premier, as we have had again and again before, in cases of emergency and of necessity. [Mr. Scaddan: We could not have done without the Attorney General.] Of course not. But again, if that reason were valid, if the House could not meet and all business must be prostrated because the Attorney General was in Brisbane, and the Premier keeping him company, if that were really the reason, why did not the Government have the courage to say so, and stand by and take the responsibility? Why had they again to arrange another meeting of the caucus, a little crew of people who said, "Now you are all right. We will see that you do not get any blame; we will take it all for you; we will let you off, and you need not have that meeting. Go on with your picnics." That is how government is conducted in this country. [Mr. Stone interjected.] The hon. member interjecting was one of those who gave the Government *carte blanche* to go over the country anywhere and everywhere. He said in effect, "You need not hold a meeting of Parliament; I can stay at home in Geraldton till you come back, and then we shall start." That is government—that

is how the country is managed! Ministers have no sense of their responsibilities. They take neither blame nor praise, but just call their friends together and say, "What do you want, boys? You shall have it." That is all the government there is. [Mr. Stone: Come across and stand in.] I hope I have not yet sufficiently sacrificed my manhood to be among such crawlers as those who would support Ministers who do dishonest acts every day of their existence. The Government say in His Excellency's Speech that the country was scarcely ever so prosperous. That is another deception. I fully agree with the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) that much of the deficiency, and of the depression both amongst the general public and in our Treasury, is due to circumstances over which the Government have no control. I will admit they are harassed by the fact that our inter-State duties have been taken from us; and here I must altogether join issue with some members who have said that the loss of these inter-State duties has made no difference to this State. It has made a vast difference. The money collected through that channel was circulated amongst the public, paid mostly in wages, utilised in the construction of public works. Our workmen were benefited by the receipt of these duties, and the country itself was thereby helped along. But now the money is not circulated in the employment of labour, or through any other channel, for the advancement of this country. It is not in the pockets of the workers, in the sense intended by some speakers; it is simply pocketed by Eastern merchants or by middlemen. We get nothing cheaper in consequence. The money is taken out of circulation, and that is the point. A country is made prosperous by the money in circulation; money paid week by week to the workers, passed on continually. This makes a country prosperous, that is contented and happy. The more work there is and the more wages circulated amongst the populace, the more generally contented and pro-

sperous is the country; and whatever adds to the circulation of wages adds in that degree to the country's prosperity. True in one sense we are not a whit worse off than we were; but we have been deprived of the circulation of that money, and thus the people are suffering and depressed. But I want to know what the Government have done, and what they propose to do, to counteract that. As more than one speaker has shown, we have not only lost our inter-State duties, not only lost our tariff from the port, which was a means of raising revenue, but we are increasing our indebtedness by farther borrowing; our interest on loan year by year is increased, and as was shown the other night, our sinking fund must as time goes on absorb more and more of our revenue; and what do the Government propose to counteract all this? I am now speaking of direct Government proposals. What is there besides the land tax? [Mr. Gordon: Tommy Walker.] There is, thank goodness. There is somebody to tell the Government what they are, and what their Whip is too. What do they propose? Absolutely nothing. They know from their Estimates prepared last year and delivered to the House, that the land tax will by no means meet the deficiency, by no means equalise revenue and expenditure. They know that the country is going to the bad. I do not say that the country will sink in consequence; because, fortunately, Western Australia has such resources that in spite of bad government and mismanagement and foreign aggression it can still hold its head up; there is yet a possibility of greatness before this country. But the Government are doing nothing to give the country a start, an opportunity. Forsooth we are told there have been certain economies in the Lands, the Works, and other departments. True, there have; but what sort of economies? Economies that ought to be a disgrace to any Government. I wish to draw the attention of members to one of the economies that affects more than one hospital in my constituency. Here is a letter addressed

to me from the White Feather hospital:—

"It is not very often I write to you, because I recognise that you have very little time to spare, and so trouble you as little as I can. Now I have something to lay before you that greatly affects the institution which I represent, so will get in early. The Principal Medical Officer notified me that on and after the 1st July, 1907, 15s. in the pound would only be paid in future on moneys locally collected for the hospital, and that we should have to reduce salaries of staff to the Government standard, and that it would be advisable to take only subscribers who were not earning more than £4 per week. Now it means that by cutting our subsidy by 25 per cent. it will cripple all subsidised hospitals. Councils and roads boards have been reduced but not to the extent that we have, while they still give the pound for pound in the mining industry. Hospitals should be the last institutions to suffer from the pruning-knife. As regards cutting nurses' salaries, we have to pay higher than the Government for the services of probationers, because we are not at liberty to grant them a nurse's certificate. If a subsidised hospital certificate was recognised, then we would be able to obtain probationers at Government salaries. I hope you will state these facts to the Government."

The Broad Arrow hospital has something very similar to say; and that reduction affects every outlying hospital in the country. [*Mr. Hudson*: No matter how far back.] No matter how far back. The Broad Arrow hospital serves an immense district over thirty miles in length, extending from Orabanda in one direction to Bardoc in the other; and it cannot keep open with a smaller subsidy than it has been receiving. Such districts are now doing their utmost in order to maintain their hospitals. They are compelled to resort to entertainments, to paid canvassers, to all kinds of honourable methods to get the necessary funds from the people. And how necessary are the hospitals no one knows who

has not visited the mining districts, where as we have heard from the reports from time to time read in this House, the number of accidents, even of fatal accidents, is yearly increasing. And yet, at a time when this fact is made evident, the Government are taking credit for economy; and this is how they are economising, by cutting down hospitals, shutting up places where the sick and the lame are admitted for treatment. Such are our administrators and their administration. What sort of administration is that which says, "Now we cannot save money on freezing-works, but we can on the hospitals. We will cut down every hospital by 5s. in the pound; we will thus save £35,000, and will make a present of it to the meat ring in the North-West." That is the kind of economy the present Government are effecting. They cannot look after their sick and lame, but can buy cast-off cattle and send an hon. member of this House and his brother away to the East to buy such cattle in Victoria, presumably to start the dairying industry. No money for the sick, no money for roads—indispensable necessities under any good form of Government; but for the rich cattle kings, £35,000 at a dose; for the farmers, the special friends of the Government, acquainted with the Minister for Agriculture, all sorts of luxuries in the shape of cast-off cows from Victoria. I cannot understand this species of economy on the one hand and the utmost extravagance on the other. The Minister for Works (*Hon. J. Price*) is smiling. He has taken an enormous amount of credit to himself in a self-laudatory speech he delivered the other night, in which one would imagine he came right down from Apollo, perfect in wisdom, understanding, and capacity. No Minister was equal to him. Let us have a specimen of the way he administers the affairs of the country. About 12 months ago I asked the Minister to survey a road from Broad Arrow to Orabanda, a rising township some 30 miles away from Broad Arrow. The character of the field there may be judged by a long report on the mines appearing in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of the 12th July; two columns of a splen-

did report on the mines in operation there. The people required a road in order to reach the main railway direct, to get their gold to sale. I asked the Minister to survey the road; he did survey it and left it there for 12 months, and nothing was done. I reminded him that the road was no good merely surveyed; it required to be made; and he promised to send an officer to the district. This is the report of the officer:—

"In reply to your memo. of the 21st ulto. I beg to state that on my last visit to Broad Arrow, I interviewed the officer in charge of the police station, also the constable stationed at Broad Arrow, from whom I obtained the following information. The road is surveyed and under the control of the board. The length of the road is 25 miles; and with the exception of two small mines about seven miles out of Orabanda, Orabanda is the only place served by this road."

The Minister for Works: Don't hurry over it; read it slowly.

Mr. WALKER: Does the hon. member want me to take time over it? Does not the hon. member see that the gravamen of my charge is that he sends an officer to survey a road, and the officer asked a policeman? That is the position, and he wants to cut down the expenses.

The Minister for Works: Do you dispute the statements there—the facts in connection with the population and the traffic over the road?

Mr. WALKER: The Minister makes a glorious sermon over it. I will read him another sermon in reply, and I will read to him as slowly as he likes. The report goes on to say:—

"The number of residents in the district is fifty, and the traffic on the road does not exceed two or three vehicles per week."

The Minister for Works: Is that correct?

Mr. WALKER: I will tell you whether it is. I am reading this in which we are told that he robs the poor

little soul we have there. The report goes on:—

"The road right through is in good order. The constable states that he does the journey on a bicycle easily in two hours, and that one of the owners of the local battery does the same journey on a motor bicycle under the hour. There is not one portion of the road that cannot be ridden over by bicycle, therefore there cannot be any urgent necessity for expending money for such small traffic.—F. Palmer, District Supervisor, P.W., A.D., Kalgoorlie."

I have carefully read every word to the delight of my friend. This letter is written also from Broad Arrow, but it is written by the mayor who lives in the place and does not need to ask a "bobby." I wrote to the mayor, for I wanted to know if the "bobbies" were trustworthy, and he wrote to me as follows:—

"Yours to hand, together with Mr. Palmer's report. Mr. Palmer's information is not correct and the police constable whom he obtained the information from is a new man in the district, and knows but little about the district. In any case I have doubts if all the information was obtained from the said officer, because at the last licensing court it was sworn by not one but several Orabanda people that the population was between 80 and 100 people. Since then it has at least increased 20 per cent. The report states farther that the road is a surveyed one, and that the said constable can ride over it to Orabanda in two hours, and that the road is under the control of the board. Now all the above statements are false and absurd. First, the present road is not a surveyed one; farther, it is but a bush track with three miles of heavy sand."

The Minister for Works: You said it was surveyed, yourself.

Mr. WALKER: I said a road was surveyed. The present road is not a

surveyed one. The letter goes on to state :—

"Second, the constable never rode over it, but over a bicycle pad cleared by the owners of the small shows mentioned in the report, and does not go within miles of the track until it reaches the said small shows. Farther, the entire track is not under the control of the local board. The portion on which Orabanda stands is in the Coolgardie board district, and that board has decided to clear their portion half-chain wide to the board boundary. The facts of the case are as follows :—Eighteen months ago the council asked the Government to survey a straight road to Orabanda. This was done; but the local roads board objected to the route, so the matter rested until now. The road surveyed is 22 miles, and all we require is a grant to clear our end half-chain wide, not to make it. All the rates there are to be got are in the Coolgardie end. So you see our request is a reasonable one."

The point in reading the letter is to show that this officer and the Government never made the slightest investigation beyond going to the constable who knew nothing about it, and who absolutely misrepresented the matter to the department—not wilfully, I admit, but because of his ignorance. He went to the wrong man to seek the information. Why not go to some other person having more responsibility than to a constable? That this is not an unimportant district as represented by the policeman to the surveyor is proven by the long list of the number of mines that are served by this particular road. I do not want to weary the House to-night by reading all to them, but there is this testimony in one day's issue of the *Kalgoorlie Miner*.

The Minister for Works : Your information does not square with that of the Mines Department.

Mr. WALKER : Why ? Because I get mine from those who have some knowledge and are responsible people in the district. You get yours from the policeman. Whoever heard of this

country being run by the "hobbies"? But that is what the Government do. It only shows us that the Minister has no sense of what is expected of him and what his duties are.

The Minister for Works : Why not give the names of the mines ?

Mr. WALKER : Why did not the Minister say to this man, "You have not done your work properly ; that is not how to guide me or protect me in saving the money of the country. I want better officers than that." That was the action the hon. member should have taken, but I only use this as a specimen why this great country is not looked at. It is too far from Perth ; too far from the Minister's little office ; too far away from the dock at Fremantle.

Mr. Gordon : Oh, yes ; he ought to have gone up there himself.

Mr. WALKER : What does the hon. member want me to do ?

The Minister for Works : Give the names of the mines served.

Mr. WALKER : I do not know why the hon. member should ask for that. But I will give him the particulars. Here they are :—

"The Orabanda mill only crushed half time during the month of June, owing to repairs necessitated by the breaking of the cam shaft. The following crushings were put through :—H. Ramont, 28 tons for 8oz. 12dwt. ; Reay and party, 26 tons for 56oz. 17 dwt. ; Abbott and party, 50 tons for 29oz. 7dwt. ; Cross and Hamilton, 17 tons for 7oz. 15dwt. ; Hilder and party, 17 tons for 7oz. 3dwt. ; O'Neil and party, 25 tons for 20oz. 19dwt. ; Cassin Bros., 45 tons for 33oz. ; Tierney and party, 51 tons for 33oz. 10dwt. ; Orabanda G.M., 532 tons for 208oz. 8dwt. The Orabanda, the principal mine in the district, is making a start with the erection of a winding engine, poppet legs, etc., and intend hauling from their main shaft on the self-tipping skip system so successfully adopted on the Golden Mile and elsewhere. The Lady Evelyn is looking particularly well. The Never-Can-Tell"

Need I go on ? The hon. member wants to know what mines are in the district.

The Minister for Mines : There are four leases there.

Mr. WALKER : I do not want to weary the House with these details. I give this only as an instance. The Minister carries out his little pettinesses, his little ways, without any comparison whatever. It is boys' play, boys and policemen managing the whole of affairs. That is why I say there is no sincerity, no earnestness, no capacity. The Government are without the sense of honour that ought to guide them, and without the capacity that ought to rule the country and its mines. I say the Government are foolishly extravagant on the one hand, extravagant in their manipulation of the Agricultural Department, in their assistance to, or rather their promise of assistance to the rich in the North-West; and they are absolutely negligent to those who are the pioneers, who are working for this country and making the country, opening out new country, making it possible for this country to be great in the future. bringing forth its possibilities—to those the Government are absolutely negligent. I say farther, the Government are making no provision whatever to stem the tide of adversity that is proceeding, to stop the inroads of trouble that are upon those who are here. I say more in connection especially with the freezing works. There is a smack to me about it which I can hardly characterise as being in the interests of the country itself. This specious speech of the Minister in charge of the Agricultural Department would have us believe this money is simply a loan, safeguarded, protected, interest to be returned, conditions attached to it, therefore there can be no harm, and it is only for the purpose of establishing an institution, a freezing works, an industry in the North-West, purely for the benefit of the meat-eaters in Perth and, if we are to take the member for Canning, the prospectors upon the fields. I want to point out that we have had too much of this "helping people for the good of the people," apparently under terms; too much of giving all kinds of gifts of the best inheritance of this land to the favoured few, guarding

them apparently with all kinds of protection, but giving to these few the absolute mastery in the long run. I submit that this is nothing else but helping monopolists to become stronger in their monopoly; that if this money be lent to the rich people who do not need it to help them to get these Government, or these *quasi* Government, or, strictly speaking, these monopolistic freezing works in the North-West, then good-by to every small settler all through the North-West. To an hon. member of this House, not to myself, a letter was written not very long ago, from the North-West, dealing with the powers of certain parties in that district. The writer speaks particularly of the small settler. After dealing with the number of Asiatics allowed now over these ports wholesale and with the fact that it is no longer a white country—Broome and elsewhere—he says:—

"There is another matter which is assuming large proportions in this district, and that is the land question. Three people, Game, Davies, and Emanuel, own by lease or are interested in four-fifths of the whole of the leases in this district. The small holder is being gradually squeezed out. This year not one single head of cattle has gone south from any of the small settlers. The trade is entirely in the hands of Forrest and Emanuel, and so long as they can avoid it they will not purchase from the small man. It is no use anyone or combination of small men endeavouring to send a shipment down south, as they could not sell them. Their only course will be to send them overland and sell them on the road, which means a big expense and risk. Before long, unless some other means of disposal of stock is found, the small squatter will be wiped out. Then wages will be cut down, and the condition of the working man here will be about that of the Chinaman."

He goes on to the effect that the small men have to collect their small herds together and send them to Queensland; and these are the herds that are going to Queensland that necessitate these

freezing works, because the small man with his small herds cannot send down his stock by the steamers that are already owned by the capitalists or the monopolists. The small men are absolutely freezeed out. If they want to get rid of cattle at all they must send them overland ; and now, in addition to the shipping monopoly, in addition to the monopoly of the lands they own there, the Government propose, in the name of the workers of this country, to give them £35,000—that is what it means—to help these men, already enormously wealthy. We cannot have closed our eyes to these enormous buildings going up to the decoration of the terrace of the city, the finest street and thoroughfare we have ; sky-reachers, enormous buildings, built from what ? From the profits of the cattle trade of the North-West. They could buy whole suburbs with the profits of the cattle trade of the North-West, but while they can spend their hundreds of thousands in the city of Perth we are told that they are so poor they cannot club together and furnish £70,000 to start a work for their own profit, for the increase of their own riches in the North. It is absurd ; it is ridiculous. Is that the kind of Government we have, that cannot distinguish between what is necessary, and what is merely “greasing the fatted sow ?” That is the position we have come to ; there is no discretion, no discernment, no judgment, no responsibility ; and what astonishes me is that there are so many who sit idly by, dumb, and allow it to go on without saying one word in murmur or complaint, as if it was a course that should be taken in this country. It emphasises the fact that this country is rich, and is growing in spite of what the Government have tried to do to strangle it in every step taken. And in like manner there have been similar acts of lack of judgment, or of what may be termed dishonesty or something else in every department, and every time in the protection of the rich man. That it is which makes the distinction between the Opposition side and the Government side. Join together, with the Government side always standing up for

and helping the monopoly every time as against the poor ! I have no objection to seeing a man grow rich or earning enough for his old age and family by honest industry, by developing the resources of this great country, but I do object to the whole powers of the State being turned to the assistance of the man already rich to the down-crushing and oppression of those who are struggling merely to live, who can have no claim to attaining wealth, or even that prosperity that gives comfort to old age and to the declining years of life. There is a distinction. Join with those who helped the Combine in the last great struggle of wealth against the wage-earner ! Unite with them in happy peace, soft soap and butter them in every speech that is made when the facts are so transparent ! I acquit the Premier altogether of any complicity in the course of conduct adopted by the Combine to obtain, by the assistance of this Government, employees for the timber mills in order that the workers there, Western Australians, might be crippled in their struggle for a living wage. What evidently was the object of the Combine to bring from that part of Europe that speaks another language not the English, men who were willing to work for a low wage, thinking, in contrast with the wages the workers receive in their own country, that they were to receive the wage of the rich in this, as was put forward by what I cannot otherwise describe than as a Government agent, an employee, either by contract or on time work, or by results, as you like, of the Agent General's office in England ? We cannot dissociate the Government from these contracts. In one way they work out, and let me clearly trace it over. There was a contract to bring out assisted farm labourers. For whom ? No disguise at the other end—for Millar Bros., for the timber mills, for the Combine. The agency of the Government—of course, in their ignorance ; the Premier tells us he knew nothing about it. But what are they doing on those benches, knowing nothing of what is going on, of what is transpiring in their own Gov-

ernment, under the aegis of their authority ? What are they doing to allow this to transpire ? This agent, employed by some means or other, went to Norway and Scandinavia, and these contracts were made, duly drawn up and signed ; and what are they for ? For passages to Western Australia with the promise of immediate employment. Employment where ? On the saw mills, one or other of the saw mills. That is the contract, and all these saw mills are owned by the Combine. In order that these may be more effective upon the imagination of the Scandinavians and Norwegians, here are pictures sent with the soliciting circular, every picture a part of a saw mill, the jarrah timber, portions of railway lines, a great log being dragged on one of the trucks. I do not know whether there is a picture of Teesdale Smith, but these are all taken from the Combine's mills, and sent over to Europe, distributed in Norway and distributed in Scandinavia. Correspondence took place between intending immigrants in Norway and Scandinavia and elsewhere, and this agent of the Agent General in London contracted to get them a passage to this country. At whose expense ? At the expense of the Government. [*Mr. Underwood* : Of the people.] True, at the people's expense ; but the Government, acting for the people, pledged the people under these false pretences to bring these men out to the country. The money has to be paid back. Who are the collectors ? Here, on these papers, we have one Government agent in London—the agent of the Government, however they may disguise it ; and who collects the money ? Here on the papers is the signature, "From Millars' Jarrah Company on account of money for the passage." How do they know to which mill to go ? Here the Government step in with our Government bureau, that grand institution to help the working man to find a billet. These men get there straight away. They know where to go. The Government are utilised at every step. They go to our Government bureau, and are granted a free passage, and their destination is named

up to the mills, to the Combine—passing through Government hands all the way ; the Government agent in London, a Government passage on the ships, the Government Labour Bureau, and Government railage to their destination ; but all in the name of the Combine. Now, I do not care how the Government may explain this. Here is a fact that this is going on, has been. It is not an old thing ; we cannot take it back to two or three years ago and say it belongs to the Labour Government, as they are so fond of doing. As a matter of fact, this occurred in 1906, last year, just over six months ago. I believe the member for Murchison has promised the Premier shall have charge of the papers dealing with the matter, so that he shall be able to look them up ; but there are dozens more, and these men are willing to testify on oath that they were misled, misguided, wronged, and badly treated, and robbed by the Combine, plus the Government. I do not wish to re-read the letters read by the member for Murchison, but does anyone tell us that this kind of thing could obtain without the Government's sanction or knowledge in any way or form ? It was their own agent in London, but the Government made no inquiries as to the tickets they had to pay for on the ships that the immigrants came in, no inquiries into that, no inquiries into what became of these men when they arrived here, no inquiries as to what they were doing, no inquiries. Is this a farce ; is this another pretence of government, or is it that dead kind of government that keeps a fair face to the public and allows all kinds of corruption and wrongdoing to exist behind its back and takes no notice of it ? Is that the state of government we have now ? I will not to-night review at this late hour the course taken in the recent prosecution where apparently, at all events, the Government stood side by side with the Combine in trying to prevent women and children receiving sustenance that out of generosity of their comrades had been subscribed for them. I will not go over all that ground now, but will say that if there were that pre-

tence of settlement, how was it that we know that only a few months ago, in last October, at the time these assisted immigrants were coming out, when the Government were bringing in men to make them blacklegs in order to try and defeat the honest labourer at the mills, the Government made practically a grant of something like £16,000 by the reduction of their sources of revenue to this company, so that wages might not be touched. No sooner did the company become possessed of this money than they came down with very striking reductions in wages. Then we have the Treasurer going to Busselton, and telling the people there, in his magnanimous style, that the Premier had settled the strike. How was it done? It was done by once more allowing the Combine to conquer, by again bowing the knee to this institution and saying, "We will give you another £16,000; please accept it." That is how the Government settled the strike. They had to pay this octopus so that the people might be allowed to live and have food to eat. The Government are proud of it. It is in points like this that this side of the House opposes the other side of the House. The Government stand by the rich, lend or give them thousands of pounds, make railways run for them, use the lines for their benefit and give them the whole of the country, so that they can crush down humanity. I feel keenly on this, for I cannot blind my eyes to the fact that the last great struggle made by the Combine was one to reduce wages generally throughout the country. If it had been possible to compel men to work and live on 7s. 3d. a day in those isolated districts, so far from all the pleasures of city life, what would become of the city workers, of our miners, of our workers for wages throughout the country? It would be one more step backward and, Mr. Speaker, is it wrong to imagine that the humblest worker of this land is a mortal, possessed of all the divine attributes of the noblest mortal, that he has the desire to improve, that he has the ambitions and ideals to improve himself and to enjoy his life and, in short, to have all that man needs? Is there any law of nature, any divine law, condemn-

ing a mortal to be the slave of another utterly? Must there be some who perpetually toil from light to dark, who sleep comfortless and foodless; are there some condemned to that state of existence while others are doomed to enjoy £3,000 or £4,000 or £5,000 a year, as the case may be? Is this natural equality, natural justice? Is this nature in its proper order? And are there to be men in this community who shall use the laws and the Government, place the wealth of the country and every agency of civilisation in the power of those who desire to crush the man who works for more than 7s. 3d. per day? The men who were being assisted by the Government with all this power were the men who were trying to reduce wages, and who made no secret of that fact. This is not the only thing we have to fight against. There are many other examples of a similar kind. Monopolies are allowed by the Government to be created. There are the cases of the firewood companies on the fields, railway lines and wood-cutting areas. We hear perpetually of the hardships that are inflicted upon the wood-cutters and the workers in that industry, of the cruel treatment they are receiving and the fact that the owners are making it difficult for the men to earn a decent living. Monopoly in the worst form exists; and the Government are taking no action to prevent it. All these people are being assisted by the Government; but it is the other side whom we are championing; it is the worker who, were it not for this party and for this section of the House and community, would be trampled upon without anyone to defend him or to plead his case. No difference between that side of the House and this! The difference is as wide as the world itself; it is the difference between the rich and the poor. Let me now say that the same tendency was exhibited in another instance which I cannot help but say I regret. This occurred in a far off part of this country when a certain man of good connections happened, I will admit by accident, in the impetuosity of his conduct, to kill another. He had to go on trial; he was excused by the court at Leonora, I think, and was let off.

Another phase of the question developed and the man was then liable to be tried for murder. The Attorney General was then in charge of the justice of this country: but, instead of exercising his independent opinion and doing what was necessary, what was incumbent upon him, he took the opinion of the magistrate, and, in spite of certain people having offered recognisances for the accused to appear at his trial, the result was that this distinguished individual escaped, and was allowed to escape—there was no disguising it—whereas he should have been prosecuted. I shall ever be on the side of mercy; I have no desire to pursue or hound that man down; but there is no gainsaying the fact that he should have been proceeded against, that it does not alter the duty of the Attorney General. Let us look at the position of the Attorney General in this matter. In addition to holding that high office, he is a member of the firm of Keenan and Randall. As Attorney General of this State it was his duty to prosecute, but the prisoner, or the accused, went to the firm of Keenan and Randall and it was they who defended him. The same man, Keenan, the Attorney General of this State, prosecuted—Keenan, through his partner and firm, defended. I do not know how that position can be defended; it seems to me most ridiculous. Either the Attorney General should have had the courage to protect his friend by resigning from the position of Attorney General, or he should have lacked that cupidity which influenced the firm to defend the same man that the Attorney General was prosecuting. Can there be honour in that sort of thing? A great many things are excused in law and lawyers, and the hon. member need not point at me, for there are lawyers and lawyers. The position with regard to the Attorney General in this matter is very clear. Either he should not have defended the accused or he must not prosecute as Attorney General. He could not do both. Probably the Attorney General will say that he did neither personally, but that through his firm he did one and through his position of Attorney General the other. He cannot get free from his position in that way. We can have no

faith or confidence in justice if these sort of things are allowed to continue. If the hon. member wants an example of what others have done in almost similar circumstances, let him carry his mind back to the history of New South Wales, when a certain Minister of the Crown, Mr. Wright, of the firm of Wright, Heaton, & Co., simply because there had been some slight misrepresentation of freightage upon the railway lines over which the Minister was carrying goods for his firm, and he was accused of it in the House, felt the sting so deeply that he resigned his position from the Ministry. Perhaps his servants were alone responsible, but it affected his honour, and he resigned from the Ministry at once. If the Attorney General states that this cannot be taken as a parallel, let him remember what took place in 1893 on the 7th December, when the adjournment was moved in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly for the purpose of drawing attention to the then Attorney General, Mr. Barton, now one of the High Court Judges, and Mr. O'Connor, also now a High Court Judge, in having accepted briefs as counsel against the Crown in the case of Proudfoot v. the Railway Commissioners. On that occasion some of the noblest and most eloquent remarks ever made by Sir Henry Parkes were uttered by him in his charge against the then Mr. Barton and Mr. O'Connor, the latter of whom was a member of the Upper House at the time. What was the result of this debate? Attention was drawn to this on the 7th December, 1893, and the next morning Mr. Barton was no longer Attorney General, neither was Mr. O'Connor Minister for Justice. They resigned there and then. That was done for accepting a brief and was a mere monetary matter. Here is a case in which justice is concerned, where it is absolutely necessary that the escutcheon of justice should be kept clean. I would like to know to whom we are to look for the protection of justice if not to the Attorney General. In this State we have no Minister for Justice. We have no higher court, as it were, no Chancellor to look down upon us and take action in the event of failure or

fault on the part of underlings in administration. We have to depend solely for the purity of justice on the Attorney General, and can anyone in his sober sense, in any fairness or justice, say that the hon. member in the present instance took steps for the protection of justice? The course he took was in the case of a distinguished citizen, who escaped; but would it have been the same if it had been an ordinary mortal? Would he then have taken notice of the magistrate's opinion and delegated his duties to that gentleman? No, he would not; in fact in other cases he has taken the opposite course. Can we but suspect that there was favouritism shown towards that man? Could justice be done when the one man was both prosecuting and defending? Is that an example that we should expect to receive from a gentleman holding that high position? It is that sort of thing that we complain of. Whatever similarity there may be and things in common between this side of the House and the other, we do not believe in screening the rich and powerful and in bounding the poor to death. That is the difference. We can never work with them so long as they neglect their duties in that manner. It is on these scores that I am opposed to the Government. In every department what do we see? I ask members, how many of them have sent letters concerning the wants of their constituencies to Ministerial departments, and never heard anything of those letters? I suppose there are on both sides of the House members who have had that experience. Could you get your wants properly attended to? You try to do business in the Lands Department, where we hear much of the economy now being effected. Go there, and see how you are attended to. It is marvellous if you achieve your object, which may involve ten minutes' work, in the course of ten months. That is the position—indifference, negligence, slothfulness, disregard of public haste and urgency. Ministers are content to float along, helpless individuals who have never known the slightest taste of responsibility, clinging to the raft of Gov-

ernment, sailing along as happy as kings. "Do you want any information?" ask a policeman. I belittle myself by these allusions to their littleness. My desire is to see this country get the full benefit of the immense wealth it possesses; but that benefit it can never get whilst it has these "old men of the sea" upon its shoulders; while it is harassed and strangled by those who profane or misuse so-called justice, those who squander the wealth of the country upon the rich and neglect the needful works which give food and happiness to the poor; whilst we have men whose littleness is circumscribed in the views, expressions and conduct of the Minister for Works (Hon. J. Price). We want men of courage, of capacity, of understanding, men who have not to crawl to their supporters, and say to them, "Please, may we go picnicking?" ; men of fine honour, who, if they fail in their promises, will themselves resign without being told to do so; men who feel the touch of dishonour like the sting of a wound; who shudder at the prospect of going wrong, and realise what it is to assume the responsibility of administering this country; men who are alive to what the country requires. But the present Government are merely drifting, driven out of their course by every passing wind that blows. They have no policy of their own. They not only borrow money, use borrowed money without any prospect of repayment, but borrow even their ideas, borrow their policy, borrow every plank in their platform; they are a Government of worthlessness, incapable in the extreme. True, they have one or two capable men, like the Treasurer (Hon. Frank Wilson); but for what is he using his capacity? to hoodwink the rest of the country. We have an able man, I admit, in the Attorney General (Hon. N. Keenan). But how does he spend his ability? in getting off men who ought to go through the ordeal of justice, whatever comes of it. I cannot say we have an able man in the Minister for Works (Hon. J. Price), because in him we have a man who—I do not wish to be personal, but I question whether his ideas run beyond

the Fremantle business establishment from which he came. He has not the capacity to grasp the needs of this country, and that is proved by every step he takes. But with what little capacity Ministers have—it may be all thrown in—their want of sincerity, of honesty, of activity, of genuine purpose, condemns them as utterly unfit to rule this country for another day.

On motion by *the Treasurer*, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at five minutes past 10 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 24th July, 1907.

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Bills, 1s. : 1, Police Force Consolidation; 2, Police Offences Consolidation; 3, Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment; 4, Workers' Compensation Amendment; 5, Public Health Consolidation	393
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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, By-laws of the Municipalities of Perth and Mount Morgans; 2, The Jetty Regulation Act, 1878—Amended Regulation and Schedule of Charges for Broome Jetty, Carnarvon Jetty, Port Hedland Jetty; 3, The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, 1902—Return of Members of Industrial Unions, etc.; 4, By-laws of the Municipalities of Coolgardie and Leederville; 5, Agricultural Lands Purchase Act, 1896—Amendment of Regulation 8, Land Purchase Board; 6, The Cemeteries Act 1897 and 1899—(a.) Midland Junction Cemetery—Balance Sheet; (b.) Karrakatta Cemetery—Balance sheet; (c.) Cookernup Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (d.) Onslow Cemetery—By-laws; (e.) Fremantle Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (f.) Coolgardie Cemetery Balance-sheet; (g.) Wagin Cemetery—By-laws; (h.) Nunggarra Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (i.) Southern Cross Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (j.) Kalgoorlie Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (k.) Cue and Day Dawn Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (l.) Upper Preston Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (m.) Lennonville Cemetery—Balance-sheet; (n.) Kelmscott Cemetery—Balance-sheet; 7, Land Act, 1898—Timber Regulations; Broome Common By-Laws; Regulation restricting cutting of Timber on State Forest at Mt. Monger; Regulation restricting cutting of Timber on State Forest at Malcolm; Guano Regulations; Timber Tramways—Rates for carrying firewood; Regulation for prescribing fees in connection with leases and caveats; Timber Regulations.

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STANDING ORDERS REVISION.

Farther Report.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL brought up a farther report of the Standing Orders Committee for the present session in regard to the revision of Standing Orders relating to public business, presented to the House July 4th.

Report received, and ordered to be taken into consideration in conjunction with the previous report.

BILLS—FIRST READING (5).

1, Police Force Consolidation; 2, Police Offences Consolidation; 3, Conciliation and Arbitration Amendment; 4, Workers' Compensation Amendment; 5, Public Health Consolidation. Introduced by the *Colonial Secretary*.