

tial to development, we must take a tighter grip of the financial control of an institution such as this. The rather limited activities of the State Savings Bank and the rather promiscuous, shall I say, activities of the Industries Assistance Board make it all the more essential at this juncture that Parliament should face the position and establish an institution that will meet our present and future requirements and prove of great value in the opening up of the undeveloped parts of the State. The next item to which I would like to make reference, and it is one that I know is very close to the hearts of most hon. members, is the question of the redistribution of seats.

Mr. Teesdale: Hear, hear!

Mr. LAMBERT: The hon. member seems to be lulled into a state of temporary insensibility when this subject is mentioned.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Do you know what the proposals are?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, reasonably, and I know they are not the hon. member's proposals.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: How do you know what they are?

Mr. LAMBERT: If I do know, I am not going to tell the hon. member. All the same, I think we are likely to approach the question in quite an impartial way.

Mr. Teesdale: Certainly, certainly, and most decidedly.

Mr. LAMBERT: I do not suppose there will be the slightest party feeling exhibited, nor will there be any selfishness displayed when we are dealing with the question. There are many other matters of minor importance referred to in the Governor's speech.

Hon. W. J. George: There are only about three items in the whole lot.

Mr. Pantou: You growled last time because the Speech was too long.

Hon. W. J. George: I have never heard such a speech.

Mr. LAMBERT: My juvenile friend would like to see it overloaded with intended legislation.

Hon. W. J. George: I should like to see something in it.

Mr. LAMBERT: Before the session closes no doubt the hon. member will have his wish gratified. May I be permitted to say in conclusion that all hon. members realise that in this big State of ours we have a wonderfully rich territory and I am confident that if there is exhibited the same

spirit that has been displayed in years gone by, a spirit of unselfishness and helpfulness in the interchange of views, so pronounced between the Government and the Opposition --if that continues and we stand shoulder to shoulder in our effort to bring about the development every one desires to see, we shall attain the goal that all are anxious to achieve.

MR. MARSHALL (Murchison) [3.46]: I formally second the motion so ably moved by the member for Coolgardie.

On motion by Hon. Sir James Mitchell, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. P. Collier—Boulder) [3.47]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday next, at 4.30 p.m.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 3.47 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 7th August, 1928.

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

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

Financial Agreement.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I notice that a question standing on the Notice Paper in my name is not that of which I gave notice and I understand that you, Mr. President, have exercised your authority under Standing Order 88 to alter my wording. I had intended to put the question as I gave

notice of it, but I have looked into the matter and I find it would be quite irregular and out of order for me to take that course. As I would be the last member in this House to infringe the Standing Orders, I shall not do that. As we know, in the absence of a Standing Order, we are governed by the practice of the Imperial Parliament, and it has been quite clearly laid down in a number of instances I have looked up that it is quite irregular and unparliamentary for a member to read words that Mr. Speaker has struck out of a question. Authority for this may be found in the House of Commons "Hansard" of the 2nd November, 1882, and there is also further authority that the Speaker is an autocrat in such matters and that there is no appeal from his decisions regarding questions tabled by members if he considers they are contrary to the rules of the House. That was laid down, according to "Hansard," on the 14th March, 1893. But as obviously the question now on the Notice Paper is not my question, and as the answers to it could not convey to me the information I really seek, I propose not to ask the question. I take it that it is open for any other member to ask the question as it appears, but I refrain from asking it.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Second Day.

Debate resumed from the 2nd August.

HON J. J. HOLMES (North) [4.40]: I desire to support the motion moved by Mr. Fraser and to congratulate him upon the vigour and straightforwardness with which he attacked various matters affecting the welfare of the community. I do not admit that he was right in some of his criticisms or some of his proposals, but it appeared to me that for a young member of this Chamber he adopted a rather reasonable attitude, and I hope the equitable surroundings of this Chamber, which have already had some influence upon him, will in due course help him to realise that the atmosphere here is different from what he has been accustomed to.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Not so pure.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The atmosphere to which Mr. Fraser has been accustomed

is one in which matters are viewed from one standpoint only. Fortunately for this country, there are men in this House who view each question from every standpoint and try to read equity into everything. Although the hon. member may have come here with the intention of supporting the abolition of the Legislative Council, I am satisfied that though his intention may be, as it were, to curse, it will not be very long before he remains to praise. Before he has been long in this House he will realise that we attempt to represent rightly all sections of the community, and that, I think, is the duty of this House.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Then you make a bad attempt at it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: His appeal to what he regards as the conservative members of the House, namely Mr. Lovekin, Mr. Miles and myself, to assist him in his difficulties is nothing new. It is only an instance of history repeating itself. The red rag business and the so-called communism as my friend would understand it, is all very well in times of prosperity, but the history of the world points to one fact, and one only, namely that when in trouble it is possible to get the difficulty solved only by appealing to the conservatives. I understand that Mr. Fraser, from his appeal to Mr. Lovekin, Mr. Miles and myself to help him in his difficulties regarding the State Implement Works at Fremantle and sundry other questions with which I shall deal later, has arrived at that conclusion. The Governor's Speech is quite a modest document. It does not contain much apart from figures that have been supplied to us from time to time. There is a reference to the Government's intention to introduce a Redistribution of Seats Bill, which is long overdue and undoubtedly an important question. I think I can speak for a majority of the members of this House when I say that if there is anything like equity in the Government's proposals there will not be much difficulty in getting the measure passed through this House. I am pleased to note that at last the Government realise the injustice of the present distribution and propose to take steps to remedy that injustice. Another matter referred to in the Governor's Speech is the prevention of profiteering. If an equitable proposal be put up for the prevention of

profiteering, including everybody who can be charged with profiteering, I have no hesitation in saying the measure will receive every consideration in this Chamber. But no Bill providing against profiteering will appeal to me unless it contains provision for dealing with those men—and there are numbers of them in this country to-day—who take the employers' money without even attempting to give service in return. That class of profiteer is, to my mind, a menace to the country—the man taking the highest wage, professing to work the shortest hours, and doing the least he can for his money. He is a class of profiteer that does more injustice to Western Australia than any individual I know. Not only does he rob the employer of the money paid, but he puts up the price of commodities on the unfortunate public as the result of failure to earn what he is paid, many of the public not being in a position to pay the increased prices. The profiteering measure will have to cover all classes in order that there may be some sort of equity in it. Those are the only two really important Bills mentioned in the Governor's Speech. Presumably we have got back to the time-honoured custom of including in the Speech all the proposed legislation of a session. That was the practice when I first entered politics, and it continued for many years. When the Governor's Speech was read, reference was made to all the legislation proposed to be introduced during the session. We seem to have got right away from that, and on the eve of the close of a session all sorts of Bills are put up, unexpected and ill-considered, and we are asked to pass them in the last hours. I hope all the legislation it is proposed to introduce during the current session is included in the Speech read by His Excellency the Governor.

Hon. J. R. Brown: It is not.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Mr. Holmes is a great optimist.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Scant reference is made to the Financial Agreement in the Speech, and even that reference is not in accordance with fact. It reads as follows:—

The Federal Government's actual financial contribution to the State has been fixed for a period of years.

Nothing of the kind has happened. Assuming that at the referenda the amended Constitution is approved of, and assuming that the Financial Agreement is subsequently accepted by all parties concerned, even then

there is nothing lasting about the matter at all. The arrangement can be altered by the Federal Parliament without the consent of the people once the amendment of the Constitution has been agreed to. What does happen is this: if we agree to the amendment of the Constitution we for ever give up powers we now possess, but there is no guarantee either that the proposed Financial Agreement will ever be ratified by the Federal Parliament, or that the arrangement will last for eight years or 58 years. Consequently I claim that that reference in the Governor's Speech is not in accordance with fact. Then we have the statement of the Premier and Treasurer referring to the July deficit—

Mr. Collier in making available the financial return stated that although the amount of the deficit for the month was much greater than that for the previous July, it must not be forgotten that the payments from the Commonwealth had been withheld on account of the State's having been obliged to send the Financial Agreement Bill to England for the Royal assent. All payments to the States by the Commonwealth under the Financial Agreement had been suspended pending advice that the Bill had been assented to. Payment of the monthly instalment of the special grant of £300,000 per annum to this State, known as the disabilities grant, although in no way affected by the Financial Agreement, had also been suspended. Had these payments been received, the position would have been approximately the same as last year.

Mr. Lovekin gave notice of some questions in regard to this matter. The House knows why the hon. member did not proceed with those questions. I am at a loss, however, to understand, and would like the Chief Secretary to make clear, why the Federal Government have withheld from this State £25,000 per month which they are entitled to pay under an Act of the Federal Parliament. It does not rest with the Federal Government; they have to carry out the Federal Act; and the Act in question provides that Western Australia shall receive £25,000 per month for a period of five years. By some means or other the Federal Government have got behind that Act.

The Chief Secretary: It is an official blunder.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: I am glad to hear that, because if it was anything but a blunder the people of Western Australia would begin to wonder what sort of an autocracy had been installed in the Federal city of Canberra. Since it is an official blunder, I shall leave it at that. I note that

the Speech contains no reference to proposed construction of new railways. That, perhaps, is an important omission. When we discussed, last session, the Financial Agreement and the handing over of our borrowing powers to the Federal Loan Council, I said in the course of my speech that when we reached that stage hon. members would find themselves up against a difficult problem when clamouring for railways. At a later date Mr. Kempton reverted to that matter and said that I had stated this country had reached the limit of railway construction. I never said anything of the kind. We have not commenced railway construction in this State yet. What I did say was that hon. members, when clamouring for railways, would find that instead of merely having to get Bills for their construction through this Parliament, they would have to depend on the Federal Loan Council, and that if the Council said the money was not available, there would be no railway. Judging from the absence of any reference to new railways in the Governor's Speech, I should say the Federal Loan Council have already taken the matter in hand and said, "It is no use your authorising any more railways; you had better start out to find the money for the railways already authorised." While it is said that some of us have been viewing things from a wrong standpoint—we do not think so—I fear hon. members representing various parts of the country will find the chickens coming home to roost, and sooner than anticipated. My own impression is that Western Australia will get its first shock at the end of 1931, when the disabilities grant of £300,000 annually for five years ceases.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Who said it would cease?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If it ceases.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Just now you said it was already suspended.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: If the hon. member had listened, he would have understood. The Chief Secretary has already told us that the suspension was an official blunder. So we have had two blunders—one by the Federal authorities and one by the hon. member. Sir William Lathlain asks, "Who says the £300,000 grant will cease at the end of the five years?" We know Sir William Lathlain enjoys a closer confidence with Mr. Bruce than do we. He knows when Mr. Bruce comes here, and he says, "Yes, Mr. Bruce." But whether Mr. Bruce has de-

clared that the £300,000 grant is to continue after the expiry of the five years I do not know. I shall be agreeably surprised and more than pleased if it does continue. I do know that South Australia at present is putting up a case, not for £300,000, but for £750,000 annually; and I am sceptical as to what may happen at the expiry of five years when our disabilities grant of £300,000 annually is to cease. I hope Sir William Lathlain will tell the House and the country what he knows about the further proposal to carry on the grant beyond that date.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Tasmania is also clamouring for a grant.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: No sooner is the ink dry on the signatures to the Financial Agreement, and no sooner has the Bill been declared to be reserved for the Royal assent, than we have this statement from Mr. Troy, the Minister for Agriculture, which was published in the Press on the 18th July—

Mr. Troy says the serious point about the position in Western Australia—

That is, dealing with unemployment—

—is that these people—

That is, Southern Europeans—

—are securing work which should go to Britishers. We are under contract with the Imperial Government to absorb 15,000 migrants a year, and the Minister stated that on no account can we go back on this agreement. The continued arrival of foreigners, who are easily able to find employment, is making the Government's task in providing for British people all the more difficult.

We see the position the State is in. We have no control over migration, Southern European or any other; but we have, according to that statement, undertaken the task of accepting 15,000 migrants yearly and finding employment for them. Not only have we to find employment for them, but we have to provide them with all essential services. The Commonwealth will collect the usual Customs duties on the requirements of those migrants, but the Commonwealth's responsibility in respect of those people will cease when they are landed on the Fremantle wharf. It is this State's responsibility to provide not only essential services, but employment, which at the present time is in great request. From my standpoint I made the position quite clear, that we cannot develop this country on half a million of money derived

from indirect taxation. With one-third of the territory of the Commonwealth, we cannot possibly find employment for all on that half a million from indirect taxation. However, I do not propose to labour that question as I have already dealt with it at length on other occasions. We come next to the statement regarding group settlement. The Speech sets out that the reclassification is practically completed. That is a matter that has been delayed far too long. In December, 1923, I secured the appointment of a select committee of this House, afterwards to be converted into a Royal Commission, to deal with this problem. I could see at that time the difficulties with which we were faced. In the following year the Royal Commission prepared a report, but as with reports of most Royal Commissions, little or no notice at all was taken of it. The fact remains that some of us who were on that Commission were able to visualise what would happen. Over four years have passed and we are now advised that the reclassification has been practically completed. The Commission reported four years ago that there were people on the Peel Estate who, even if they knew their job, would never succeed. I do not blame the present Government for what has happened, because the expenditure on that scheme was embarked upon before they came into office. They should however, have got busy at an earlier stage, and not allowed the money to have been squandered and the people driven off their blocks. I have no wish to weary the House by going into details, but without doubt, the most important question before this country is that there has been an expenditure of seven millions of money there with very little result up to date.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Seven millions is it?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: During the last session of Parliament I quoted from a statement made by Mr. Troy, the Minister for Lands, who then said that the total was over six millions. The Chief Secretary asked me afterwards whether my figures were correct. I referred him to "Hansard" which showed that they were not my figures, but those of Mr. Troy. Since that time I know there has been considerable additional expenditure. In the report that the Royal Commission presented over four years ago, there was this comment—

If within a reasonable period of time, the State by the risk of its capital through the

instrumentality of the individual, is able to provide for its needs from its own soil, and to add to the number of the people on its huge area (approximating 1,000,000 square miles), a limited loss should not be regarded as indefensible, but, rather, might be accepted in the light of the goodwill price of the business which has been established.

That was a warning to the country. The Commission's report was never published in the "West Australian" although I pressed for its publication. We spent days and nights in trying to bring the facts before the notice of the public of Western Australia without attempting in any way to ruin the credit of the country, or without alarming the people at the other end. The report went on—

The foregoing, however, must be qualified to the extent that the expenditure in the promotion of this form of land settlement must be subject to restrictions. Waste and extravagance must be strictly guarded against, because, apart from State interests, the individuals concerned must eventually have cast upon them the full responsibility of the greater part of the capital involved. If this be excessive, due to lack of economy in the earlier stages, it may become impossible for the settler when dissolved from his group, to earn a sufficient living for himself and his family, or his capital burden may so weight him that his progress will be checked to a point of despair, and perhaps ultimately lead him to abandon his holding.

That is what has happened.

It will thus be apparent that before any such undertaking is embarked upon, the objective must be clearly defined. There must be full co-ordination of effort on the part of all concerned. The work to be undertaken must be prescribed in full detail; surveys and classifications of areas must be carefully prepared, estimates of costs must be calculated, and at least some general conception must be predetermined as to the ultimate capital which will need to be borne by the settler—what class of production he is to embark upon, and what future prospects are ahead of him provided he is capable and industrious.

Then the report adds—

Your Excellency's Commissioners regret having to report that the evidence before them discloses non-compliance with any one of these essentials prior to the placing of the settlers on the land, or before the work of development was proceeded with.

That was written over four years ago and everybody knows what has happened. The annoying part of it is that in the south, where a great number of people can make a noise, there is no restriction as to the amount of money that can be expended. Away in the far North, however, where legitimate development

can take place, and would take place if ordinary facilities were provided, it is almost impossible to get any money spent. If of that seven millions that has been wasted two millions had been spent in the North to provide facilities for the pastoral industry referred to by Mr. Fraser, we would have had better returns than have been obtained from the expenditure of a similar amount in the south. I will give a couple of instances. Four years ago the jetty at Point Sampson was blown away by a gale and since that time no jetty has been built to replace it. I will admit that there are difficulties and that the Engineer-in-Chief has stated it would be waste of money to build a new jetty in the same position. I understand that a new site has been found for the erection of a jetty and I hope that the Chief Secretary will be able to make an announcement as to what the Government propose to do in that respect. A peculiar thing happened. Under the amending Land Act which granted extensions of pastoral leases it was provided that proximity to ports, proximity to railway stations and proximity to markets should govern the rate that the pasoralist had to pay. Many pastoralists were compelled to pay higher rentals because of shipping facilities that had been provided. In the Point Sampson instance, however, since the jetty was blown away, there have been no facilities provided by the Government. I am satisfied that the Government are fully seized with the position and that as a new site for the jetty has been selected, the Chief Secretary will be able to tell us that at a not far distant date the work will be proceeded with. Another matter is that after a delay of 20 years in the construction of the Beadon Point jetty, I am now advised that the difficulty of crossing the Ashburton River to get to the jetty is to be overcome by a bridge which should have been built long ago. I hope, too, that an announcement will be made in this regard. Reference is made in the Speech to harbours and rivers, the reference being to what has been done in the past. Nothing is said as to what it is proposed to do in connection with the Fremantle or any other harbour. We know that last session the subject was discussed at some length and the point at which the railway was to be deviated was definitely fixed. A matter of such importance should certainly have found a place in the Governor's Speech. There is no question

about it that the position at Fremantle is serious. The railway bridge collapsed once and it may collapse again at any time. I do not know what has been done to strengthen it, but I do know that the structure has given the Government much concern for the past 25 years. Then again, anybody that likes to take a trip to Chidlow's Well will see train loads of traffic held up along the line awaiting an opportunity to get through to the port of Fremantle. It is certainly time that facilities were provided to deal with the traffic at Fremantle and the traffic to and from that port. A subject of such importance should have been referred to in the Speech, but I presume that we shall hear something about it later on. Mr. Fraser also made reference to agricultural matters and he spoke on sound lines when he complimented the Government on what they had done. We must remember though that anybody who chooses to work can grow wheat. That is a simple matter. He need not know anything about wheat growing; he has only to fallow when the other man fallows, to seed when the other man seeds and to harvest when the other man harvests. But when we come to closer settlement, there must be some knowledge of the right kind of fodder to plant, the right time to plant it and the right soil in which to plant it. Unfortunately the people who have been placed in the South-West have never had any experience of this kind of work, and it seems to me that very few attempts have been made to show them what to do. So far as production is concerned, we are only in the initial stages. I am concerned about the settlement now going on in the drier areas. We must remember that rain is the first essential to growth. No matter how good the land is, if rain does not fall at the right time, the land is of very little use. Have we not an example of that at Kalgoorlie where the soil is rich, but where without rainfall, it is useless. If we have moderately good land in the rainfall belt, science will do the rest. There is no need to mention the Mt. Lyell and the other superphosphate companies who can be depended upon to provide the fertilisers that are required. Given a reasonably good class of soil and a sufficient rainfall, the superphosphate companies can do the rest. Through the addition of superphosphate a lot of our second class land will at no distant date become

first-class land, because of the constant use of the fertiliser. During my visit to the Eastern States recently, I was astonished to hear, at the Roseworthy College, South Australia, the lasting results that were to be obtained by superphosphate. I was under the impression that the bulk of the super. was lost to the ground in the first year. That is not so. A certain percentage remains in the soil each year, and, by the addition of greater or lesser quantities from year to year, the soil is gradually built up until it becomes first-class land. What some people in the Eastern States do not understand, and we do not always understand it here, is, when they regard their own land that has been tilled year after year and brought up to a certain standard, why we get the results we do here from what we regard as second class land. If we add the super., and the rainfall is sufficient, there is no limit to the production from our lands, without extending the sphere of operations into danger zones where the rainfall is uncertain. Mr. Fraser said there were some things the Government had done with which he was not entirely in accord. He added that there were very many more men out of work during the earlier part of this year than during the corresponding period of any previous years. It is not for me to answer that statement. In view of the fact that we have had a larger revenue and more loan expenditure this year than before, it is a matter to which the Chief Secretary should reply. How is it we have more unemployed to-day when we have had a greater revenue and a greater loan expenditure than before? Mr. Fraser blames the introduction of Southern Europeans for a lot of the unemployment. I take exactly the opposite view. The Southern European is the only man upon whom we can depend for the clearing of our land. Very few Englishmen will clear land, but they will do the other work. Those of us who are engaged in the development of this country have Southern Europeans to clear the land, because the other men will not do it. When the land has been cleared, work is available for men with the plough, men to look after the horses, and men to work the agricultural machinery, etc. The solution of the unemployment question to-day is that the European should do the axe work, as he will do, and that this should then make work for those who are not fit for the job, but are suitable for lighter employment. Mr. Fraser

then attacked the police for maintaining law and order, and indirectly he attacked the Government. I am with the Premier in this matter. The Government are to be congratulated upon having maintained law and order. Law and order are essential to good government. So far as I can judge, the unemployed defied the Premier and the police. If that had been allowed to go on, there would have been no government in the country. I understand they refused to nominate two men to wait upon the Premier, and said they wanted four. The Premier said he would see two men. I suppose if he had said he would see four, they would have asked for eight. We should have got back to job control. The Government are deserving of the thanks of the community for dealing with the matter as firmly as they did. They are now engaged in trying to find employment for these men, and I am very grateful to them for their efforts. We must first have law and order. Now that has been established, I hope the Government will be successful in finding employment for these people. We ought to be proud of our police force. It comprises the finest body of men to be found anywhere in Australia. In view of what has happened in the past in connection with members of the force, because they had the courage to carry out their duties in the way they did, I marvel that they stood so firmly as they did recently. I am also glad that some of the wrongs that have been done them have been put right. They have had a better backing from the present Government than they had some time ago, I am glad to say. Mr. Fraser also referred to State lotteries and premium bonds. I do not think he made out a good case, or that his heart was in what he said. If we had provision for a stamp on all wages, so that everyone who received wages paid something towards the funds of public hospitals, we should have an equitable system. The workers are earning good money.

Hon. E. H. Harris: What about those who pay the wages?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They always pay. I am in favour of such a system. I do not, however, approve of either lotteries or premium bonds. We now come to the State Implement Works. Mr. Fraser appealed to Mr. Lovekin, Mr. Miles and me to help him in this very difficult problem.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: The three musketeers!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The three Conservatives of the House. It is a case of history repeating itself. When things are all right, it is all very well to go on as we are doing, but when we meet with trouble it is necessary to fall back upon the genuine 18-carat Conservative if we want things done in the right way.

Hon. G. Fraser: I appealed to you as one Western Australian to another.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Fraser admits that the capital of the concern has been written down by £120,000. The interest on that is chargeable to revenue for ever. As a supporter of State trading concerns, that was an important admission of his. It showed that there has been a loss of capital amounting to £120,000. That is not the worst feature of the whole thing. He said that in 1912, 600 men were working there, and that to-day only 200 men were employed. He adds, "Where the trouble is I do not know."

Hon. E. H. Gray: The trouble is with the cookies.

Hon. H. A. Stephenson: The manager had something to say about that.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Shaw, the manager, has thrown some light upon the question. If there is one man associated with State trading concerns in this country who knows his job and stands up for what is right, it is Mr. Frank Shaw. He is a fine officer. He was associated with the railways for years, and went to the Implement Works expressly to endeavour to pull them out of a difficulty. This is an interview with or statement by Mr. Shaw, as it appeared in the "West Australian":—

Moving the Address-in-Reply in the Legislative Council last week, Mr. Fraser, M.L.C., said that he hoped that the Government would set up a Royal Commission to inquire into the conditions at the State Implement Works, which used to employ 600 men and now employed only 250. That statement was referred to Mr. F. Shaw, the manager of the State Implement Works on Saturday.

Mr. Shaw said that Mr. Fraser's figures were not quite correct. When he took over the management of the works in May, 1915, the employees numbered 602, and of that number over 200 did not seem to have any useful employment. He did not do anything dramatic but by careful selection the number was reduced from 602 to 350 during the first 12 months and gradually after that as the occasion warranted. Paradoxical as it might seem the production increased as the number of employees decreased.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: Let them go on reducing the number of employees.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: Mr. Fraser wants Mr. Miles, Mr. Lovekin and myself—the Conservatives in this House—to assist him in this difficult matter. No one has questioned the capacity of the manager. He is a capable officer, is not afraid to say what he means, and would not put a statement like the one I have quoted before the public if it were not founded on fact.

Hon. H. Stewart: He was prodded to make that statement. He was obliged to make it.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The trouble is that the machines manufactured there are not suitable.

Hon. G. Fraser: Question!

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: When the Royal Commission dealing with the Peel Estate was making its investigations, certain evidence was brought forward which gave Mr. Gray much concern.

Hon. E. H. Gray: A case was not made out before that Commission.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: We had it in evidence from principal officers that if a man was likely to succeed on the land he was allowed to buy his machinery where he liked, but if he were in trouble or likely to fail he was obliged to take his machinery from the State Implement Works, to make sure he did not succeed. In other words, the officials said that the State-made machines were better in use on the farm, even if they were of no use there, than they would be lying idle at the State Implement Works. Highly technical agricultural machinery has been designed by private enterprise and built up as a result of years of experience. The State Implement Works, when established, bought an obsolete plant, and have been trying to infringe the patents and rights of other people.

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: They ought to be in gaol.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: They were not successful, because they were prevented from doing this. As a result they have been putting out machinery which is not suitable for the job.

Hon. E. H. Gray: What machinery?

Hon. Sir William Lathlain: All of it.

Hon. E. H. Gray: That is not true.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The workers in this country will not countenance piece work. All this agricultural machinery is manufactured in the Eastern States, a great deal of it by piece work. If Mr. Fraser wants

the problem solved, let him shut down the Implement Works, induce the men to adopt the system of piece work, and have all this machinery made within the State. I would not mind going to Trades Hall myself, though I have never been there before, to try to induce the men to adopt that system. In this morning's paper it was stated that the Sunshine Harvester Co. had received a permit to assemble parts of machinery, which could be made here if Messrs. McKay and Co. and other manufacturers were allowed to follow the system of piece work that is adopted in the other States. Can we wonder that men are unemployed when the technical work, which should be done here, is performed by mechanics in the Eastern States, and sent over here? Every technical mechanic has one or two men waiting on him, so we can see how much employment would be given if this system were followed here. I venture to suggest that if the Unions controlling this labour would adopt piece work, as their comrades in the Eastern States have done, we should have 1500 additional men here before we knew where we were, engaged in the manufacture of agricultural machinery. Including the wives and children, this would mean an increased population of at least 6,000 persons. True, the Victorian Government will collect £7,500 per annum from the Federal Government in respect of those people for 58 years, but that is another matter. If we cannot get justice under the Financial Agreement, that will not prevent me from helping Mr. Fraser, and he should help me, to get some justice for this State by securing work to be done here under piece work conditions such as are observed in the Eastern States by the workers there. Mr. Fraser can say what he likes; we must have no end of agricultural machinery in Western Australia, and we must have it manufactured within the State. The sooner we wake up to that fact, the better it will be. We must manufacture the necessary machinery by means of private enterprise and piece work, and the sooner we wake up to that fact, the sooner shall we put an end to the exhibition of 200 men wandering about the State Implement Works without any useful form of employment. If we can achieve that, not only will McKay come here, but other people as well, who are engaged in the manufacture of machinery.

Hon. H. Stewart: Do the men work under piece work conditions at the railway workshops?

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: The hon. member understands most things, and he can deal with the railway workshops and the construction of engines when he likes. If the hon. member thinks I am wrong, he can give the House his views.

Hon. H. Stewart: I am agreeing with you.

Hon. J. J. HOLMES: In view of what happened recently, it is hard to say on which side the hon. member is! I am sorry that I cannot agree to proceed with the advocacy of a Royal Commission on the lines suggested by Mr. Fraser. I do not think there is any necessity for such a Royal Commission. After all the work we put into the Royal Commission appointed to deal with the Peel estate, the neglect of the Press to publish the report in extenso so that the people could read it, and the refusal of the Government to get to work in view of our recommendations, I do not think a Royal Commission will do any good. On the other hand, I will help Mr. Fraser along the lines I have indicated and will be prepared to go with him to the Trades Hall to see if we can take such steps as will induce those people who are capable of manufacturing agricultural machinery, to get to work and thus absorb a great body of men, large numbers of whom deserve employment, and respecting whom it is a wicked shame that they have been stranded here. We can achieve that if we can induce the workers here to accept piece work conditions as their fellow workers in the Eastern States have done, so that they can enjoy the conditions of employment that operate elsewhere. It is not for me to reply to the question of unemployment. I hope the Minister will be able to tell us, as I believe he will, that steps have been taken to find work for a great number of very worthy people. The solution of the problem of manufacturing agricultural and other machinery or any other article in this State is for the work to be undertaken by private enterprise, not State enterprise. When piece work is introduced generally here, better wages and better conditions will be enjoyed by the workers, just as they are now being enjoyed by the workers in the Eastern States. It is a short-sighted policy on the part of those control-

ling the Labour movement here to insist upon the workers of this State standing apart from the piece work system. I desire to support the motion.

On motion by Hon. H. A. Stephenson, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 5.35 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 7th August, 1928.

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

QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR, ACCIDENTS.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Premier: 1, How many vessels during the last twelve months have crashed into the Fremantle harbour wharf? 2, What were the names of the vessels and the dates on which the accidents happened? 3, What was the cost of repairing the damage on each occasion? 4, Who paid for the damage done? 5, To what reason "officially" were the accidents attributed?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Three. 2, s.s. "Jervis Bay," 12 October, 1927; s.s. "Surrey," 4th May, 1929; s.s. "Moreton Bay," 29th June, 1928. 3, "Jervis Bay," £1,361 8s. 8d.; "Surrey" £233 9s. 10d.; "Moreton Bay," £1,036 15s. 10d. 4, The Fremantle Harbour Trust. 5, "Jervis Bay" case—Mishap was attributed to the fact

that the ship's towline to a tug-boat carried away owing to unskilful handling by the ship's crew directed by a responsible ship's officer, and to the fact that a responsible ship's officer so unskilfully handled the ship's anchor that it failed to hold. "Surrey" case—Mishap was attributed to the failure of the usual seaman-like measures taken to cause the ship to stop. The master of the ship wrote to the Trust exonerating the pilot from all blame. "Moreton Bay" case—Mishap was attributed to the fact that one engine being out of commission the ship had not sufficient power to overcome a sudden squall which drove her into the wharf.

QUESTIONS (4)—RAILWAYS.

Locomotives, duty.

Mr. THOMSON asked the Minister for Railways: What is the total amount of duty that would have been imposed if the ten locomotives made at Midland had been imported?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Assuming that the engines could have been purchased at the same price as those previously imported, the amount of duty would have been £20,503.

Brookton-Dale project.

Mr. BROWN asked the Premier: Now that the permanent survey of the proposed Brookton-Dale railway is completed, when is it intended by the Government to proceed with the work of construction?

The PREMIER replied: This will be considered when the survey beyond Dale River is far enough advanced to enable the route beyond this point to be located.

Dale-Armadale trial survey.

Mr. BROWN asked the Premier: What progress has been made with the trial survey of the proposed railway route between Dale and Armadale?

The PREMIER replied: Nothing will be done until completion of the aerial survey. This latter is at present held up awaiting favourable weather conditions.

Boyup Brook-Cranbrook.

Mr. J. H. SMITH asked the Premier: Do the Government propose the early construction of the Boyup Brook-Cranbrook railway?