

further at the moment, the Chief Secretary having informed me that a special bus license can be granted and that the substitute bus can be used on other routes. Since the tea adjournment the proprietor has informed me that he does not desire to use a second bus, but merely wants the privilege of using a substitute bus to maintain the service while his own vehicle is laid up for repairs. I shall deal further with the matter on recommitment.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 37, 38, 39—agreed to.

Progress reported.

BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING ACT AMENDMENT.

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the Council's amendment.

House adjourned at 8.54 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 21st October, 1926.

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

QUESTION—INDUSTRIES ASSISTANCE.

Mr. TEESDALE asked the Premier: Is it his intention to lay on the Table of the House a list of the firms and industries re-

presented that have received financial and other assistance through the medium of the Council of Industrial Development during the past two years?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Premier) replied: It is considered not advisable to publish names of firms as requested, but if urgently needed the information should be moved for in the usual way.

QUESTION—WORKERS' HOMES, NARROGIN.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Premier: 1, Are the Government aware that the whole of the owners of leasehold workers' homes at Narrogin signed a petition asking that they should be given the same right to convert their leases to freehold, which has already been given to holders of leasehold town lots under the Land Act? 2, Is it the intention of the Government to give effect to the prayer of this petition during the current session? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (for the Premier) replied: 1, Yes, in March, 1922, the petitioners being informed the Act did not permit compliance with the request, since when the question has not been under the consideration of the Government. 2 and 3, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—MAIN ROADS CONTRACTS.

Insurance of Employees.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Works: Is it a fact that in all contracts between the Main Roads Board and District Road Boards in connection with grants under the Federal and State Aids Scheme, a condition is inserted that all men employed must be insured by the local governing body with the State Insurance Office?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: Yes.

QUESTION—SOUTHERN CROSS LANDS, SURVEYOR'S REPORT.

Mr. CHESSON (for Mr. Corboy) asked the Minister for Lands: Is it his intention to lay on the Table the report of Surveyor Lefroy on land south of Southern Cross?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: I have not yet seen the report referred to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Resolution reported, the report adopted, and a message accordingly returned to the Council.

BILLS (2)—REPORT.

1, Timber Industry Regulation.

2, Shearers' Accommodation Act Amendment.

Adopted.

BILL—INSPECTION OF SCAFFOLDING ACT AMENDMENT.

Council's Amendment.

Amendment made by the Council now considered.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair; the Minister for Works in charge of the Bill.

Clause 3, Subclause 2—Delete in lines 4 and 5 the words "by substituting for the word 'workmen' in line 3 the words 'any person'":

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The proposal in the Bill was to alter the term "workmen" to "any person," but the Council has disallowed that amendment and desires to retain the term "workmen." Personally I do not think it matters very much because, after all, it is the protection of the workmen that is aimed at. The fact remains that others, such as architects, inspectors, supervisors, and even contractors themselves may use scaffolding and something may happen to them. Should there be such an occurrence, the Bill will not cover them. The Legislative Council has shown more concern for the workmen than for others in this instance.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Why did you desire to alter the clause?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Because others besides the workmen might use the scaffolding and it was to bring them within the scope of the Bill that the amendment was sought.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: For any purpose at all?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, so long as the persons were there on business. I do not propose to press the amendment embodied in the Bill, and will take what I can get. I move—

That the amendment be agreed to.

BILL—RESERVES (No. 2).

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from 14th October.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.40]: It is refreshing to find a golf club receiving encouragement from the Government. Several times we have discussed questions of this description in the past, but always any suggestion of setting aside land for golf club purposes met with strenuous opposition on the part of members now sitting on the Government side of the House. I am glad that the Minister for Lands has at last seen the light and decided to join with us in encouraging people who indulge in sport. I have no objection to raise to that or any other proposal in the Bill. I notice, however, that the Marble Bar Road Board is to be given the right to lease the local common for pastoral purposes over a term not exceeding 21 years. The Minister will need to be very careful about the conditions of the lease, because one never knows when such reserves may be needed. Usually such leases are made subject to termination at comparatively short notice. The Minister does not set out in the clause what the conditions are to be, but the rents and conditions have to be approved by the Governor. I hope the Minister will insert a clause in the lease that will make it possible for the Government to cancel it either in respect of the whole or any portion of the common that may be needed. Just now there are indications of mining developments in the district and these may result in considerable activities there.

The Minister for Lands: Motors are used now.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: Yes, to a large extent, but it may be that we shall witness a reversion to the use of horses and camels for transport work in a district such as Marble Bar. I do not desire to raise the ire of the Minister at such an early stage of the sitting, but wish merely to suggest that reasonable conditions shall apply to a lease of land extending over 21 years in the circumstances proposed. If

he will do that, I will allow the Bill to go through. I have no intention of opposing the second reading.

MR. LAMOND (Pilbara) [4.43]: I am pleased that the Minister has introduced the Bill, particularly in so far as it applies to the Marble Bar district. Some time ago the Marble Bar Road Board, the members of which have asked for this legislation to be introduced, borrowed money to fence the common and to equip two wells with windmills, troughs, and so on. With the advent of motor transport the teams have been driven off the road. With the departure of the camel, horse and donkey teams, little or no revenue has been received in connection with the common and the interest bill on the money borrowed has increased to the extent of about £65 a year. Hence the desire of the board to secure permission to lease the common. I do not foresee any danger in the direction suggested by the Leader of the Opposition in the event of teams being used again. Six miles from the common is a better reserve known as the Moolyella Common. Men prospecting about the Bar usually took their horses to Moolyella because it was a much better common. While that reserve is retained, there is no great need to keep the Marble Bar reserve as a common.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Panton in the Chair: the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clases 1 to 3—agreed to.

Clause 4—Reserve 2906 Marble Bar:

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: I think the right should be given to lease the reserve or any part of it. It surrounds the Marble Bar township and as the clause stands it would be necessary to lease the whole of the reserve. I move an amendment—

That after "common," in line two, the words "or part thereof" be inserted.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for the district has clearly explained the position. The chairman of the road board waited on me. A fair sum of money was borrowed to provide water, and as the common is not being used for stock, there is no revenue. The fact of there being

another reserve not far away will obviate any hardship. The amendment will improve the clause.

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—ROADS CLOSURE.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 14th October.

HON. SIR JAMES MITCHELL (Northam) [4.51]: I have no objection to offer to the Bill. I was not aware that the small reserves facing the Albany foreshore formed part of the road. It is a good idea to set them aside permanently as reserves. Albany is a very beautiful town and this piece of land has added to the beauty of the town and the comfort of the people. I take it the Minister has inquired closely into the question of closing the other roads. It is necessary that close inquiry be made; otherwise we may do an injustice. The officials of the Lands Department are usually exceedingly careful, and the Minister himself gives great attention to detail.

The Minister for Lands: No objection has been lodged.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: But it does not follow that no objection could be or should be lodged. People have an unfortunate habit of trusting the Minister to see that the propositions he makes are correct. I remember introducing a Roads Closure Bill and the hon. member had it reprinted to provide for the closing of another road without my knowing it. My Bill provided for the closure of three roads and the hon. member's Bill stipulated four.

The Minister for Lands: You told me to get it done.

Hon. Sir JAMES MITCHELL: No, it was done without my knowledge. There is a road in the Gosnells district that might well be closed, and had I thought of it in time, I might have got it included in this Bill.

HON. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) [4.54]: This Bill deals wholly with the closing of roads in municipalities and the Minister has indicated that the officers have made the necessary surveys and investigated

the circumstances and that there is no opposition.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Minister has the consent of the local authorities.

Hon. G. TAYLOR: Consequently we cannot do wrong in passing the Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Mr. Pantou in the Chair; the Minister for Lands in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 4—agreed to.

New clause:

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I move—

That the following be inserted to stand as Clause 5:—“All rights of way over a strip of land in the municipal district of North Fremantle, 25 links wide, bounded on the north by Lots 5 and 12 of North Fremantle Lot P105 (as shown on Land Titles Office Plan 2098), on the east by Thompson-road, and on the west by Victoria Avenue, shall cease from the passing of this Act, to the intent that the way may be closed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Have the council agreed to it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. There is an area of $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3 acres of Government land, and inquiries have been made to secure it for a factory site. The whole of it is required for that purpose. It will be possible to connect it with the railway siding running to the Mt. Lyell works. The land is to be submitted to public auction, but I am advised that it is necessary to close the right-of-way before the land is offered for sale. There is no objection to the closure and the Government might just as well have the proceeds from the land.

New clause put and passed.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with an amendment.

BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME TAX.

Returned from the Council without amendment.

BILL—SPECIAL LEASE (ESPERANCE PINE PLANTATION).

Second Reading.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin—North-East Fremantle) [5.0] in moving the second reading said: Power is sought to enable a lease of 45,000

acres of land along the Esperance railway to be granted to a company. All the particulars are described in the schedule of the Bill. The land surrounds the Gibson townsite. This lease is desired for the afforestation of softwoods. We are aware that numerous persons have been canvassing the State for some time on this question. So far as we can gather a fairly large sum of money is being raised, leaving this State for investment in pine plantations in the other States and New Zealand. A request was made to the Government asking that we should grant an area in this district to enable a company to be formed on somewhat similar lines to those that have been formed in the other States and New Zealand for the planting of pines. It has been suggested that the Bill should not be confined to this one area, but that power should be given to the Minister to exercise his discretion. I thought that was inadvisable.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I do not think the House would agree to that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I did not think so either. It is necessary that members should have an opportunity to deal with each proposition that comes along. Considerable quantities of softwoods are brought into Australia annually. Western Australia itself is a big importer of this class of timber. The importations of by-products into the Commonwealth amounted in 1923-24 to £336,159, and the softwoods brought into Western Australia in 1924-25 were valued at £162,000. The Forests Department are planting a fairly large area of pines in various parts of the State. If we can get private capital to go into this business as well, and utilise land that is at present lying idle and is unsuitable for any other purpose, it will assist us greatly in providing our own requirements of softwoods. The Bill provides for the planting of 500 acres for the first year, and 1,000 acres per annum thereafter.

Mr. Latham: I hardly think the company will be able to keep to that.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Crown grants will issue for areas of 1,500 acres when 1,000 acres are planted and satisfactorily established, and considered to be so established by the Conservator of Forests at the expiration of one year from the time when planting is completed. It is estimated that the timber reaches maturity in about 30 years. The object is to have areas of 1,000 acres coming into maturity and ready

for the market each year thereafter. I was rather surprised to find that it was necessary to provide firebreaks and to allow for other patches of land that are unsuitable for cultivation. This is the reason why approximately 1,500 acres will be required for the planting of 1,000 acres of pine. It is this position that has led to the request for 45,000 acres. It is necessary for a plantation of this kind to have numerous firebreaks and other means that will provide for the safety of the trees. It is not intended to depart from the original price of the land as defined under the Land Act, having regard to its agricultural capabilities, and survey fees must also be paid by the lessee. The Land Act does not give power to lease such a large area to any one person or company. Power in this direction is limited to 5,000 acres. It is impossible to form a company of this kind on 5,000 acres only. Before the matter was finalised by the Government it was referred to the Surveyor General, the Conservator of Forests and the Under Secretary of Lands. Their report on this question is as follows:—

We have considered the proposal to establish a pine plantation on an area of approximately 50,000 acres surrounding the Gibson townsite on the Esperance Railway. The object of such a large area is to allow for an annual planting of 1,000 acres over a period of 30 years, which is, generally speaking, the time of maturing, and thus provide 1,000 acres of pines ready for the market annually thereafter, and for an additional area for firebreaks, etc. The necessary capital will be obtained by the sale of debentures redeemable in 30 years, or such time as the timber would take to mature. The timber would be worth probably £250 to £300 per acre. The cost of planting and maintenance would be about £16 per acre over the whole period from planting to maturity. Pines are estimated to go 100-200 tons to the acre at maturity. (50,000 to 100,000 super feet weighing 100-200 tons.) The classification of the country is shown on the plan, page one hereunder. It is favourably situated so far as the railway is concerned, and the rainfall is satisfactory. The soil conditions are such as make it unattractive for wheat growing, but it appears to be suitable for pines. In this respect, however, we give no guarantee. If it is developed as proposed the railway and port earnings will be increased even before the pines mature, and thereafter the earnings would be considerably augmented, and without apparently any increased expenditure by the Crown. The shortage of pine timber in the world's markets to-day makes such a proposal as now submitted of great advantage to the State. Under proper supervision and management the supplies should be considerable, and the promoter estimates an annual output after the first crop matures of up to 200 tons per acre, or

200,000 tons for each 1,000 acres after 25 to 30 years. The proposal would require special legislation. The price of the land could be fixed on the same basis as usual, the company to pay for necessary surveys, and the annual planting to be considered as an improvement; Crown grants to issue for such areas when paid for and planted, and the usual conditions of re-entry by the Crown if the conditions are not substantially fulfilled. We see no objection, in fact, the scheme is one we think should be encouraged. We therefore recommend favourable consideration, and that the land be temporarily reserved for 12 months as requested.

This is signed by the officers to whom I have referred. It will be seen that we made full inquiries before introducing this Bill. In various parts of the State there are millions of acres of this type of country. The area involved in this Bill will, therefore, very slightly affect the total area of this class of land that is available. The land is not suitable for wheat growing although the officers report that it might grow oats, barley or rye. The classification of the country is, generally speaking, sandy soil over ironstone and gravel, with a little paper bark, wattle, blackboy and mallee scrub. It has, therefore, not been considered suitable for subdivision.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Is it suitable for pines?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. It is an area that has hung fire and has not been sought after for ordinary farming. Members will see the terms of the lease set out in the schedule attached to the Bill. They will also see that there is no intention to depart from the usual conditional purchase conditions. The Bill really means that the Minister will be empowered to place under conditional purchase an area of 45,000 acres of this class of land instead of 5,000 acres. After the 1,000 acres are planted and fenced, and such expenditure has been incurred as required under the Land Act in the way of improvements before any Crown grant is given, a Crown grant will be issued on each lot of 1,000 acres, treated in that way.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That will mean that they will get their Crown grants 12 months after?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: It will mean that the whole of the expenditure required under the Land Act has been fulfilled instead of being made over the period that is allowed.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: That is a departure.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes. There is also provision in the schedule that if the conditions are not complied with the land will be open to forfeiture to the Crown. This is a new venture in Western Australia. Since it has become known several other parties have made inquiries for similar land in other parts of the State with a view to embarking upon the same class of business. When we have such large areas as these lying idle, and there is no prospect for some time to come of bringing them under cultivation, and when the land is for the most part unsuitable for ordinary cultivation or farming, we should do what we can to encourage people to utilise it in the manner proposed and so keep our money here instead of sending it elsewhere to invest. The company has not yet been formed. The Bill provides that it shall put up a deposit of £500, which may be forfeited to the Crown at the end of two years if the conditions are not complied with. In the case of all these companies I think a deposit should be put up. I know of instances where Bills have been passed through Parliament granting leases to certain people, and after all the expenditure has been incurred they have not gone on with their schemes, and the cost has been borne by the State. If I had my way there would be no more of that sort of thing. This company had to put up £10 for the preparation of the Bill and another £100 before its introduction. There should be some provision for the repayment to the State of any outlay that is incurred in connection with proposals of this kind. I commend the Bill to the consideration of members, believing as I do that it will assist us in providing our softwood requirements as well as in disposing of large areas of land which are considered useless to-day. This should be the means of keeping within the State funds that are now sent outside for investment upon such works as are proposed in this Bill. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

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

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1926-27.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 14th October on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and on the Annual Estimates; Mr. Lutey in the Chair.

Vote: Legislative Council, £1,555:

MR. GRIFFITHS (Avon) [5.14]: It would take up more time than is at my disposal to discuss these Estimates in a fitting manner, and to do them justice. Perhaps, also, I should take longer than members would desire. I did not speak on the Address-in-reply, and I, therefore, intend to speak upon several matters in the general debate on the Estimates. I do not expect to be longer than half an hour. I intend not so much to enter into the details of the Estimates as to discuss one aspect of Western Australian and Australian finance, namely, that of borrowing. We have heard a good deal about what has been termed "The mad borrowing policy of Australia." We as a State, however, have been working for sound finance. The Federal Government, through Mr. Wickens, have defended their position and have denied that the Commonwealth finances are, as suggested in certain quarters, unsound. Moreover the Federal Prime Minister, speaking in London recently, laid special stress on the soundness of Australia's financial position as a whole. Whether Australia as a whole is financing soundly is perhaps a question. The Treasurer of this State now finds himself in a better position than any Treasurer since the war and for some years earlier. Recognition has been accorded to the financial disabilities of Western Australia by the Federal Parliament, and that is satisfactory so far as it goes. There was a nice little windfall of £353,000 last year, and this year there is one of £212,000, making a total of £565,000, which has come in very useful and has enabled the Government to reduce our income taxation by one-third. The time was ripe for such a reduction in order to enable people to invest money here on somewhat of a par with investors in the other States. The Premier is devoting £200,000 to reduction of income tax, as I have stated. That is the major part of this year's grant. From last year's grant of £353,000, an amount of £165,000 is being devoted to the assistance of the mining industry. I hope that when that amount is allocated, the Minister for Mines will have an eye on that corner of my electorate known as Westonia. At Westonia there is known to be about half a million of gold values below water level, awaiting capital and enterprise to render it available for the benefit of the State. A sum of £200,000 is to go towards the extinction of

the unfunded deficit and of Treasury bonds issued for the purpose of funding the deficit. My Leader recently suggested that as the primary industries had suffered owing to Federal disabilities, some portion of the grant might well be devoted to agricultural relief. Undoubtedly agriculture has a claim as well as mining, and perhaps the more statesmanlike and more profitable course would be to devote the £200,000 which is being applied in reduction of income tax, either wholly or partly to the assistance of the agricultural industry.

Hon. S. W. Munsie: Will not the reduction of income tax assist the agriculturists to a certain extent?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It will assist the Government and the agriculturists and the State as a whole, including the mining industry.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The other £200,000 should also be applied in reduction of taxation.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I have examined the figures carefully, and I find there are five items which will help us financially. First there is the main roads grant. Since 1923 a total of £301,180 has been paid to Western Australia on account of that grant, and the total coming to this State over a period of 10 years will be £3,840,000. It is true, however, that some of the money will be taken back from us by the Federal petrol tax. Again, there is £10,612,388 of cheap money at 1 per cent. which is being lent us to assist in the settlement of the South-West. Our sinking fund is getting on towards 11 millions sterling, the exact figures being £10,652,929. That sinking fund represents another excellent aspect of our finances, though I do not know that either the present Treasurer or the previous one is entitled to credit for it, the fund having been constituted, I understand, in 1899. With regard to the goldfields water supply loan the Premier stated that this would be the first time in Australian history that a State loan floated on the London market would be wholly redeemed from sinking fund within the life of the loan. That is the most satisfactory feature, due, presumably, to the foresight of the late Lord Forrest. Neither the previous Government nor the present Government is responsible for the general increase in revenue and trading. Those are matters which have come about irrespective of Governments, though I give the Opposition Leader credit for his agricultural policy.

Mr. Richardson: It is the agricultural policy that has caused the progress of to-day.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: We must remember that over half a million sterling has been handed back to us by the Federal Government. It is our own money, no doubt; but still it has rendered possible the reduction of the income tax by one-third and also the application of funds to relieve the disabilities of the mining industry. To me it is deplorable to see how mining has gone down. Gold is the finest thing we can export to relieve our indebtedness overseas, where a gold currency exists. Moreover, gold is the finest of immigration agents. Gold has built up Western Australia. And that is not a new thing; it is only a repetition of what has occurred in many countries. As I mentioned in opening my remarks, there has been a great deal of talk about "loan policy run mad." The Commonwealth Statistician recently, in reply to criticisms embodied in a pamphlet on Australian finance which was issued by Messrs. S. R. Cook and E. H. Davenport, stated that taking into consideration the debts of all sorts owed by Australia, they would only amount to a mortgage of slightly over 20 per cent. of our total assets, exclusive of human capital. The Commonwealth Statistician also mentioned that during the last four years Australia's war debt has been reduced by 28½ million sterling, and that the remainder of the debt includes certain sums owing to the States for properties transferred at Federation, these properties having considerably appreciated in value since then. Further, he pointed out that much of the money borrowed had been invested in revenue-earning assets, such as telephones and other postal works, on which about 20 millions sterling had been expended within the last four years. These undertakings, he said, were returning revenue sufficient to pay a contribution towards interest and sinking fund which would redeem the debt during the life of the assets. Actually the net debt of the Commonwealth, the statistician added, was less now than it was four years ago—approximately £5 per head of population less than in 1922. But there is another side to that report. The Commonwealth revenue is derived practically from taxation of loans which come into the country. People have an idea that loans come here in the form of money. As a matter of fact—and I shall prove this directly—

loans come in the shape of goods of various descriptions; and the more goods coming into the country, the more Customs revenue the Federal Government receive. Compound interest is a fearful thing to contemplate. I recently read a statement made by Mr. Smethurst, of Broken Hill, to the effect that if Moses had borrowed a £5 note from Pharaoh when the Israelites were advised to borrow from their Egyptian neighbours of that time, B.C. 1491, the bill with compound interest at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., if presented to Solomon in all his glory 500 years later, would have bankrupted that monarch of fabulous wealth. It is easy to repay a borrowed pound to-day; but if Moses had borrowed a single pound from Pharaoh at compound interest, even at only $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and if that debt had accumulated until the present time, a globe of solid gold as heavy as the earth with the sun and all the planets together would not now suffice to repay that borrowed £1. This is the attack that Mr. J. Smethurst, of Broken Hill, made in an address before the social and statistical science section of the Science Congress. Speaking upon Australia's external debt he said—

At the end of June 1926, the overseas debt of Australia was roundly £500,000,000—of this £156,000,000 is classed as Federal debt, and the remainder, about £340,000,000, as State debt. As the same people are to all intents and purposes involved, there is not much occasion to separate them in a general survey of Australia, except for the important fact that the Commonwealth debt is war debt, and the State debts are peace debts. The State external debt has, in round figures, doubled during the past 24 years. Thus at the present rate the external State debt is doubling at the rate of four times in a century—which means that in a hundred years at this rate it would amount to 16 times the present sum, or, £5,440,000,000. The total State debt would at the present pace double every 16 years, over 6 times in 100 years, thus making the total debt of the States £5,000,000,000 in 50 years and over £38,000,000,000 in 100 years.

Of course it cannot reach such sums, but the figures are given just to show how impossible it is that the present rate of borrowing can be continued. Mr. Smethurst continued—

Even if borrowing additional money should cease to-morrow, and new loans be placed abroad for the payment of interest only, the present external debt of the States (excluding the Commonwealth debt) would double six times in 100 years at the rate of increase since 1916, which at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. compound interest, makes the total amount 64 times the £340,000,000 or, say, £20,000,000,000. Ever in 50

years the external State debt alone will be £2,270,000,000, if we borrow abroad for interest payments alone. There is no sign of this moderation. Whether the loans are floated by the Commonwealth or by the States separately makes no difference; the people of Australia are equally liable. If anyone thinks that 50 years is a long time to look ahead, I will ask him to remember, as plenty of active people can, that 50 years ago, when they were boys the policy of borrowing was justified on the ground that posterity would get the assets, all reproductive, for which the loans were obtained, and that it would be easy for posterity with the wealth created by the national works paid for by the borrowings to repay the loans. We are the posterity of those who borrowed 50 years ago, and we have not repaid those loans. On the contrary, we are borrowing and spending more lavishly than ever, and we are still saying that posterity will be able to repay. The children of the infant sons and daughters of this generation will be only middle aged 100 years hence, and the figures already given would be those to be faced by them if the crash did not come sooner, as it obviously must. To stop borrowing is very difficult. It is more difficult now than it was 50 years ago, or 25 years ago. It will become more and more difficult as involving more hardship, the longer we postpone it. Not only is the total debt increasing at the rate shown, but the amount of debt per head of the population is increasing even more rapidly. During the past 10 years, from 1916 to 1925, the external State debt has increased by 50 per cent.—over $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum. The population is increasing at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent per annum. Both are increasing at compound interest, so that by the time the population has doubled twice and reached 24 millions, the debt per head will have doubled four times, and will be 16 times the present sum. Thus there is no hope of escape from the inevitable crisis by the increase of population. Thus the need for stopping all new borrowing even for interest payments, is obvious. The difficulties in stopping are many. The first is that a large portion of the population of Australia is fed, clothed, housed, and amused by retaining in Australia that portion of the value of the national products, which should pay interest on what we owe abroad; and another large portion of our people are fed, clothed, housed, and amused by the things which come to Australia represent our new loans. We believe sometimes that our loans come to us in the form of materials for permanent and reproductive works. As a matter of fact, the loans come in all forms except money—from motor cars to motion pictures; from tinned foods to champagne and cigars; and including of course everything in metal from steel rails to gold bangles, and in textiles and clothing every sort of article from precious silks to dungarees, from Arctic furs to oilskins. Loans that arrive in the form of food and clothing converted by muscular energy into less movable or totally immovable assets which are less perishable than the food and clothing, or subsistence goods consumed in the course of the conversion. By stopping overseas borrowing we should reduce the annual wage fund by

the amount of the present annual loan influx and interest bill: and that would play havoc with our comforts and luxuries until we had adjusted ourselves to the altered conditions. This reduction in imports would alter the finances of the Federal Government very greatly. At present the loan influx gives a large Federal revenue in Customs duties. It is really the loan influx which maintains the Federal revenue. A small proportion of the revenue thus obtained is applied, it is true, to the reduction of war debt and to the sinking fund. But the Customs revenue consists of duties on goods, which are in reality loans, and the Excise duties consist largely of money which is available for the sinking fund, merely because it is not used to pay interest on public debt. Thus the revenue of the Commonwealth consists largely of the product of new loans. Another difficulty in the way of stopping our London borrowing is that powerful interests in England are strongly opposed to any lessening of our drawings from British lenders. The so-called loans to Australia are really nothing more than sales of goods on long credit, with the understanding that the promise to pay may be renewed indefinitely. The railway and other material, which represented the earliest loans, has never yet been paid for. Unless the so-called borrowing is stopped, those goods never will be, and never can be paid for.

The Minister for Railways: Are you opposed altogether to borrowing?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am reading a charge brought against Australia as a whole. We in this State, I am glad to say, have a glimmering of the meaning of sound finance. The State can take credit to itself for having set an example to all Australia.

Mr. Hughes: Do you think the world will ever attempt to pay its debts?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That brings us to the question "How can we avoid the catastrophe which is as inevitable as death?" The report continues—

In the first place there is one thing which can be done from to-day on, without serious disturbance. That is to provide, in the case of all future loans, whether internal or external, for new works, for conversions, for interest payments, or otherwise, that each such loan shall be issued repayable as to both principal and interest within a reasonably short time, say 15 years at most for new money, by half-yearly or yearly instalments. Sinking funds are a delusion unless kept where the debt lies—under the control of the creditor. If the population of Australia increases at even the present rate—considered far too slow—in 100 years it will be 50,000,000. By that time, assuming that the Commonwealth debt is paid off to the last shilling (though it is growing constantly), the present State debts would amount to £1,600 a head, including the babies, even supposing that no new loans were floated except for renewals and interest. And if the external debt alone is considered, which is not being reduced even by the Commonwealth but is being increased by new loans,

and now stands at over £500,000,000, the burden of interest will be not less than £60 a head in 100 years' time, even if the population increases to 50 millions, which is very doubtful. The expectation that increase of population will materially lighten the burden of interest per head is altogether fallacious. The only way to lighten the burden is to reduce or discharge the debt. When the great Jewish law-giver declared the statute of limitations, he knew the effect of interminably accumulating interest. The Commonwealth of Australia is in a better position perhaps, to discharge external debt than any other country in the world saddled with that incubus. In the first place, we have our gold; the value of our gold as an extinguisher of external debt is, I feel sure, not realised. If we could double our output of wool and wheat, we should gain something, but not nearly double the present exchange value; and if any other country could produce 10 times as much wool as Australia, the exchange value of our wool as a means of paying for what we buy or owe would diminish to vanishing point. But how different is the case with gold! Gold is the only thing that will pay debts in countries with the gold standard. Past experience in Australia shows that active gold mining is the most effective immigration agency of modern times. It is also a marvellous stimulus to all other forms of industry. Everyone who has studied our immigration policy since the war must surely be heart sick at its deplorable failure and the awful cost of it. It has only proved what most of us know—and what some of us said and wrote—before it was started. So long as the credit of Australia is good enough, just so long will politicians be forced to borrow more and at higher rates of interest, until the final collapse, unless we take action while there is still time, to establish an activity which will pay our debts, in place of a spurious prosperity which is constantly increasing them.

I must apologise to the Committee for all this reading, but the subject is so important as to be well worthy of attention. Actuaries and accountants have particularly stressed this matter of our loan indebtedness. That is why I say it is so important and why I am inflicting this upon the Committee. The report continues:—

There is one other special advantage Australia possesses which may be availed of as a means of repaying the external debt. That is the special quality of Australian wool. The reason our gold is so valuable is because it cannot be refused in settlement of debt. The reason our wool has a special value for debt payment is that, though it could be refused, it never will be (as far as man may see), because to a great extent it is unique, and the world wants it; and, as proved during the past few years, particularly, the world will pay very high prices in order to get it. The expansion of our debt is gradually bringing about an inflation of values in Australia, which, if not checked, will in a subtle way, push on down towards the abyss that engulfed Germany, and to-day threatens France. The

difference is that Germany (like France), apart from war obligations, had no external debt, so that by continued inflation, involving widespread internal ruin, but not the loss of national assets, the internal debt was extinguished. But if Australia should default with its external debt, the holders could, by their agents, gather the revenues of the Commonwealth and the States, and the standards of living would become just the lowest that would prevent Australians fleeing from this country to some other.

He sums up the position in these three lines—

The reform suggested is, in a word, that employment based on loans shall be transferred to production that will repay loans.

That is rather a doleful outlook so far as Australia is concerned. The opinion is given by a prominent man, one who is looked up to in the statistical world as being an authority on matters such as this, and I presume he has reasoned it out on common sense lines.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Who is he?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Mr. Smethurst. If I have been the means of causing members of this House to seriously think over the problem of our loan policy, I shall have not done any harm by reading out his long screed.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: We must spend our money wisely.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That is what the writer suggested at the end of his article. I considered it wise to bring the matter forward to-night, not so much with the idea of locking upon things in a pessimistic way, but I considered it would give us food for thought and allow us to see whether everything is as bright and as rosy as we think it is. Although there may be a certain amount of prosperity at the moment, we should prepare ourselves for the wise expenditure of our funds and see that money is not squandered, but that it is devoted to works that will pay interest and sinking fund.

The Minister for Lands: If we do that, there will be no more railways.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That is what is pointed out by the writer. In this House there are 50 members, and after one has been here for a few years he gets the idea into his head that a lot of what he may have to say is futile, that he is merely one amongst 50, and that therefore he cannot alter things very much with the financial heads who are conducting the affairs of the State. I contend, however, that so long as

a wise policy is carried out, one can take things as he finds them and permit the spirit of *laissez faire* to enter into the position. Then again, many members who have been in this Chamber for some time form the opinion that the subject of finance is too big for them to grasp and that deters them from speaking on it. But they need only speak on common sense lines and their remarks could be made to apply to the finances of the State just as they might be directed towards the finances of a business concern. In view of the fact that to-night a party of members intend to proceed to the Merredin State farm, before I start upon the little I have to say about agriculture and our secondary industries, I should like to make some reference to the subject of irrigation. Members of this House who have been here for some years, are aware that on many occasions I have brought under notice a number of questions. Some people have looked upon those matters as fads. I do not look upon them as such; I look upon them as questions that are of vital interest to the State. Amongst them is the subject of irrigation, and I have made the request that there should be some slight expenditure in the direction of experimenting at the river Avon. There has been too little attention paid to irrigation, and its possibilities have not been recognised to the extent that should have been the case. In ancient and modern times irrigation has played a very important part. We know the history of Egypt; and we know that to-day in Mesopotamia big irrigation schemes are in progress for the growing of cotton on land controlled by Great Britain. Irrigation prevails in many countries of the world where they have two seasons, wet and dry, and in countries of an arid and semi-arid character. To stress the importance I attach to the question of irrigation, I would state that in India there are 50,000,000 acres under irrigation. In the United States there are 10,000,000 acres; in Egypt 6,250,000 acres; in Italy 4,700,000 acres; in Spain 2,800,000 acres, and in France 400,000 acres. It is estimated that over 200 millions of people are entirely dependent on irrigation. In the older countries of the world irrigation has been practised as far back as history gives any record, and in India and China works and channels exist which are known to be 1,500 years old. In Egypt irrigation was recognised in the time of the Pharaohs. On

the 26th November, 1919, I spoke in this House on the subject of irrigation by suggesting the damming of the Avon River. On that occasion I made reference not only to the Avon, but to the 17 surveys for smaller schemes in the South-West. We have a lot of small rivers in this continent that lend themselves admirably to schemes of irrigation. The 17 surveys to which I have just referred, cover 110 miles between Bunbury and Perth and if the schemes were carried out, they would serve 150,000 acres. The rivers in question are: one at Serpentine, two at Murray, two at Harvey, two at Brunswick, three at Collie, two at Logue's Brook, two at Bareillo, one at Samson's, one at Drakesbrook and one at Wokalup. In Western Australia little has been done in a large way with the exception of the construction of the Mundaring Weir, which, in addition to its main use for the goldfields, provides water for a considerable farming area north and south of the pipe line where it crosses the wheat belt. Some little time ago a friend of mine came here on a second visit from India and he was very enthusiastic in regard to what had been done in India by way of irrigation. I gathered from him when he was speaking about the development that had been brought about in India through irrigation and water conservation, that there had been constructed great tanks along the river courses, that hundreds of miles of embankments had been built, that in Southern India great rivers had been impounded, and that tunnels had been driven through mountains and water conveyed to land that was previously dry, and had never been used. We have a great heritage in the North and North-West. When I spoke upon this matter previously, the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) made a request to the Premier that we should endeavour to obtain the services of an officer from India, an expert in irrigation, to go through our North-West and report upon the possibility of irrigation, as to how we might utilise the enormous number of rivers we have there and from which millions of tons of water are to-day going to waste. In speaking of the North-West, I do not wish anyone to suggest that I should leave it alone.

Mr. Teesdale: You will not get that from me.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: We in the south should be more interested in the North than we actually are, and if a southern member

begins to display an interest in the North, no northern member should warn him off.

Mr. Teesdale: It is the northern members that ought to be warned off.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It is interesting to learn that 57 years ago there were 300 miles of railways in India and that the turnover was 40 millions sterling per annum. To-day there are well over 32,000 miles of railway, fed by 37,000 miles of metalled roads, and the turnover reaches the enormous figures of 260 millions sterling per annum. All this has been brought about by irrigation and water storage. There is land of the size of Great Britain under rice, the area being 119,000 square miles. There are 75,000 square miles under millet and 33,000 square miles under wheat. These figures are so enormous that they should have some effect upon us when we think about our great territory in the North. When I speak about irrigation, I think of the present Minister for Lands who said we have no rivers. Certainly we have nothing on the scale of the Murray, but we have rivers in the North which northern members tell us are enormous. Out of curiosity I got hold of Mr. Hobler's report on the North-West and took from it a list of the rivers in that part of the State. Here are a few: Chamberlain, Forrest, Drysdale, Carson, King Edward, Moran, Lawley, Roe, Prince Regent, Charmley, Calder, Lennard, Meda, Fitzroy, De Grey, Wooramel, Fortescue, Ashburton, Manilya, Gascoyne, Murchison, Ord, Behn, Panton, Butlers Bow, Sandy Bow, Big Bow, Isdell, Denton, Elvira, Fox, Black Elvira, Harding.

The Minister for Lands: The Gascoyne was for five years without water.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In all we have 33 rivers in that part of the State. We in the south cannot realise what that country is. A great many of us have not been over it. I sometimes think of the first occasion on which I came to this country. I walked from Esperance to Norseman, carrying my swag. That was in 1894. I considered it a pretty long walk, but when I got a map and compared the distance with the size of the continent, I came to the conclusion that the journey was a mere flea-bite. Even now when I think of that long walk I have no difficulty in visualising the enormous extent of territory that we have in the North. Since that time I have travelled many thousands of miles over the greater portion of what we call the southern corner. I have

seen much of the country, yet I have not gone further north than Mullewa and Geraldton. Although I have travelled such a lot I have been over a small portion only of the State as a whole. The fact that the Muresk Agricultural College is to be officially opened on the 29th October makes the present time opportune for me to revert to the question of the Avon River, and the necessity for investigations being carried out in connection with the salinity of that waterway. I would like to again bring before the notice of the Minister the advisability of considering whether or not steps can be taken to reclaim the Avon River. Many of the pools are salty but they are in that condition simply because of man's folly. The salinity of those pools is due to the wholesale cutting down of timber without regard to watercourses, which have been stripped of every vestige of vegetable growth. In country such as ours that is semi-arid, with a hot summer, the removal of vegetation has caused the salt to come to the surface. I do not want the member for York (Mr. Latham) to think that I am trenching upon his preserves.

Mr. Latham: If you can make the Avon River fresh, you can keep on talking all night.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It was not the fertile soil only that first attracted the early settlers to the Avon Valley. Many went there and took up land and some of the older settlers have informed me that in those days the water in the pools, while not absolutely as potable as might have been desired, could be boiled and used. It was the presence of the waters of the Avon River as much as the fertility of the soil that attracted the early pioneers. The water in those pools is now salty. This has been accentuated because of the fact that large quantities of flood waters make their way during the winter months into the lakes at County Peak. I think the Minister had something in mind regarding experiments to be undertaken by means of flood gates to prevent the overflow from the river entering the lakes. That would have saved the upper reaches of the river and if that alone were achieved, it would be a wonderful thing. After I have presented some facts and figures to hon. members, I know they will be inclined to agree with me. The Avon River starts somewhere near Wickiepin, at an elevation of over 1,000 feet above sea level. The river runs past Pingelly and

Brookton and enters the Avon Valley at Beverley. It passes on through York, Northam and Toodyay, finally junctioning with the Swan River in the vicinity of the Moondine Hills, about 20 miles from Midland Junction. It may be said, therefore, that the Avon is about 120 miles long. That is about the same length as the River Severn in England. The Severn is the largest river there and to those of us who came from the Old Country it seemed to be a very large stream indeed. That river runs more or less right through the year and there are no pools such as are to be found along the course of the Avon River. When hon. members realise that the water shed drained by the Avon covers, roughly, 4,000 square miles, and that the river runs through country where droughts are unknown and where the rainfall ranges between 15 to 30 inches annually, the importance of such a large stretch of country will be apparent. More particularly will this be so when they recollect that the watershed available in connection with the goldfields water scheme in the Mundaring area covers only 330 square miles. I have details of the overflow at the weir at Northam, but I will not weary the House with them. I will content myself with stating that in 1917 when the rainfall was very heavy—again this year the total rainfall must be very heavy—enough water went over the weir at Northam to fill the Mundaring reservoir 42 times over! The overflow comprised rain water only.

Hon. G. Taylor: In one year?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Yes.

Mr. North: Is there an overflow every year?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Even in a bad year there is a restricted overflow. In fact, even then the overflow runs into several millions of gallons, or enough to fill the Mundaring Weir two or three times over. When we come to consider the soil of the Avon Valley, it must be recognised that we have a class of country unsurpassed for fruit growing, with a climate that is most advantageous. It is similar in many respects to the decomposed granite country on the south coast of New South Wales, where the finest and earliest crops of stone fruits, pears and apples, are produced. As in that part of New South Wales, irrigation is necessary in the Avon Valley to obtain the best results. On the other hand, the Avon Valley has the advantage in that we can grow to perfection a larger variety of

fruits, including all citrus types and vines. Furthermore, the climate is eminently suitable for the drying of all types of fruits, without the aid of artificial means. The position, therefore, warrants a very complete investigation of all the natural resources of the Avon district, including, of course, an exhaustive investigation of the Avon River waters to determine their suitability for developmental purposes. I will give hon. members some idea of what has been done in the Avon Valley. Many of them probably had an opportunity of seeing what has been done by Mr. A. J. H. Watts as the result of his power schemes. Mr. Watts has an orchard at Northam where he has been growing all classes of deciduous and citrus trees, and vines very successfully. His three-year-old mandarin and orange trees have carried two cases of fruit per tree, while the five-year-old trees have returned as many as five and six cases per tree. As I have indicated, Mr. Watts is the same gentleman whose enterprise with tractors on the North Waeel country is transforming sandplain country into smiling wheat fields. There have been others who have experimented in their endeavours to use the river water in the development of their holdings. I can quote the instance of Mr. Craig at York who has been successful in his irrigation operations, in the course of which he used water from one of the Avon River pools, and has grown splendid crops of lucerne. At Muresk, Mr. Cotton told me, some years ago river water was used in connection with an orchard, but the trees were killed. That emphasises the fact that something must be done to make the water more suitable before it can be used for irrigation purposes. As I have already indicated, it is in flood time that the waters of the Avon River rush into the County Peak lakes. It is there that I suggest the Minister should carry out experiments and dam the waters from entering the lakes. Already experiments have been carried out along those lines, seeing that farmers have used sandbags at the entrance to the lakes in order to keep the flood waters back. That has been possible when the overflow has not been too heavy. As a result of their efforts, it was found that the water in the pools next year was much fresher than usual. The overflow from the river enters the lakes where all the loose salt is gathered up. When the river once more falls to its normal level, the salty water is brought

down by the banked up waters that are released and pollute the river just when most harm can be done. That is when the flood waters come down in the early part of the season. The result is that the upper reaches of the river are polluted, with consequent deleterious results. Mr. Bernard, who was at one time Mayor of Northam, issued a pamphlet in which he dealt with the reclaiming of the river and the reduction of the saline contents of the Avon River waters. In the course of his pamphlet Mr. Bernard said:—

It is now an accepted fact that where the York gum grows along the bank of a creek, the water is not salty, the gum trees absorbing the salt in the soil. It may therefore be possible to improve the quality of the water by the simple expedient of distributing plenty of gums among the settlers for planting along the creeks, and this in itself would probably improve the quality of the water considerably within, say, 10 years.

I have already mentioned Mr. Craig and his lucerne experiments at York. That gentleman has also had splendid results with his couch grass experiments. The couch was artificially planted and is growing splendidly in the bed of the river where it is not covered in summer time. When I was in Northam, Inspector Houlahan noticed that I was interested in the salt problem, both in connection with the Avon River water and the Avon Valley soil. He took me to a paddock that had been reclaimed. I had seen that paddock previously when it was covered with salt and magnesia. Inspector Houlahan planted three or four plants of "Old Man" salt bush, that being the large variety. The result was that those plants ate up the salt and cleared the magnesia out of the paddock. That shows how feasible it is that something may be done to overcome the salt problem. I would commend this question to the officials of the Forests Department, and I trust they will interest themselves in the problem. There were many orchards in the Beverley district, but owing to the salt rising, the trees died out. This was because all the vegetation had been cut down, thus enabling the salt to rise to the surface. As an illustration of what happens, I would mention the experience of Mr. F. E. S. Willmott, who has an orchard at Bridgetown. On one occasion he had a re-tive horse that backed his conveyance into a flooded gum. Mr. Willmott became annoyed and ring-barked the tree as he had decided to get rid of it. The tree did not die, as he did not do

the job completely. Prior to the ring-barking of the tree, the water in the well had been absolutely fresh. After ringbarking the tree, Mr. Willmott found that the water in the well had become as salt as the sea. Later on, however, the tree sprouted from the bottom and after the new limbs had grown up again, the water in the well resumed its freshness. To-day the water there is as fresh as any to be obtained in the Bridgetown district.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: It seems more than likely that should the river be turned into a live stream, with a good volume of water always present, the proportion of salt and magnesium in the water would become so small as to be harmless, especially if this could be helped by (a) An occasional flushing of the river bed; (b) If possible diverting some of the streams that carry much salt into the Avon; (c) A persistent and consistent policy, in which the Government and the settlers should co-operate, of planting gum trees or other suitable trees, etc., along the banks of the various water courses. I may mention parenthetically that the water on the eastern side of the Mundaring catchment area on one occasion became so contaminated through the earth salt being washed from the banks, denuded of timber, that alarm was felt lest the source of supply might become salt. Reforestation was undertaken on the banks and, with flushing through the flood gates, the water was restored to its original sweetness. Touching the nature of the water, the data available is so scanty and of such poor quality as to make it useless and even worse than useless. It must be remembered that the settlers in this State, even the old settlers, have been and most of them still are in the pioneering stage. The Avon provided good drinking water for their stock, and that was all they required it to do for them. It is generally stated that the water in the Avon varies, that it is salty in some parts and quite fresh in others. It seems that the water throughout has a strong admixture of salt and magnesium. It must be remembered, however, that the water is rainwater, and, therefore, fresh, that it gathers its salt and magnesium from the land it passes through, and the various creeks that pour into it. Even with the meagre details we have, we are

able to say the salt runs as low as 33 grains to the gallon and as high as 300 grains and always at about the same places, namely, Burges' Siding, on the Mortlock and one or two places about York. If I can direct the attention of the soil and agricultural chemists and analysts not only to this Avon River water problem, but to the salt trouble on our lands, I shall feel that my time has not been wasted. The Forests Department are doing splendid work, and I would direct their attention to a suggestion for co-operation with the settlers in a tree and suitable shrub planting campaign to arrest the contamination and bring about the ultimate restoration of the waters of the classically named Avon River to their original state of purity. Various remedies could be brought to bear upon the salt problem. There are chemical antidotes and in the States of America, for even the worst form called "Black Alkali" land plasters of gypsum and lime have proved successful. Salt has also been eradicated by means of vegetable growth, such as gums, native scrub and shrubs, saltbush, lucerne, sorghum and beet. The Leader of the Opposition, in speaking on the question of using the water for irrigation purposes, rather scouted the feasibility of irrigation anywhere beyond the ranges. At the Moree artesian irrigation farm the mineralised salty water has been successfully utilised by wise and careful cultivation of plants and vegetables suitable to that particular country. In a pamphlet published in 1913, Mr. O. L. Bernard, then mayor of Northam, stated inter alia:—

The main question arises, could the Avon River watercourse be so improved as to become a live water course flowing all through the year? How is this to be done? Without anticipating the opinions of engineers and others, who alone can give authoritative views on such matters, it certainly does not seem to the lay mind that there are any insuperable difficulties in the way. There is a continuous and gradual decline in the country all along the course of the stream, and whilst in some parts the bed of the river is somewhat too wide, in other parts for long distances the river is naturally banked up on both sides. Altogether there seems to be nothing against and everything in favour of a system of locks at the various points found suitable, with a big reservoir at the highest point to provide what I believe is referred to as "compensating water," or water which will reach those parts where the water backed up by the local lock will not reach.

I fancy I hear the Minister for Land say, "Now you will want millions of money."

I would therefore suggest:—1, That the Government be asked to instruct, as soon as possible, an engineer or engineering party to examine the course of the River Avon, and to decide upon the best method for preserving the water of the river, and so arrange that it be turned into a live continuously flowing stream, if such be possible. The engineers to formulate a scheme and give an approximate idea as to the likely cost of the undertaking in its entirety, and as to the likely cost of each section, should it be found advisable to do the work in sections. 2, That a system of gaugings be at once established in connection with the river. This, once started, could be carried out by the local authorities at, perhaps, hardly any cost to the Government. 3, That the work of analysing the water of the river systematically and thoroughly at various depths at various places, and at various times of the year by reliable men be inaugurated as soon as possible.

Since that time gaugings have been taken of the river overflow and some valuable information has been obtained. I have already referred to the quantity that overflowed in the big flood year of 1917. On the 23rd November, 1920, Mr. E. A. Mann, then Agricultural Chemist and Government Analyst, addressed the Minister through the Under Secretary on the utilisation of the Avon water thus:—

The gaugings and tests of the water flowing over from the Northam Weir have now been completed for this year, and I forward herewith three tables showing:—(1) The weekly gaugings of overflow and estimation of certain ingredients therein. (2) A graph in which the overflow has been converted into acre-feet. (3) A table showing a series of tests made of Burges' Pool at Tipperary, between Spencer's Brook and York. The results are very interesting, and it will be seen that during the week ended 23rd August no less than thirty-three thousand acre feet of water flowed over the Northam weir, containing only thirty-one grains per gallon of salt. The overflow during this week is over nine thousand million gallons, or approximately twice the capacity of the Mundaring weir. There seems to me little doubt that, if this water supply were controlled, such a huge volume of fresh water could be utilised to advantageously change the whole of the content of the Avon River. The examination of the figures for the Tipperary Pool shows that this pool seriously lags behind the water in the Northam weir, since it freshens much later, becomes salt much earlier and never reaches the same degree of freshness as the water flowing to waste over the weir. This is to be expected, and must be largely due to the condition of the river bed, which effectually prevents a proper freshening of the stream during flood times, and thus the lower depths of the river are at present forming reservoirs of saline water which are detrimental. I am of opinion that if the river bed was cleaned and snagged, these pools could all be sluiced and left full of comparatively fresh water at the end of the wet season. The effect

of this could be greatly enhanced by the construction of weirs at various points as already suggested, through which bottom sluicing could be conducted to keep the river bed scoured. The tables which I forward to you are very interesting as constituting the first systematic examination of the variations in salinity of this water, and should, combined with engineering data, afford particulars for exact mathematical calculations by which the proposals to utilise the Avon River could be critically examined. As the water has now ceased flowing over the Northam weir the further tests cannot be made until the overflow has begun next wet season, but I would strongly urge that a similar record be continued from year to year during each winter. I beg to recommend that these data may be forwarded to the Engineer-in-Chief for his examination. As I understand that some question has been raised by the engineers of the Water Supply Department as to why I should make suggestions in connection with this matter, which is looked upon as an intrusion upon their work, I would like to make it perfectly clear that I had no intention whatever of trespassing upon the domain of other officers. The matter has come before me in quite a legitimate fashion from two sources:—In the first place, owing to the inquiry of the special committee appointed to report on the establishment of an Agricultural College, of which I was a member, and in connection with which it was necessary to ascertain data as to the possibilities of irrigation in the Avon Valley. In the second place, the same question has arisen in connection with inquiries made by Mr. Hampshire as to the possibility of dairy development in that district. As Agricultural Chemist it was necessary for me to obtain certain facts, and as these facts appear to me of value I am now forwarding them through you with the desire that they may be of some value to the engineering officers of the Public Works Department in dealing with this scheme. As I understand that Parliament has recently passed a resolution that inquiry should be held into the utilisation of this water, these facts may be particularly opportune at the present time. (Sgd.) E. A. MANN, Agricultural Chemist and Government Analyst.

I do not think it would serve any useful purpose at this stage to put additional information before members.

Mr. Marshall: Not when you use the statements of E. A. Mann.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: He is an agricultural chemist and was Government Analyst. His reports were relied upon as to the potash and mineral content of the water, and his investigations have proved to be correct.

Mr. Marshall: He is like sugar and water.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In view of the Muresk College now operating, Mr. E. A. Mann's report and a speech he made at Northam just about the same time are doubly interesting. The Minister for Agriculture, no doubt, has already been querying if it is

possible to reclaim this Avon River back to its original state of sweetness, and I have purposely revived this discussion thinking the time is ripe for so doing. Mr. Mann's speech, as reported in the "Northam Advertiser," read—

Last year, when he had been travelling around in connection with the establishment of an agricultural college, one of the things to be decided upon was a favourable area for the growing of fodder crops, and he had been greatly attracted by the flats on the banks of the Avon River between Northam and York. Experts from Perth had come up, and they were agreed upon their suitability. There was one great difficulty, however, and that was the question of water irrigation. The pools along the Avon were very salty, more so than they had thought, for no record had been kept, as might have been expected in such a district. From experiments he had conducted in his laboratory, he had found that the water contained 300 grains of salt to the gallon, and it was generally accepted that water with over 100 grains to the gallon was unsuitable for irrigation purposes. He contended, however, if the difficulty was properly studied it could be overcome. The solution was at their door. The only data regarding the river were figures in connection with the amount of water that flowed over the weir at Northam.

The figures I have here show that 103 billion gallons was the overflow in one month. That was in July, 1917. As a matter of fact the actual overflow during 1917 was 212 billion gallons, or sufficient to fill Mundaring dam 42 times over. The report continues—

In flood time over 103,000,000 gallons went over, and when the river was in flood the percentage of salt was very much reduced. The water had been tested, and showed as low as 53 grains to the gallon, but he thought more complete figures should be obtained. He desired to get Mr. Hampshire's opinion on the flats already mentioned before making any representations to the Government. If by imprisoning the water at different points, as it came down, they could reduce the salinity, the river would be admirably suited for the irrigation of the flats. It seemed to him that the thick growth along the banks was causing obstruction, and the roots of the trees forming silt.

I would here mention this is not altogether in accord with other opinions. The opinion is that the trees along the river banks do good, helping to keep salt in check, but it is agreed that the river channel should be cleared. In concluding Mr. Mann stated—

Could the river be cleared of these obstacles, and the channel cleaned, they would obtain a flow which would enable them to flush the river to an extent never before contemplated, and if it were flushed regularly, it would cause a permanent improvement in the river and adjacent land.

Mr. Mann, in support of this, instanced an example of sluicing that had been carried out at Mundaring (when the water showed signs of becoming too salty) with excellent results, and maintained that what had been done there, could also be accomplished here, although it might take one or two years. At one period the water in the Mundaring Reservoir became pronouncedly salt, on the eastern side, due to the wholesale slaughter of the timber on that side. This was remedied by opening the bottom flood gates and washing the salty deposit away. And re-afforestation has stopped the trouble altogether. I have been asked what the depth of these pools is. Burlong Pool is about 23 feet deep. The Mile Pool near York is 1½ miles long and only slightly brackish. There is a great body of water and a succession of these pools, and the pity of it is that something is not being done to utilise the water. Giving the Avon a length of, say, 100 miles, and allowing, say, 20 miles on either side for irrigation, this would give some 2½ million acres of irrigable land. This at a low estimate would be worth £20 per acre capital value or, say, £1 per acre annual value. At 50 acres per family, it would provide room for 50,000 families and should produce new wealth to the extent of at least £10 per acre per annum—all new wealth, and new settlement mostly, if not wholly, along already existing railways, roads, schools, etc. All this along or near the main line connecting the two great centres of population of the State, viz. the goldfields and the metropolitan area, all this furthermore within two hours rail from the chief seaport of the State. The hilly character of the country in the far South-West and at Toodyay, Northam, and York so far investigated in this direction suggests possibilities of storage reservoirs such as Waranga Basin with its 4½ miles of embankment, Kow Swamp, Lake Boga, Long Lake, the North-West string of lakes. I now leave the matter of irrigation. I thought the time was opportune because some discussion may arise upon this subject. I do not advocate the big schemes that have been outlined by the ex-mayor of Northam. These are on rather an ambitious scale. I would rather advocate the smaller experiments in connection with the river in the Beverley electorate. Something should be done to stop the flow of the Avon into the lake there, and to see whether some parts of the river cannot be replaced. We are going to Mer-

redin to-night. I am proud to represent the Avon electorate, which contains two of the squares which contributed one-fifth of the wheat produced from the State last season. The Dowerin square contributed last year 1,255,620 bushels, that including Kununopin and Nungarin contributed 779,122, the Meckering square contributed 921,978 bushels, and the Kellerberrin up to Merredin square contributed 1,057,168 bushels. The total yield of the State was 20,471,177 bushels. The little tract of country, half of which I have the honour to represent, contributed between the four squares one-fifth of last year's wheat yield. I think the contribution this year will be even greater. I was glad to hear the Premier's reference in his Budget speech to agriculture. He said he looked forward hopefully to the future, and that it was very largely to agriculture we must turn our eyes. We may become a manufacturing nation in the future, but for a time will have to be content with developing our primary industries. By that I mean wheat growing, wool growing and other primary industries, and gold mining. Agriculture is the natural industry of the State. Every Government with any foresight must see that our destiny lies in this direction for many years. I believe in a well-balanced State. If we could develop our secondary industries in a natural manner, preventing them from making unnatural parasitic growths, and causing them to go ahead in a reasonable way, in conjunction with our primary industries, we should have a well-balanced State. I believe in a certain amount of protection. I am not a rabid freetrader, and I do not believe in the present protective policy. The best way to create a well-balanced State is by developing agriculture, as we are endeavouring to do now, and encouraging secondary industries to proceed along natural lines. A spirit of optimism has been strongly in evidence of late. I had a trip of 1,200 miles through my electorate recently. Wherever I went the crops looked most promising. As far up as Merredin and Nungarin there were some of the finest crops in the State. Along the road leading to Lake Brown there were crops as good as any that could be seen. Around Lake Brown there were some crops which had not properly seeded. In such instances it seems that men with inadequate plants had been endeavouring to put in too large an area and had sown it too early in the year. The grain had, therefore, re-

mained in the ground for several weeks under a hot sun. Some of these people had sown on April fool's day. The wheat came into flower at a time when no pollenisation could take place. Around Westonia I saw many crops that had been put in on fallowed ground that were as good as anything one could wish to see. On the unfallowed ground the crops were not so good. I noticed six crops in particular, and learned that these were the crops of men who had farmed properly. In the case of some of the other settlers, owing to the vagaries of the season, or possibly to bad farming, the crops were not nearly as good. Most of these settlers know how to farm in the best way, but are not in a position to put their knowledge to use. The bank or the Industries Assistance Board require that they should put in a certain area of crop, and they have done it. In any district that is at all doubtful the Government should insist upon a certain amount of fallowing being done. I believe that policy is being pursued to-day. Around Lake Brown and other places I saw many fine crops, because these had been properly put in. Next door to them were very often poor crops. The settlers had to farm as best they could, and were not in a position to do any better. I would remind members that out of a total production for Western Australia last year of £29,228,583, the products of agriculture, pastoral and dairying industries, forestry and mining, all primary industries, were worth £23,973,626. Agriculture, pastoral and dairying were responsible for £18,810,363, and manufacturing for £5,254,907. This shows that we should centre our attention on our primary industries, but keep an eye on the growth of our secondary industries. In view of the large sums necessary to promote land settlement on a sufficiently large scale it has been suggested that Australia should push on with the development of its manufacturing industries with the object of promoting a more rapid increase in population than is possible through land settlement. Although protected by a high tariff, Australian manufacturers can make but limited progress because of the relatively small home market and of the cost of production. This renders an export trade of any magnitude in manufactured goods almost out of the question. I have heard a great deal about the troubles of farmers and about the general outlook of agriculture. Recently a new secretary for

agriculture was appointed in the United States, a Dr. Jardine. When asked the remedy for our agricultural problems, he summed up the position in four words, "Balanced production, orderly marketing." He then went on to say:—

The farmer cannot improve his business methods by means of law any more than the town man has done, although certain laws are useful. We cannot increase land values unless we make the land produce a larger income. This can be done if he will only produce the right kind, the right quantity, and right quality of farm products. Most of this can be done by the individual farmer on his own farm, and not by legislative fiat. The farmer does not want charity, nor does he want to be pitied. The farmer has the opportunity for better food, better air, better health, more variety of work, greater independence of action, is less a slave to the routine of watching a clock, and with the radio and the motor car all the pleasures of the city are now available. He has a chance to grow a tree, hear a bird sing, see the blue sky as a whole, and the inspiration of cultivated acres.

A big job, for a big man, in a big country! We have in our present Minister for Agriculture a gentleman who is interested in the scientific side of farming, and who I am pleased to be able to say is doing a great deal for the new areas by the establishment of experimental farms and plots particularly in districts having a light rainfall. When reading the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" recently, I came across the statement that wheat would not grow well unless it had a mean maximum temperature of 42 degrees. We know that as one goes further inland, the temperature becomes low in winter time. The question is whether the temperature of the areas further inland will suit wheat. I recommend that aspect of the matter to the consideration of the authorities. I have spoken about this with various people who are extremely anxious to see the wheat belt extend to the goldfields, if possible; and on the goldfields the temperature is at times pretty low. Merredin, where wheat grows admirably, is one of the coldest spots in Western Australia. Southern Cross is said to be worse in this respect. However, what has been accomplished in Merredin is a good augury for the success of wheat growing at Southern Cross. An interesting article on the scientific aspect of the pastoral industry from the pen of Mr. Hugh McCallum, Sheep and Wool Inspector, appears in this month's "Agricultural Journal." The writer quotes the wool values and skin values of last year, and then points out that more

attention should be paid to the scientific aspect of the pastoral industry. The country south from Geraldton is more and more becoming sheep country. I feel sure that those districts in time will carry proportionately more sheep than the existing sheep areas. The article states—

At the present time there is available a considerable amount of scientific and practical knowledge in regard to the breeding and feeding of sheep, but, notwithstanding this, there is much wasted effort on the part of sheep men through working on unscientific lines. Among the most important subjects calling for scientific investigation are sheep husbandry and the growth of wool, sheep alone in their ability to transform feed in quick time into an article of marketable value. The cultivation of fodder crops has not received the attention it deserves. More knowledge is required of our soil in relation to stock breeding. In this respect the sheep man is behind the wheat grower. The scientist has made it possible for the wheat grower to carry on. Without superphosphate there would be no wheat industry in Western Australia to-day. The application of super has earned 7½ millions per annum for Australia. Experiments are being carried on to assess the value of fodders that have given good results in other countries.

The scientist has made it possible for wheat to be grown to-day in localities where not many years ago it was considered impracticable. Superphosphate, early sowing, and fodder crops have rendered possible the growing of cereals on lands which at one time were regarded as merely hay-growing propositions, and poor at that. When hay was grown in those districts, it was sold on the goldfields. The early settlers were content to take the line of least resistance. The article continues—

Experiments are being carried on to assess the value of fodders that have given good results in other countries. Again in regard to the growth of wool there is room for research on the part of the scientific investigator.

The writer goes on to declare that a research bureau would repay expenditure over and over again.

There are many questions of vital interest to the industry that would claim the attention of the bureau. All disabilities that confront the sheep breeder would come within its purview. It would amass and distribute all available information and it would be an authority to which all interested could turn.

Finally the writer makes a statement which is of considerable importance in view of the fact that we are now embarking on what will eventually prove the greatest agricultural college in Australia. The department have set out with that ideal, and

I feel sure it will be achieved. The statement is—

Above all, the greatest hope for the future lies in the scientific training of our young men in the breeding and in the subsequent nurture of sheep. The sheep industry has always appealed to the youth of Australia, but in a measure our boys can only take it up in a casual way, gleaming it as best they can.

Whilst a great deal has been said about our up-to-date methods and what we are doing to increase the wheat yield, we are in fact only reverting to fundamental principles which were in vogue 2,000 years ago. In B.C. 29 the poet Virgil, in his "Georgics," a pastoral poem, said things that are of great interest, having regard to what has been stated about too early seeding—

But if for harvest of wheat and for hardy spelt you ply the ground, and if for grain alone is your aim, first let the daughters of Atlas pass from your sight in the morn, and let the Cretan star of the blazing crown withdraw ere you commit to the furrows the seeds due, or hasten to trust the year's hope to a reluctant soil. Many have begun ere Maia's setting, but the looked-for crop has mocked them with empty ears.

Another translation says—

But a harvest of empty stalks mocks their expectation.

Virgil also gives instructions as to seed pickling and selection plots—

I have seen seeds, though picked long and tested with much pains, yet degenerate if human toil, year after year, culled not the largest by hand. Thus by law of fate all things speed towards the worst, and, slipping away, fall back.

As to Mr. Curlew's forecasts, there is something appropriate to be quoted from the "Georgics"—

Yet ere our iron cleaves an unknown plain, be it our first care to learn the winds and the wavering moods of the sky, the wonted tillage and nature of the ground, what each clime yields and what each disowns. Here corn, there grapes, spring more luxuriantly; elsewhere young trees spring up, and grasses unbidden.

Virgil recommends rotation of crops and occasional burning-off of stubble—

Thus also, with change of crop, the land finds rest, and meanwhile not thankless is the unploughed earth. Often, too, it has been useful to fire barren fields, and burn the light stubble in crackling flames.

Referring to a growth that is too forward and should be checked by putting stock on to graze, Virgil writes—

Need I tell of him who, lest the stalk droop with heavy ears, grazes down his luxuriant crop in the young blade, soon as the growing corn is even with the furrow's top?

If many of our farmers in the early districts this year had sheep to put an artificial check on their crops, they could have followed that advice of 2,000 years ago. I am sometimes amused to read in the Press what I may term the urban outlook on farming. I have here an extract from a "Hansard" report of a speech on the tariff by Mr. West, member for East Sydney. It reads as follows:—

I am not the first who has tried to impress upon legislative bodies the necessity of doing something for our boys. We spend something like £2 5s. per head of our population on primary, technical, and University education, and what is it all for? Are those whom we educate to be employed in chasing blowflies from cabbages or mosquitoes from grape vines? Surely there should be some better occupation for our young men than the digging of post holes or the running of wire netting around some squatter's estate. When the farmer ploughs his land and sows his seed, Providence does the rest, and for three months the farmer has nothing to do. He only knocks about the farm, chasing the fowls. There is really no employment in connection with the land.

There is no knowledge of farming in what Mr. West has to say. Increasing wages and decreasing hours in the cities are putting up costs, which have to be passed on. The high tariff adds to the difficulties of the position. These economic problems will have to be solved by our statesmen. Now let me give a few figures relating to the farmer's tools of trade. A reaper and binder enjoys a natural protection of 27.6 per cent., by reason of freight, packing and insurance. The current rate of Customs duty is 49.5 per cent., making a total protection on a reaper and binder of 76.11 per cent. A stripper and harvester has a natural protection of 31.39 per cent., and the current Customs duty is 38.5 per cent., making a total protection of 69.24 per cent. The corresponding figures for a reaper thresher are 15.29 per cent., 38.5 per cent., and 53.34 per cent.; and for a 7-furrow stump-jump mouldboard plough they are 16.3 per cent., 38.5 per cent., and 54.8 per cent. As an instance of how the farmer is hit to leg, I may mention that a 13-disc drill, which in Canada costs £33 5s., in Australia costs £68 10s. In order to keep 4,674 men, who are working far away from the main sources of the supply of coal and iron and steel, employed in manufacturing implements, we are compelling fifty times as many farmers, 222,500 farmers, who work longer hours and have uncertain returns from their wheat, to pay extortionate prices for their tools of trade.

To turn to secondary industries I am sorry to see that from present indications the mission to America that the Federal Government attempted to organise will be abandoned because of the suspicious attitude the various Trades Halls have adopted towards it.

[Mr. Lambert took the Chair.]

Mr. Latham: You won't forget that that train is going to-night, will you?

The Minister for Lands: We shall have to postpone that train.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: In "From War to Work," a book by Samuel Turner, the author quotes as follows:—

I will give the evidence of Mr. E. W. Scripps, a well known American newspaper proprietor and a socialist, who cannot be accused of any bids in favour of the capitalist. This is what Mr. Scripps wrote in the "New Statesman":—"The average wage of the American working man is several times greater than that of the English working man. The average hours of daily labour of the American working man are from 20 to 40 per cent. less than those of the English working man. I know enough of the average conditions in England and her cities to know that, on the average, the American working man is not only far better nurtured and nourished, but that he is far better housed and clothed, and that his children are far more generally, and perhaps far better educated than those of the English working class. In the light of such cold facts, what is there left of the ridiculous theory which represents the results of high production as mischievous to the working man. The question is of such vast importance to the future of our own people that I would consider a little more closely still the facts about America. The Americans are our own kith and kin but, on this subject they think differently, because in their own surroundings they have been able to judge the question impartially. We have not: before the war, at any rate, we had failed to think it out on its merits, owing to our inherited prejudices."

The following are the conclusions drawn by the late Mr. Samuel Gompers, the then President of the American Federation of Labour, who represented 2,000,000 workers, the men whose conditions are described by Mr. Scripps. Lest he should be thought a voice crying in the wilderness, remember that in Britain there are only about 4,000,000 trade unionists all told. This, then, is what 2,000,000 organised American workmen said through their then chief:—

We are not going to have the trouble here that Britain had through restriction of production. There has not been any restriction of output for over 30 years in America. We

in the United States have followed an entirely different policy. We say to the employers: Bring in all the improved machinery and new tools you can find. We will help you to improve them still further, and we will get the utmost product out of them; but what we insist on is the limitation of the hours of labour for the individual to eight per day. Work two shifts a day if you please, or work your machinery all round the 24 hours if you like, with three shifts, and we will help you; but we insist on the normal working day with full physical effort. We will not agree to that overwork producing the poison of over fatigue which destroys the maximum of production, undermines the health of the individual worker, and destroys his capacity for daily industrial effort.

This is what millions of Englishmen domiciled in America think who have left their country never to return. Let us now examine the question of consumption, for consumption and production are two sides of a wheel, which must balance if it is to run true. The fundamental fact about consumption under high production is that the consumers are the producers. America has always depended primarily upon her home market. The high wages paid in the United States have been offset by scientific methods; and the consequence was that before the war the wholesale factory prices of many commodities in America were as low as in Great Britain. Bulk production and scientific methods have reduced the price of commodities steadily. The history of steel production is a capital example of high production in operation. In 1880 the United States produced less than a million tons of steel. In 1916 they produced over 40 millions. Fifteen thousand tons of steel rails have been produced at Bethlehem in a single day. Yet prices of steel rails have steadily fallen year by year from 130 to 28 dollars per ton, etc. The result of increased production, that is to say, and the economies which it effects, is inevitably in the long run increased consumption and lower prices. It appears from official investigations that in 1909 the American people bought £120,000,000 of cotton goods where the British people bought only £20,000,000. As the American population in that year was, roughly, double the British it follows that the average American family bought three times as many shirts, collars, handkerchiefs, etc., as the average British family—a striking confirmation of Mr. Scripps's statement. They did so quite simply because they could afford to do it; because the shirts were cheap enough, and their wages were high enough. It was the result

of maximum output with science, good management, and improved machinery. The example of America has proved that treble wages need not mean treble prices. Here was another chapter, in the form of a table:

PRODUCTION PER MAN INCLUSIVE OF RAW MATERIAL USED.

	U.K.	U.S.A.
	£	£
Boots and Shoes ...	171	516
Cocoa, Chocolate, and Confectionery ...	296	662
Cutlery and Tools ...	164	323
Clothing ...	158	484
Hats and Caps ...	149	414
Hosiery ...	184	309
Leather ...	686	1,054
Matches ...	223	625
Paper ...	330	795
Printing and Publishing ...	398	672

Low industrial production per head is mainly responsible for low wages in Great Britain, and high production per head has made possible high wages in the United States. Consider this table:—

NET PRODUCTION PER WORKER PER WEEK.

	In the U.K.	In the U.S.A.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Boots and Shoes ...	1 7 4	3 10 0
Cardboard Boxes ...	1 0 0	2 15 10
Butter and Cheese ...	2 8 1	8 8 1
Cement ...	2 10 10	4 17 8
Clothing ...	1 3 11	4 7 4
Cocoa, Chocolate, and Confectionery ...	1 12 3	4 18 6
Cotton Goods ...	1 10 5	2 13 9
Clocks and Watches ...	1 7 0	4 3 0
Cutlery and Tools ...	1 8 1	4 1 6
Dyeing and Finishing Textiles ...	1 18 11	4 4 3
Gasworks ...	4 1 1	11 16 7
Firearms and Ammunition ...	2 2 8	4 9 2
Brewing and Malting ...	6 7 3	19 10 5
Paint and Varnish ...	8 16 2	12 9 3
Soap and Candles ...	2 19 8	11 7 8

Mr. J. Ellis Barker, in the "Nineteenth Century," shows that wages in the U.S.A. are higher than in Great Britain. He quotes weekly wages in U.S.A. as follows:—

	1907.	1912.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Builders' Labourers—		
Chicago ...	7 0 0	7 10 0
Pittsburg ...	5 0 0	5 0 0
Carpenters—		
Philadelphia ...	8 5 0	9 3 4
Ironmoulders—		
Pittsburg ...	8 15 8	9 9 0
Linotype Operators—		
Detroit ...	10 0 0	10 0 0

The conclusion is inevitable; and the main reason for it is disclosed in the table taken from the same two documents of the relative horse-power per 1,000 workers employed in the industries of the two countries. In a word, allowing for all exaggeration, it shows that the American worker uses two to three machines or thereabouts to one used by his British competitor. Here is an extract from official American records, published by Sir L. K. Chiozza Money in the "Sunday Chronicle" of 8th October, 1916:—

RELATIVE H.P. PER 1,000 WORKERS.

	U.K.	U.S.A.
Boots and Shoes ...	172	486
Cocoa, Chocolate, and Confectionery ...	346	960
Cutlery and Tools ...	420	2,069
Clothing ...	46	165
Hats and Caps ...	181	588
Hosiery ...	163	804
Leather ...	847	2,389
Matches ...	408	1,729
Paper ...	4,201	15,848
Printing and Publishing ...	1,133	1,154

America uses per 1,000 workers about two to three times as much power as does Great Britain. In addition, she uses in many cases superior automatic machinery. Can we afford to ignore the advantage which these figures show, that we have allowed America to enjoy undisputed in the past; so to speak, to leave to her the steam shovels and content ourselves with the common or garden spade. In regard to our restriction of output, the reason for the enormous increase in the cost of building cottages, factories, etc., is to be found in the simple fact that in 1885 the number of bricks laid in plain walling per worker was from 1,200 to 1,500. In 1912 it was from 560 to 650. In Britain there are innumerable instances of this great refusal. They are refusing the automatic loom. There are only 12,000 in use there, whilst America has 350,000 of them. The same applies to coal-cutting machinery. Only 3 per cent. of British coal is cut by machinery: America cuts 50 per cent. of hers mechanically. That is one reason why, for the last 30 years, coal, the very life-blood of our industry, has grown steadily dearer at the pit's mouth in England, while in the United States and most other countries, it is now as cheap as formerly, if not cheaper. The Sheffield light trades are another instance. Germany before the war was beating Sheffield out of market after market in the cutlery trades. The reason was simply that Germany had adopted the best machines and the best manufacturing methods, and had built large factories in which the labour employed was properly subdivided and the work scientifically specialised. These facts were admitted by Sheffield Labour leaders themselves who visited Germany before the war.

The Minister for Lands: Who ever read their report; did you read it?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: No. Many are of the opinion that, but for the war the British cutlery trade would have perished. We have refused machine tools in the engineer-

ing industry. The census of production showed that, generally speaking, British industries used only one-third to one-half the horse-power per thousand workers that America used.

The Minister for Lands: If I did not have a better opinion of the Old Country than you have, I would not denounce it.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I am not denouncing it; I am saying that it is a mistake that we are all not doing likewise, so that we might be able to cater for all needs.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: What good will your speech do in Parliament?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: What good does anything do—the futility of it all.

Hon. W. D. Johnson: Why don't you lecture the Chamber of Manufactures?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: This is the sort of thing that the Chamber of Manufactures is getting pushed into it from many quarters. We refuse to build houses and factories; let those who doubt this statement consider the following: A block of cottages erected in 1885 cost for 9-inch brickwork (labour only) 8½d. per square yard: bricklayers 9d. per hour, and labourers 6d. In 1912 exactly the same labour cost 1s. 9d. per square yard of 9-inch brickwork: bricklayers 10d. per hour, and labourers 7d. Let me now make comparisons: Based on 20,000 square yards (8½d.) the cost of labour in 1885 was £708; based on 20,000 square yards (1s. 9d.) the cost of labour in 1912 was £1,750. The increase in wages amounted to £98 3s., and the national loss due to restricted output was £943. The loss to the nation was something like £1,000. In erecting a weaving shed in 1882 the stone cost per cubic yard 6s. 6d., and 12,064 cubic yards worked out at £3,920. An identical shed built in 1912 cost 13s. per cubic yard, and the cost amounted to £7,841. In 1882 the material (stone) cost 3s. per yard and mortar 6d., or a total of £2,111. In 1912 the stone cost 5s. and the mortar 1s., a total of £3,619. Mr. Gilbreth, who has investigated the trade of brick-laying in connection with his motion study, found it possible to cut down bricklayers' work by more than two-thirds solely by the eliminating of needless, ill-directed, and ineffective motions. Observe that this enormous saving of labour power entailed no sort of loss to the worker. Mr. Gilbreth's system was not a mere bloodless slave-driving. It recognised to the full what ignorant or incompetent management so often ignores—the human factor in the

worker. He does not ignore the worker's size of brawn in his analysis of his powers; neither does he ignore his creed, his contentment, his food, his health, or his temperament. All these things must be recognised and allowed for by the intelligent employer of the future who will seek the means of high production, which means high wages, and short hours, not in a senseless and cruel speeding-up, but simply in reducing the waste of time and labour which crude old-fashioned rule of thumb methods involve in the workshop. It is quite certain that the scientific method of production involves no necessary addition of labour, to the worker. The girl whom Mr. Gilbreth advised on the right way of putting papers on boxes of shoe polish benefited greatly by taking his advice. Following her own method she put on 24 papers in 40 seconds. The first time she tried the new way she put on 24 in 26 seconds. The second time she did it in 20 seconds. She was not working any harder, only using fewer motions, and both her production and her wages (for she was on piecework) were increased without any extra exertion on her part. What I have gone out of my way to try to prove to the House is this: that if we want to do the best for our people we must follow the examples of other parts of the world. Let it be the Chamber of Manufactures, our working men or anybody else, they should not deny themselves the opportunity to inquire into the methods that are being put into operation elsewhere and that are working so successfully. If there was anything to show that those methods were having harmful effects as the result of cruel speeding-up or anything of that kind, there would be something to object to. There is, however, nothing of the sort. In the States there is mass production. It is in that respect that we are handicapped because we have not the latest appliances, those appliances that will bring our factories up to date, appliances that put more horse power into the hands of the workers. If we had all those things we would be able to do as much as America is doing; we would be producing far more, and greater production means greater wealth. All these things also mean shorter hours and better wages. In America the men get more out of their appliances and in their output there has been no restriction. There have been restrictions in the Old Country, but there they are becoming alive to the fact that they must wake

up to see whether they cannot compete, realising that in no other way will they remain the leaders of the world that they are to-day. The Minister for Lands said something to the effect that I should be ashamed to say such things.

The Minister for Lands: Because you cannot prove them: that is the trouble.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The figures I have quoted are all from official documents.

Mr. Marshall: It is only one side of the question.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: We find that Great Britain to-day has sent two Commissions out. One is making investigations in America at the expense of the "Daily Mail," its object being to see whether it will not be possible to adopt improved conditions. To hear members opposite talk one would think that they were the only people who had democratic ideas, or ideas for the betterment of the country. One would think, too, that they were the only representatives of the working man. I am game to say that in my electorate I am considered as the representative of every section. I attend to the requirements of all the electors. The poorest working man knows that he can get sympathetic treatment and kindly counsel from me, just as I would give it to the biggest farmer.

Mr. Wilson: Who does not do that?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I hope all do.

Mr. Marshall: Then why make the suggestion?

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Because when anyone speaks here a section pooh-pooh his remarks and begin to throw off. In my case it is not a question of getting into the political limelight.

Mr. Marshall: It is not that at all; you disclose the fact that you know nothing about the subject.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: The hon. member is generally looked upon as the know-all in this House, so I will not contradict him. Let that be as it may, I have had my say, and I shall not weary the House any further.

MR. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [8.43]: I did not make a speech on the Address-in-reply and so I shall take the opportunity of making a few remarks on this occasion. It is possible there is no other Parliament in Australia where the Opposition has been so helpful and considerate to the Government as the Opposition in this Assembly. It is not usual to find this sort of feeling

and, as a matter of fact, the help and consideration we have given to the Ministry has caused certain misunderstandings amongst our own people; it has been looked upon as totally unnecessary on our part. One would think, having exposed ourselves to that sort of thing, that there would be a little appreciation shown by those whom we have been trying to help. On the contrary, we have been repaid with abuse and insult to such an extent that it has become almost unbearable. It has come to such a pitch that no one on the Opposition side of the House can make the slightest suggestion regarding an amendment. It is impossible for us to attempt to help with any Bill, without being insulted by one or other of the members sitting on the Government side of the House and even threatened by Ministers!

Hon. G. Taylor: That is right.

Mr. TEESDALE: It is a pity Ministers do not leave that sort of thing to the pack and to the gang who sit behind them ready to obey, and do what they are told.

Mr. Marshall: I ask for a withdrawal of that statement.

Mr. TEESDALE: You have been asleep and know nothing about it!

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. TEESDALE: The member for Murchison has been snoring like a pig. What does he know?

Mr. Marshall: I ask for a withdrawal. I am not one of a pack, nor am I one of a gang. I ask for a withdrawal of the words that are offensive to me.

Mr. TEESDALE: Pig or pack?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Marshall: Pig, pack or gang, I ask for a withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Roebourne is not in order in referring to other hon. members as belonging to a pack. I ask him to withdraw his statement.

Mr. TEESDALE: I withdraw it. I wish that the member for Murchison would withdraw himself from the House. He is a nuisance to everyone.

Mr. Marshall: I ask for a withdrawal of that statement. It is not becoming and it is offensive and rude to me. When I desire to withdraw from the Chamber, I shall do so, but not at his direction or his suggestion.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Murchison objects to the statement, and I ask the member for Roebourne to withdraw it.

Mr. TEESDALE: I will withdraw anything for that man! I was saying when this

unseemly interruption took place that this is a regrettable condition of affairs to exist in this House. It is not conducive to good feeling such as should exist between members here.

The Minister for Lands: I am surprised to hear some of your remarks.

Mr. TEESDALE: Seeing that the members of the Opposition do not wish to make things unpleasant or uncomfortable, but have been endeavouring to help members on the Government side as much as possible, their efforts should meet with approval.

The Minister for Justice: Are you referring to the Shearers' Accommodation Act Amendment Bill?

Mr. TEESDALE: When we were sitting on the Government side of the House we, as a party, were pleased to receive helpful suggestions from the Opposition, and very often acted upon them. Most decidedly we appreciated them, and therefore we have a right to expect the same treatment occasionally from members now sitting on the Government side of the House.

The Minister for Lands: And you get it.

Mr. TEESDALE: During the last six months the position has become most unpleasant for everyone on the Opposition side of the House. It has been to us nothing less than an insult to sit here, because members opposite will not allow any one of us to make a speech without a series of interjections.

Mr. Marshall: I ask for a withdrawal of that statement because it is a reflection upon members sitting on this side of the House.

Mr. TEESDALE: I will withdraw the statement. When the Mitchell Government were in power the members of the Opposition were treated with courtesy, and I am surprised at the way we have been treated during the past month or so. That position has been particularly noticeable of late. On one occasion I remember a member speaking for nine hours, and although I did my best to get Sir James Mitchell to apply the gag, he was too gentlemanly and courteous to do it. He said, "No, Teesdale, I will never do that, if I can possibly avoid it." There has been nothing but gagging on the part of the Government members for some time past.

The Minister for Justice: There has not been any gag.

Mr. TEESDALE: There has been nothing but the gag.

Mr. Marshall: I ask for a withdrawal of the statement that members have been gagged in this Chamber during the past six months. It is offensive to me and rude and unbecoming of a member of this Chamber.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement by the hon. member was merely an expression of opinion.

Mr. TEESDALE: If the Committee is to be—

Mr. Marshall: Mr. Chairman, I ask for a withdrawal.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have given my ruling.

Mr. TEESDALE: I wish he would withdraw himself from the Chamber.

Mr. Marshall: There is no ruling in it at all.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member will resume his seat.

Mr. Marshall: I ask for a withdrawal of the statement.

The CHAIRMAN: I have ruled that the hon. member has merely expressed an opinion, and I cannot call upon him to withdraw it. The member for Roebourne may proceed.

Mr. TEESDALE: When the Premier delivered his Budget speech, one cannot forget the close attention he received from members on both sides of the House. It has to be admitted that members on the Government side of the House always act up to their instructions. The members of the Opposition sat throughout the speech without making any interjections. There were certainly one or two inquiries on the part of the Leader of the Opposition, but apart from those, the speech was received with rapt attention. What a change took place when the Leader of the Opposition attempted to reply! Amidst a tirade of interjections we had the extraordinary exhibition of the Premier conducting a three-minute conversation with a member on this side of the House, totally preventing the Leader of the Opposition from continuing his speech. I was staggered at such a procedure. At one time I had the greatest respect for members sitting on the Government side of the House, but I am losing it, because they are not fair: they are not reasonable.

The Minister for Lands: We are more reasonable than you are when you speak like this.

Mr. TEESDALE: One of the Ministers positively roared across the floor of the House stating that he did not care a two-

penny dump for members sitting on the Opposition side. Was that a statesmanlike utterance that we might expect from a budding Peel or a budding Palmerston? We would expect that sort of thing from a cub who might have found himself here under some extraordinary circumstances that stunned his brain, but not from a man who is leading this House.

Hon. G. Taylor: Ask that that be withdrawn too.

Mr. Marshall: I will ask for you and the member for Roebourne to be withdrawn soon if you keep on annoying me.

Mr. TEESDALE: Lie down! Doubtless, the most important matter dealt with by the Premier during the course of his Budget speech was the financial position. One can state positively that never before in the history of Western Australia has any Treasurer ever had an easier row to hoe than the present Treasurer.

The Minister for Justice: It is always easy for the other man in the job.

Mr. TEESDALE: Not many years ago this State was agog with excitement when a loan for £250,000 was floated in London. At the present time £1,000,000, £500,000, and £456,000 are showered upon the State, and they are glibly referred to as mere sops and bribes, wretched doles and miserable pittances. Never before were such huge sums of money ladled out to a Government in power here.

Mr. Sleeman: That shows the confidence with which the Government are regarded.

Mr. TEESDALE: I do not suppose that ever before has such a deluge of money made available to the State been met with such abuse, derision and insult. We have seen the Press day after day teeming with indignant letters, full of criticism. Sometimes they have been inspired and sometimes they have been written direct by Ministers, endeavouring to show that we have got nothing from the Federal Government. One would have expected that even if the payment of a debt had been retarded, the payment would have been received courteously when made. One would have expected that common courtesy to be extended. One would have expected the fact to be appreciated that the debtor had recognised his indebtedness. On the contrary the payments were received with ingratitude and insult. That fact has attracted a good deal of attention to this State from outside. Usually when people pay their debts they are not insulted.

The Minister for Lands: You must have been suffering from something during the last few days.

Mr. TEESDALE: No Treasurer has had an easier opportunity to make ends meet than the present occupant of the office. If I venture to mention one or two items relating to figures, I suppose I shall be taken to task by the Minister for Lands who seems to be always looking out for an opportunity to detect a few pounds too little or too much in amounts mentioned by members on the Opposition side. Having made provision for that contingency, I may be permitted to mention a few figures, without being taken to task so quickly and earnestly by the Minister. The first dole paid to us amounted to £350,000; the second pittance was £215,000, and the third bribe amounted to £796,000, representing a refund on account of soldier settlement; a total of £1,361,000 shovelled into this State without the slightest condition attached to the payments. The money represents a present, pure and simple, for the Government to do with as they choose. That amount does not include the colossal sums of money allocated on account of road making. These vast sums of money enabled the Minister for Works to go up North and tell my brain-stunned constituents that the Government had to spend £10,000 in their district during the next five years, and that they should arrange their programme so that the money could be spent. The Minister should be careful when he goes amongst my unfortunate people! They cannot stand such announcements! They are going about now in a state of surprise at the thought of the expenditure of such huge sums of money. While it has permitted the Treasurer to proceed along more comfortably than any of his predecessors, it also enabled him to send the Minister for Works about the country making the statements I have referred to. Then the immigration scheme brought a million and a half of money to the State, money that was procurable at 1 per cent. or 1½ per cent. As against that, the Leader of the Opposition had to pay 5¼ per cent. on loan moneys with which to make ends meet. What a splendid position the Government are in with 4½ per cent. to the good!

The Minister for Justice: You seem to be annoyed about it.

[Mr. Luty took the Chair.]

Mr. TEESDALE: Notwithstanding this fusilade of money, there is something extraordinary about the unemployment difficulty. As the present Government seemed to get on their feet, so the unemployment difficulty appeared to become more intensified. I was struck by the extraordinary figures given in this Chamber in reply to an hon. member's question relative to expenditure in this connection. In 1924, while the Mitchell Government were in power, no money was paid out on account of unemployment relief in May, nothing in June, and £7 5s. in July. In May, 1925, with the Labour Government in office, £717 was expended, in June £949, and in July £1,288.

Mr. Marshall: That was the outcome of Sir James Mitchell's immigration policy.

Mr. TEESDALE: You are supposed to be asleep.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. Marshall: That is due to the immigration business.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The hon. member must keep order when called upon to do so.

Mr. TEESDALE: In 1926, £651 was paid out in unemployed relief in May, £976 in June, and £1,346 in July. With all the prosperity we are enjoying and with money coming in at a rate never known before, and with the money considerably cheaper than formerly, yet we have unemployment confronting us even to the present day. We have evidence of the unemployed trouble, and it is no uncommon sight to see outside Parliament House 30 or 40 unfortunates, whose only crime is that they cannot get work. It seems as though the Government are powerless to provide work. In fairness to the Government I admit that they have provided work for a number of the unfortunate men, but one would have thought, in view of all this cheap money that is available, the Government would have been able to overcome the difficulty.

The Minister for Lands: Where is the cheap money that you talk about?

Mr. TEESDALE: In this great country it should not be difficult.

The Minister for Lands: Where is this cheap money?

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: You have had £1,500,000.

The Minister for Lands: That is bunkum.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: Yes, you have.

The Minister for Lands: What is the good of talking like that.

Mr. Marshall: You should know better.

The Minister for Lands: You know you are wrong.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: I know it is right.

The Minister for Lands: Bunkum.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I must ask the member for Roebourne to continue his speech and hon. members to keep order.

Mr. TEESDALE: The Minister for Works and the Honorary Minister travelled through the North and the North-West. I wish to point out that I am speaking of my own district now. We were glad to welcome Ministers, and the people were pleased indeed to think that the Government took such interest in the country that Ministers had seen fit to go North and have a look at them. Some electorates up there were fortunate in getting a good deal of consideration. I was not fortunate, because, owing to the unsuitable running of the boats, the Minister was not able to give me the attention he might otherwise have done. In a speech he made on 10th July, the Minister said he was the head of the department now taking over the North-West Department, and was there to gain knowledge as to the requirements and difficulties of that part of the State to enable him and his colleagues in future to give more sympathetic and sounder judgment to North-West questions than heretofore. That was well put together, but I do not think it was altogether right. I am now speaking for my own district. The Minister's speech is further reported as follows:—

He assured the people that in future things would be handled more efficiently by the Public Works Department under the new regime than they had been by the abolished North-West Department.

After nearly 40 years' experience in that part of the country I confidently say the North-West has never had the attention, the despatch and consideration at the hands of the Public Works Department during the whole of that time that it received from the North-West Department. I came into contact a good deal with the heads of the North-West Department and I saw much of the work that they did. Without fear of contradiction, I say we had our work put in hand more quickly and completed more quickly, and were very much more satisfied under that administration than ever before. The Minister then detailed the road grant policy and said it was the best deal the State had

ever got. He added that they would have to spend—not that they wished to spend, or hoped to spend, but that they would have to spend—£600,000 annually, of which the State found about one-half. He declared that as soon as the agreement was completed the State would be able to get cheap money to assist migration to any part of the State. That was the most encouraging thing I had heard for a long time, and I thought that perhaps we might even have a migration scheme for the North. Here is an extract from the report of the Minister's speech:—

The new steamer, on which no expense had been spared to bring her up to date, would be out in January, and the second boat would be started at once.

This was to call particular attention to the way in which the Labour Government had put the steamers on the coast. I agree that on this point they are to be commended. But when the Mitchell Government sounded the market for new steamers there was no Trade Facilities Act money available. Moreover, the cost of a steamer then was perhaps twice as much as it is to-day.

The Minister for Lands: The Act was in existence.

Mr. TEESDALE: Then I think the money could not have been available, for had it been, our ambassador would have been quick to take advantage of it, and my chief would not have wasted so much time trying to get money elsewhere. Then, as I say, the cost of steamer building at that time was twice as much as it is to-day. I want to draw attention to the treatment accorded to different constituencies while the Minister was up North. I am making no insinuation, but am just giving two plain statements from two newspapers published up in the North-West. I recognise that the Minister was in a difficult position, inasmuch as the steamers on the coast cannot be induced to run just as one would like. Still my electorate had a very unfortunate experience. Here is a quotation from the Broome "Echo" of 10th July, under the headings, "Mr. McCallum's Visit," "In the Benevolent Mood":—

The chairman, Captain Gregory, hoped the Minister would not mind their asking for things first. It appeared to be the only way. Mr. McCallum appreciated the arrangements made. The chairman enumerated the board's requests.

It must have been an extraordinary experience to hear a list of requests read out, and to hear the Minister granting them straight-

way. Here are the requests and their fate:—

No. 1. Money for good road from the residency to goods shed—granted. No. 2. Half a mile of extra road on the entrance to Broome road—granted. No. 3. Exported pearl shell, a primary product, to be allowed to go out wharfage free—to be referred to the Minister responsible. No. 4. Alterations to jetty to enable quicker handling—granted. No. 5. Erection of police morgue at cemetery—referred to Minister responsible. No. 6. Interpretation of A.W.A. and P.W.D. awards—granted. No. 7. Abolition of 20 per cent. wharfage sur-tax—to be referred to the Minister responsible.

So out of seven requests, three were referred to the Minister responsible, and four were granted. Now I have here the account, taken from the Carnarvon "Times," of the visit of the Honorary Minister to Roebourne, as follows:—

It was arranged that a deputation should meet the Honorary Minister (Mr. Hickey) and party on the return trip when our member, Mr. Teesdale, M.L.A., now at Derby would be present. But a telegram was received from the Minister at Onslow asking that the meeting be held on the "Bambra's" up trip.

That was unfortunate for me, and I do not altogether forgive the Honorary Minister for it. I had wired down to the North-West Department when I heard that the Ministers were going up, for I wished to receive them in a proper manner, although not because I thought my electors could not get through without my help. On this occasion, when a Minister actually proposed to land, I thought it necessary to be there and so I made provision to meet him when on his way south. I got a reply saying that that would be arranged. Accordingly my people were advised that it would be all right, and I went off up to Derby. But instead of the Minister landing to take deputations when on the down trip, he despatched a wire from Onslow telling the Roebourne people that he would take the deputations on the up trip. This left me stranded away at Derby. It was a great disappointment to me, because I had already advised the residents that I would be there. As showing how ready my electors are to stand by me, they wired to the Minister that time did not permit of an alteration of the programme, as many members of the road board resided considerable distances from Roebourne. So they sent Mr. Marshall, the secretary of the road board, off to meet the steamer and to acquaint the Honorary Minister that the deputations would have to wait till the down

trip, as there member was not present. Consequently no harm was done. Still, I felt vexed about it, and I have mentioned it to one Minister. So the requests from Broome were granted one after another, whereas I was unlucky enough to not even have the Minister for Works land in my electorate. The extraordinary thing is that some of my people must be thought-readers because before I arranged to meet the Minister on the down trip they sent me this telegram:—

Board urged Minister to visit Roebourne if possible and arrange daylight stay. The board do not agree with port-hole visitors.

And sure enough they did not see any visitors at all, not even port-hole visitors. The Minister for Works kindly acceded to my request to visit Point Sampson. I met him at the steamer and took him off in a launch to see the derelict jetty. He took a good deal of trouble there and I have since had an intimation that the £1,500 originally voted by the Mitchell Government for a survey of a new site for the jetty has been replaced. It was removed by the present Government because the local residents were desirous of having the old structure repaired, in which event the vote would not be required. It has now been replaced on the Estimates. I notice that the Honorary Minister in another place congratulated a North-West member on his splendid speech. I was interested in that, because I like to read of North-West members making splendid speeches. I have no pretensions to that sort of thing, and so I do not look for any approbation, and consequently do not feel aggrieved when I fail to get it. But here we have a North-West member who positively makes splendid speeches. I read the speech and found that the gentleman strongly buttered up the present Government, and so far lost respect for himself as to malign his own party. So my opinion of the splendid speech was rather a different one. The member was satisfied that the present Government were not to blame for not having brought in a Redistribution of Seats Bill. It is an extraordinary attitude for him to take. One would think that he had been away from the country for a few years. Anyhow that particular member is safe and snug in his seat for the next six years and evidently does not much mind what he says, but it is strange that he should select a party that he is

supposed to support about whom to make a statement that is not borne out by fact. The Government he referred to did bring down a Redistribution of Seats Bill. That is well known to every member who was in the House at the time. They forced that Bill to a division, but with the generous opposition of our Labour friends and the help of one or two of our own party, the Bill was defeated. I am surprised that any member or supposed member of the party should make a statement like that which was positively untrue.

The Minister for Mines: Who is the member to whom you refer?

Mr. TEESDALE: I am allowed to say no more than that he is a member of another place. There is no doubt about that particular Bill having been brought in. I have an extract from an Eastern paper that reads:—

A redistribution of seats was not among the measures outlined by the Westralian Labour Ministry in commencing the last session. This means that Westralian Labour now supports an arrangement of boundaries which it furiously denounced when introduced by the late Frank Wilson and which, in the course of 15 years, has grown a hundred times worse. It means that a party professing to believe in the one-vote-one-value principle actually stands for giving goldfields votes fifteen times the value of metropolitan votes.

The extract concludes, "We thought better of Collier and Angwin."

Mr. Marshall: Any fool can write eloquently of something about which he knows nothing.

The Minister for Lands: That paragraph came from this State.

Mr. TEESDALE: The final comment should go a long way towards appeasing the member for Murchison who is getting a little cross—"We thought better of Collier and Angwin."

The Minister for Mines: That must have appeared in a Victorian paper.

Mr. TEESDALE: I do not think it was a Victorian paper.

The Minister for Mines: I think it was.

Hon. Sir James Mitchell: The Labour Leader over there made a hotter speech on redistribution.

The Minister for Mines: But the Premier of Victoria refuses to resign.

Mr. TEESDALE: The Premier in his Budget gave us very little explanatory matter. Therefore I have contented myself with dealing with a few questions that have appeared on the Notice Paper. One of those

questions is the extension of the Council franchise. When the present Premier last asked for a more liberal franchise for the Upper House, I supported him because I thought there would be no great harm in showing a little more liberality. But I have had good grounds lately for regretting that action, and I shall take particular care that so long as I am in the House it will not happen again. This is not on account of any charge that might be levelled against the present Government, but because we have in another State such extraordinary illustrations of extreme legislation that one is fearful of even contemplating the State being left at the mercy of one House. I am now convinced that no further pickets should be taken off the Council fence. The spaces are already quite wide enough. When we find a man holding the honourable position of Premier in another State positively lying to secure an addition of members to the Upper House in order to ensure the passage of extreme legislation—

The Minister for Lands: You cannot say that.

Mr. TEESDALE: It makes a man who tries to be fair become nervous of a State left in the position of the whole of its interests being in the hands of such a person.

The Minister for Lands: You cannot say that. Do not make such statements unless you know them to be correct.

Hon. G. Taylor: Perhaps the Minister does not wish to know it.

The Minister for Lands: I would not say that of anyone.

Mr. TEESDALE: The increase of members of the Upper House in that State was arranged in order to jockey through legislation that otherwise could not possibly have been passed. It was a fitting return for that sort of business when that particular Premier was sold by the very hirelings he bribed to help him. It was a splendid return. He got hold of men who were so unscrupulous that they positively sold him.

Hon. G. Taylor: He could not expect much less.

Mr. Marshall: No, seeing that the member for Mt. Margaret twisted on one or two occasions and that similar characters were appointed over there.

Mr. TEESDALE: I have come to one or two conclusions lately and I shall endeavour to adhere to them. While I remain in this House I shall not give the slightest consid-

eration to any proposal for an extension of the franchise until the Labour Party rid their institution of men like Walsh and Johansen, who have been received back into the fold. Those men are now the respected president and secretary respectively of two of the largest unions in the other States. What an extraordinary position for those men to occupy! Just a few months ago they were being decried and vilified from one end of the State to the other, and in that campaign against them I assisted. The position was so extraordinary that in this House I have been accused by a Labour member of belonging to a party that positively bribed those men to keep up the deportation business; yet we find those men occupying responsible positions to-day. I have the greatest respect for the real, genuine, first-class unionism that I knew when I first began to take an interest in matters affecting the State, but to-day that unionism is being rotted by allowing scoundrels, aliens and blow-ins to come here and help ruin men who otherwise would do their best to be fair and straightforward. I pass now to a more pleasant subject by speaking of my own district. It is hardly necessary to say that the erection of a jetty at the port of Beadon has caused a perfect transformation in the district. The activity and the tremendous advantage resulting from that jetty is almost incredible. Where formerly it cost 5s. per head to lighter a sheep two miles and put it on a steamer, on top of which a freight of 4s. per head was charged, we can now drive the sheep over the jetty at a charge of 1½d. or 2d per head without loss of time. When there is a drought and we want to get stock to market, and the roads are closed on account of the drought, we can put them on a boat, and if they are only forward stores when shipped, we can get a decent price, where otherwise they would have been left in the district to starve. During the financial year 1925-26 we had more tonnage through that port, where two years ago only a few luggers entered, than Broome had. That may surprise some people. The tonnage was only a little short of that handled at Carnarvon. In the 12 months 104 vessels of a combined tonnage of 230,062 tons unloaded at Beadon; 8,000 tons of general cargo and 8,350 bales of wool were handled; nearly 20,000 sheep were shipped outward and 3,700 sheep, mostly valuable stud stock, were received inward. Those

are figures that cannot be beaten by any port on the coast; yet two years ago Beadon was little more than a sand waste without a scrap of timber or anything that would enable one to go on or come off a steamer. This is due to the Mitchell Government having recognised the claims of the district as one of the oldest in the North-West, a district that never had had decent jetty facilities. To-day it has this splendid record, and members should bear in mind that the 20,000 sheep shipped from the port would probably be lying dead in the paddocks but for the facilities to send them away. The jetty at Beadon is, perhaps, unequalled anywhere in Australia. Not only has the jetty proved a great boon to the pastoralists and to the general public, but it has given mining a fillip, which is very important.

The Minister for Lands: You do not give the present Government credit for their assistance.

Mr. TEESDALE: I have always recognised that the present Government honourably fulfilled their obligations which were a sort of legacy from the previous Government. The jetty has enabled lead ore to be shipped at a reasonable rate and that has created considerable activity in the district. At present five or six lead lodes are being worked, and in three or four instances they are being worked by miners with their own money, which is very creditable.

The Minister for Lands: Do you think the jetty or the increase in the price of lead is responsible for that?

Mr. TEESDALE: The cost of putting a ton of lead on board steamer previous to the erection of the jetty was something like 30s. and now I believe it is only about 5s. The price of lead is not wholly responsible for that activity. No matter what the price of lead was, it could not previously be handled profitably on account of the great expense of carting it to the beach and lightering it to the ship. Everyone will be glad to know that the ore is of very good quality. The last two or three lots that were shipped to Antwerp gave a return of 92 per cent. extraction, and in one instance up to 20 ozs. of silver. The Government advanced some money for the Braeside mines and a group of men are now sinking shafts in that district. It is a pity that their attention was not directed to the opportunities offering in my district. I did not neglect to bring those opportunities under their notice, be-

cause it would have been better to spend the money at a place where a 5-ton truck of lead ore could be put on the steamer in three hours, rather than at Braeside, which entails the expense of long carting.

Mr. Marshall: The Government are rendering certain assistance there. All that has been applied for has been given.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am glad to hear all that. As the member for the district, I have not the slightest information as to one farthing having gone up there.

Mr. Marshall: They have not applied for a subsidy of any kind.

Mr. TEESDALE: I was asked to recommend a party, and I did so. I had no idea anything had been done. It is satisfactory to know something has been done. The port of Beadon may in the future be an important factor in regard to shipping lead ore from the State. It is of first-class value, and contains a higher percentage of silver than perhaps any of the Northampton ore. It has my best wishes for its success. I wish to speak now about Cossack, its derelict jetty, and its 40 year old transport arrangement. The people there are still struggling along as well as they can. There has been one of the most disastrous droughts in this district that has been known for years. When a little rain falls in the North some people jump to the conclusion that the drought has broken, and that the whole country is under water. No doubt there have been good seasons in the Kimberleys and parts of the Onslow district, but within 100 miles of Roebourne the country has never been in a worse condition. Stock is dying by thousands. Owners of stations say they have never experienced such a bad time. They have to go sometimes 100 miles away with their stock in order to get feed for them. When it does rain up there, no country is so recuperative as this is. In less than two months of a really good downpour the grass is all over the place, and within six months it is waist high. To-day the country is barren. On top of all this there is the derelict jetty, and the fact that goods cost from 25s. to 30s. per ton more than they did. Members can imagine how hard it is for pastoralists, especially those who have not previously had good times. These people have my sympathy. There has been a little luck there inasmuch as a few patches of shell have again been worked, which were worked when I first went up to the North. Cossack was then the headquarters of the

pearling fleet. Broome had no standing. There used to be four or five big schooners manned with 20 or 30 men, and a big fleet of luggers travelling backwards and forwards. The country was flowing with money. When beer was 40s. a dozen men set up bottles like nine-pins and bowled at them with other bottles. To-day things are very different. The jetty is down. Everything is dearer, and pastoralists are buying as little as possible. This disastrous drought is worse than anything of its kind in Australia. The conditions are in contradistinction to the success attached to the port of Beadon and neighbouring ports. A number of luggers are working satisfactorily as far as Onslow. I think the owners are satisfied. The price of shell is now very low. It is costing more to put shell on the decks of luggers than the owners can sell it for in Broome. Because of this, the principal industry of the North is experiencing the worst time in its history. In 1924 when the Cossack jetty was in existence, there passed over it 6,000 bales of wool, 454 tons of cargo, and 7,700 head of stock. In 1926 there passed over it 2,226 bales of wool, 200 tons of cargo, and 786 head of stock. This shows that the inward and outward cargoes were reduced by 100 per cent. in two years, owing to the disaster to the jetty. I do not see the slightest chance of any alleviation of the trouble until the Government can see some way of having the goods and passengers landed more cheaply and with greater ease. I had a letter from an elector asking me to look into the question of sandalwood. There are some fine patches of sandalwood running right through the back country. This particular individual wrote to the Government on the subject, and received from the Forests Department the following letter dated the 20th May, 1926:—

Your letter dated 25th April addressed to the Hon. P. Collier was handed to me by the Premier prior to his departure for Melbourne. I am directed to inform you that the presence of quantities of sandalwood in the North-West has not been overlooked during the consideration of the control of the export trade of this commodity. Investigations show that a steady output and fair prices can only be maintained by restricting the quantity exported annually from Crown land. Such restrictions have resulted in the number of old sandalwood getters employed in the industry being limited, and any move in the direction of sandalwood pulling in the North-West must inevitably result in the number being still further reduced, and

such action is not considered at the present time in the best interests of the State.

I have heard most impassioned orations from members now sitting on the other side of the House as to the unfortunate prospectors in their electorates who at intervals were able to pull a little sandalwood to eke out a not too prosperous existence. There are also prospectors in the North who would like to get a little sandalwood, but are not allowed to because it interferes with the old sandalwood getters down here.

The Minister for Lands: What is the date of that letter?

Mr. TEESDALE: May 20th of this year. It is signed by Mr. S. L. Kessell, Conservator of Forests.

The Minister for Lands: It may have come in after the arrangement was made.

Mr. TEESDALE: I could not help thinking of the tremendous outcry that occurred in the House when the Mitchell sandalwood Bill was going through. Many friends of mine on the other side of the House became incoherent with excitement and indignation at this extraordinarily unjust measure. We do not hear much about it now since the pullers have been receiving £15 of £16 a ton instead of £5 or £6. This is not hard for them to take. We do not read indignant letters in the papers such as we used to see. I am pleased that the pullers have found a market for the sandalwood roots, and that they are getting these good prices. I think it was during the regime of the Mitchell Government that a market was found for the roots. This has proved a wonderful advantage, because certain individuals in the North are now able to make quite a good thing out of roots that were once deemed to be valueless. I am glad that the Government during the year have received £47,000 out of sandalwood. It is pleasing to know that stocks are being rapidly reduced.

The Minister for Lands: There is a good deal at Fremantle now.

Mr. TEESDALE: I used to be troubled about the size of the stocks of sandalwood at Fremantle.

The Minister for Lands: There are big stocks still at the end of the wharf.

Mr. TEESDALE: I used to wonder whether the Government had made a mistake in reducing the output, but according to the Forests Department stocks are now being reduced every day. I have just as

much enthusiasm about cotton to-day as I ever had, or as I had when I went to Queensland at my own expense. I made inquiries in that State which resulted in a good deal of cotton being grown in Western Australia. The crop may not have been large, but it was satisfactory from the point of view of values. We received first prize on two occasions for cotton grown in the North-West. I persuaded the then Premier to engage an expert, who took a lot of trouble and selected grounds up there. In one case he was not very fortunate, because a mistake was made in the location. Not much money was involved in the experiment. If nothing more is lost in the North through experiments on tropical agriculture, it will not be a very serious matter for anyone. I am glad the Government are going on with the work of valuing blocks. I am assured by the Minister that this work is being done, and it will not be long before the public have an opportunity to take up the land. I trust that the delay which occurred from the very beginning has not caused those who were anxious to embark upon the industry to change their minds. As soon as these blocks are ready I think some move will be made in the direction of giving the industry a better trial. I shall do my best to interest a group of people in the Old Country, just as I did before when the project was terminated by the scathing and untrue statements that were made by a certain gentleman. This man is now discredited throughout Australia, and is but a small potato in the Old Country. He is discredited in Queensland, and very few people have any time for him. He did this State a lot of harm. I refer to Colonel Evans. I am not afraid to mention his name. We had a first-class scheme on foot. At the psychological moment a bomb shell which appeared in the "Morning Post," to the effect that Colonel Evans declared that the boll worm existed in the North-West, put an end to the negotiations. There were a lot of boll worms about at that time, some of them in the house where that gentleman was living when he made the report. I received a cablegram from London reading, "Owing to adverse report in 'Morning Post' all negotiations off." Only 24 hours previously I had received a message asking what amount of money was necessary and what acreage I proposed to put under cultivation. Although the industry has not yet proved a success here, Western Australians are broadminded enough to recognise

what a splendid success it is in Queensland. In that State the cotton industry has saved the position for hundreds of small men. Where there has been a total failure of other crops, there have been nice little cheques for cotton. Similarly, the Queensland dairy farmer has been saved by ratoon cotton. Many agriculturists in Queensland have had cheques for £150 and £200 as their returns from cotton crops, whereas otherwise they would not have had a shilling. Let us bear in mind that cotton is required not only for wearing materials but also for munitions.

The Minister for Lands: The other day I was asked for a bale to be sent to Sydney.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am indeed glad to hear it. Some time or other there may possibly be another world struggle, and it would be a most serious thing for us if the control of cotton, which is necessary for the manufacture of gun cotton were in the hands of a particular nation. That nation was doing its best at one time to cripple Britain in her supplies of cotton. Fortunately, however, greed conquered patriotism and the nation sold Britain enough cotton to go on with. As an illustration of the success of this Australian industry, let me mention that a Sydney firm, who have erected an expensive spinning mill, are forwarding supplies of knitting wool to retailers here and in other States at 50 per cent. below the cost of the imported article—to my mind a highly satisfactory state of affairs. The retailers have a flat rate at which to sell. The firm in question are determined not to allow chopping and changing about in prices, as the result of that is to cut the sale of the article to pieces. They have fixed a retail price which allows the retailer 50 per cent. profit and still is 25 per cent. below the cost of the imported article. Recently there was in Perth a magnificent show of towels made by Australians from Queensland cotton. The towels were on view at a large drapery store, and I went out of my way to get the "Western Mail" to publish a photograph of the window as a splendid example of the success of at any rate one Australian manufacturing industry, an industry which is holding its own and is likely to become of great importance. The firm guarantee that two pairs of their Australian cotton trousers will outlast three pairs of any other brand sold at the same price, and these are the first cotton trousers made in Australia. Indeed, the firm have published a challenge to

that effect in the Press. If I could wear cotton trousers, I would buy two pairs of that firm's make to-morrow morning. One other matter I have to bring forward does not, unfortunately, give cause for satisfaction. I refer to the project to establish fish chilling works at Shark Bay. During the absence of the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) I looked after his electors, as he looks after mine when I am away. I was as pleased to be able to do something for him as he is to do something for me. The result of our joint efforts has been to establish on the coast a little industry which eventually may prove of great importance, but I am sorry to say that not much credit attaches to the Ministry in the matter. The member for Gascoyne approached the Government with a view to getting a little assistance for the project. In this he was not successful. When I took the matter up, in his absence, I was asked to introduce a deputation to Mr. Drew; and I did so. The people interested and I subsequently met the Chief Inspector of Fisheries, and afterwards the Government consulted the manager of the Wyndham Meat Works. Those two gentlemen made a report on the scheme. Later a cold storage engineer was called in to advise. Thus there was quite a gathering of eminent men to pass opinions on the project. Everything seemed to be going right. The owner of a first-class shelling plant, including engine, trawls, boats and luggers, roughly estimated by the inspector of fisheries at Shark Bay to be worth £1,250, offered to mortgage that property to the Government as security for an ultimate advance of about £1,700. All the inquiries made resulted satisfactorily. The Government were permitted to revise the list of spare parts and to increase the stock of ammonia which the applicant had prepared. I went North thinking I had done good work for the member for Gascoyne in his absence. Strange to say, however, as soon as my back was turned this highly satisfactory scheme seemed to tumble to the ground. In spite of a proposal being approved by the Minister and his expert advisers, for some reason or other it was necessary that the matter should go before some board in Barrack-street.

The Minister for Lands: Blame me for it. I do not let anybody else carry my blunders.

Mr. TEESDALE: The result was most disappointing. I do not think a more legitimate proposal was ever submitted to the Government.

The Minister for Lands: I did not know before that you were in it. However, that makes no difference. I turned the proposal down.

Mr. TEESDALE: We did not ask the Government to advance £1,700 all at once, but by way of easy payments. After recovering from this knock-out, we did not again communicate with the Government. I may mention that it cost the unfortunate man who approached me in the first instance, £60 to stay in Perth while awaiting the Government's decision. One of the officials concerned said to me, "You can go away; everything is in good trim; I cannot tell you your application is going to be granted, but I think you have a very fair chance of getting the thing through." Ultimately we put the proposal before a private firm, who without making any demur, without indulging in any talk about establishing an industry for the good of the North, gave us a plant valued at about £2,000, subject to a paltry deposit of £100 and with easy payments for the balance. It was splendid treatment. The firm in question did not ask us for a farthing of security, nor did they require us to mortgage our plant, as we proposed to do when applying to the Government. The members of the firm, who were total strangers to us, had the conviction that the man meant business and were completely satisfied with the case laid before them. They were strongly impressed with the fact of the man being prepared to put every shilling he had into the venture. For some reason somebody in the Government turned the proposal down.

The Minister for Lands: I turned it down.

Mr. TEESDALE: In less than seven weeks from the day the first stick of timber was put into the ground, a thousand pounds weight of prime fish was sent down here—the best fish ever marketed here. They brought 7½d. per lb. wholesale. When making overtures to the Government, we proposed to be bound down in our estimates to a selling price of 4½d. wholesale. That figure was low for catching, fishing, and chilling fish. However, we accepted the estimate of 4½d., and on the very first occasion of sending fish down here we realised 3d. per lb. more, a total of 7½d. I am sure no one will be better pleased to know that

than the Minister who has just admitted having turned our proposal down. We have sent 31,000 pounds' weight of fish down here already, and this has made a little difference to those unfortunates who, because of the exorbitant prices previously obtaining, could never purchase any fish.

The Minister for Lands: Who bound you down to that figure of 4½d.?

Mr. TEESDALE: Nobody.

The Minister for Lands: Who offered the Government a fleet of boats as security?

Mr. TEESDALE: I thought the Minister understood that the working plant consisted of an auxiliary vessel with engine, two trawls, and boats.

The Minister for Lands: Those things were not offered to me as security. I was merely asked for an advance of £2,000.

Mr. TEESDALE: I am sure the Minister's colleague will bear out my statements. I am trying to leave the hon. gentleman a loophole.

The Minister for Lands: I do not want any loophole.

Mr. TEESDALE: If the Minister's colleague tells him the position is as I state, I am sure he will believe him. It is a positive fact that those things were to be mortgaged to the Government, and very properly too. However, I wish to draw attention to the splendid treatment we got from a private firm, in contradistinction to the treatment given us by the Government. I would have stopped in Perth for another fortnight if I had thought that I was leaving the unfortunate promoter totally destitute of an idea of how to proceed when suddenly confronted with a notification that the Government had turned the matter down. However, the scheme is now a great success. Every boat brings down from two to four tons of fish, and these supplies must make a good deal of difference, putting fish within the reach of people who otherwise would never taste it. Originally I insisted upon the fish being sold to European firms exclusively; none of it was to be sold to Greeks. The rejection of the scheme by the Government tended, naturally enough, to irritate the man I refer to, and he declared he would have no nationality barred. The unfortunate result is that Greek firms now purchase four or five tons of these fish at a time. I should mention that they put down their cheques for the fish at 7½d. per lb. It is a great pity the Government, when asked to do so, did not see their way

to help this little northern industry and thus afford employment to a number of men.

The Minister for Lands: The Government have helped several fishing ventures in the North.

Mr. TEESDALE: I admit that, and the previous Government helped too. In this particular instance I think it was a most deserving case and one that seemed to be most honest on the face of it. The man threw all his cards on the table and in effect said: "I am completely done. I am a ruined man if this venture is not a success." When a man adopts that attitude and proves his bona fides, I think hon. members will agree that he is deserving of success and assistance. I regret to say that just now the fish is coming down and is being handed over to the Greeks. I did all I could to insist upon the fish being sent direct to men of our own colour, because I do not like our own people having to purchase fish from men of another race who, in my opinion in many instances, should not be allowed to come here.

The Minister for Lands: Your tale this evening is foreign to me.

Mr. Angelo: But why did you turn it down?

MR. BROWN (Pingelly) [10.2]: I did not intend to speak this evening but there is a possibility that I shall not be present in the House next week. I desire to refer to one or two matters that I omitted from my speech on the Address-in-reply. I congratulate the Government upon having a surplus of £10,960 for the first time for many years.

Mr. Angelo: That is merely an estimate.

Mr. BROWN: That is so.

Mr. Angelo: The surplus has not eventuated yet.

Mr. BROWN: But this is the first time we have been able to estimate a surplus for many years. At the same time I recognise that the Government have been working under very favourable conditions. Western Australia is a country of primary production and during the time the Government have been in office they have been fortunate in experiencing good seasons, both as regards wheat and wool, in addition to other lines as well. As a result our revenue is increasing. The Government have also been extremely lucky regarding Federal grants. They received £353,000 in one lot, and £212,000 in another lot. No previous Government had the advantage of such grants.

I understand it is the intention of the Government to devote £200,000 of the Federal money to reducing the deficit. In my opinion the suggestion made by the member for Katanning (Mr. Thomson) that £200,000 should be placed in a suspense account was a sound one. We know that frequently four or five months before the financial year ends, money allocated for various purposes becomes exhausted. The result is that requests for expenditure of an urgent description are met by refusals on the score that the money provided has been spent. If money were placed in a suspense account so that it could be drawn upon in such circumstances, it would be of great advantage in the country districts, particularly in a State like Western Australia, which is developing so rapidly.

Mr. Marshall: It might lead to extravagance.

Mr. BROWN: Perhaps so, but it is worth trying. I am pleased to note that the trading concerns are showing a profit. The brickworks, the State hotels, the implement works, the sawmills and the Wyndham Meat Works are all showing profits, while the State quarries and the State Shipping Service disclose deficits. The loss on the State Shipping Service is estimated to amount to £71,000 during the current year. Despite that, however, it is estimated that the State trading concerns as a whole will show a loss of £17,142. We recognise that the State vessels represent to the North what the railways mean to the South. When a new railway is constructed in virgin country, it is not possible for the line to show a profit until the land is cleared and put into a state of productivity. The shipping service was established for the purpose of developing the northern parts of the State. I understand that a Royal Commission was to be appointed to inquire into the conditions obtaining in the North, and negotiations were opened up with the Federal Government, with what result I do not know. So far as hon. members are aware, everything is held up for the time being. We have a wonderful asset in the North-West. Development is necessary and there must be expenditure of money. In my opinion we should get into touch with the Federal Government as quickly as possible or else the Royal Commission should be appointed. Although the trading concerns in most instances show a profit, many of them have a monopoly. In those circumstances they can

charge whatever they like and thus be made to pay. I believe the brickworks have a monopoly and I do not know that it is desirable.

Mr. Marshall: There is no monopoly. You could start brickworks to-morrow.

Mr. BROWN: With the machinery at the disposal of the Government and the Government contracts as well, naturally orders would be diverted to the State works. It would be impossible for private enterprise to work in opposition under such conditions.

Mr. Latham: The most important point is that they cannot supply the bricks.

Mr. BROWN: At any rate I am pleased to hear that a profit has been shown. As to the Wyndham Meat Works, it is pleasing to know that the cattle up north can be dealt with there and the products exported direct, instead of the livestock having to be brought down south and slaughtered to meet the requirements of the metropolitan market. I notice that the estimated land tax revenue amounts to £150,000, showing an increase of £9,170. In view of the buoyant revenue, the Government propose to reduce income taxation to the extent of £166,344. I do not know whether that is quite wise. I would sooner see the land tax decreased and a reasonable income tax imposed.

The Minister for Lands: The farmers do not pay all the land tax. Over 50 per cent. of that is paid by the city people.

Mr. BROWN: I will admit that the residents of the city pay a tremendous lot of it, but the fact remains that the land tax has been increased.

The Minister for Lands: To the extent of a half-penny in the pound.

Mr. BROWN: The Government propose to decrease the income tax payments.

The Minister for Agriculture: Your colleague agreed with the Government's proposal regarding the income tax. Where do you stand?

Mr. BROWN: I believe in an income tax, and, provided reasonable exemptions are allowed, the man receiving a fair income is in a position to pay that tax. However, the party to which I belong does not believe in heavy income taxation. It is a very unpopular tax, and the taxpayers see nothing in return for it. I am surprised that the Government propose to reduce the income taxation. Probably it is good policy on their part. I wish to say a few words relating to the various departments. For the

Education Department there is to be an increase of £10,229. That is only a small amount, because many schools will have to be built during the coming year. Again, a number of our existing schools are altogether too small, and a considerable sum of money ought to be spent in enlarging them and building others. The proposed increase will not go very far. The railway revenue has increased by £85,787 and yet there is only an estimated surplus of £5,000. The railway service is of paramount importance to country members. Repeatedly have I made requests to the Railway Department for small improvements, and invariably have I been put off with the cry of "no funds." I have a hardy annual in the railway station at Pingelly. That station was constructed by the Great Southern Railway Company and members would be surprised to see the room in which the staff has to work. Visitors from all over Australia have greatly admired the town of Pingelly, but have deplored the railway station, which is a disgrace to the department. There is no waiting room for men, and I have had to stand about in cold rain for half an hour or more waiting for a belated train. The ladies' waiting room is about a chain and a half away from the other building; it has no fireplace and it is virtually only a dog kennel. If private enterprise were running the railways, the convenience of the public would be much better catered for. We ask, not for an elaborate station, but merely for something that will be of convenience to the public. I trust that this year the department will be able to give us a respectable station. We have no items here, but only the aggregate amount, and so I do not know whether or not it is the intention of the Commissioner of Railways to do something for the Pingelly station.

The Minister for Lands: We want new railways before new stations.

Mr. BROWN: Still, it is not right to neglect the people who have borne the heat and burden of the day in building up established districts.

The Minister for Lands: It were better to build the railway from Kalgarin than to spend a few thousands on the Pingelly station.

Mr. BROWN: The Pingelly station would cost only a few hundreds. I admit that in the back country some of our loop lines are lacking in many conveniences. There ought to be a platform erected at every

siding. I have seen old ladies and old gentlemen find great difficulty in climbing up the steps into railway carriages.

Hon. G. Taylor: I have had that difficulty myself.

Mr. BROWN: Probably under certain conditions you have. I have often wondered whether it would not be possible to construct for our lines railway carriages with steps like those on the Trans-Australian railway. That would allow old people to get up into the carriages without difficulty. The Minister for Lands, I know, says we must look after new country and do all we can to encourage settlement in new districts. But that is not altogether fair, for those who have built up the settled districts ought to have a little consideration. Take the Narrogin-Dwarda railway: those people waited 14 years for that line, contributing to the railways all the time.

Mr. Chesson: Everything comes to those who wait.

Mr. BROWN: But in the meantime a good many die of old age. I would never oppose the building of a railway in a new district; in fact, I would advise the Government to borrow all the money they could for new railways to open up new country and encourage settlement. I do not wish to allude now to the Kalgarin railway, for that is to be constructed out of loan funds, with which we are not dealing at present. However, if anybody deserves a railway, it is those people out there. When the land tax was increased we were told that a proportionate reduction of railway freights would be granted. Probably railway freights on the high rate goods have been reduced to the extent of 5s. per ton, but who is getting the benefit? The Railway Department are probably losing £20,000 a year or more by reason of the reduction, but the general public are not getting one pennyworth of benefit.

The Minister for Mines: Who is getting it?

Mr. BROWN: The storekeepers. How can they give the public the benefit of a reduction of 5s. or 10s. per ton on general merchandise? We are paying as much as ever for our goods and the Railway Department are losing many thousands of pounds a year.

Hon. G. Taylor: This is a storekeepers' Government, is it?

The Minister for Lands: What would you advise us to do—raise the freights again?

Mr. Latham: Yes, and take off the extra and tax.

Mr. BROWN: The farmer has to pay his rates and land tax.

The Minister for Lands: Does not everyone else?

Mr. BROWN: And the farmer is paying as much for his goods as are other people. Where is the benefit to the man on the land?

The Minister for Lands: What about the goods they purchase direct?

Mr. BROWN: Most of the farmers are loyal to their own towns. If the Minister went to towns like Beverley, Pingelly and Narrogin, he would find that the merchants there are catering for the general public just as well as are those in the town.

The Minister for Mines: And they are getting the advantage?

Mr. BROWN: To a certain extent they are. When the reduction of railway freights represents only 5s. per ton, I should like to know how it is possible to reduce to the consumer the price of rice or sugar. It is impossible to do it.

The Minister for Mines: We shall have to increase the freights again.

Mr. BROWN: The land tax, however, has been passed on to the land owners.

The Minister for Mines: We are not squealing about the land tax. We are paying it.

Mr. BROWN: It is possible that in the near future a deputation from my district will wait on the Minister for Railways with a request that a motor coach be run from Brookton to Corrigin. I have not mentioned this matter to the Minister, but I have broached it to the Commissioner of Railways, who said it was a luxury and the department were not in a position to spend £5,000 or £6,000 on a luxury. I maintain that a motor coach for this line is a necessity. If the deputation can prove that it will be a paying proposition to run a motor coach once a week, the Government should see that the request is granted. When we get engines of the right type for our motor coaches, they will be a great success. On the light lines in the back country they would be exceedingly popular. I know it is impossible for the department to supply all these wants at once. At the same time they should realise that motor coaches have been a great success in South Australia and in New South Wales, and why in the name of goodness, I ask, can-

not we run them successfully on our light lines?

Mr. Sleeman: They are not a success here.

Mr. BROWN: No, because we have not the right type of engine. The deputation will be prepared to produce figures to show that the estimated number of passengers and parcels to be carried will make the new service a payable proposition, while it will also be a great convenience to the public. The Lands Department, the most important department we have, is to receive an increase in its vote of £5,796. The Minister for Lands, to encourage settlement, could spend an even greater sum than is provided over and above last year's expenditure. Western Australia is now beginning to come into its own. We have had many visitors from the Eastern States who have been most favourably impressed by what they have seen here. By judicious advertising we should secure a large influx of people from the East.

The Minister for Lands: Where would you get the land for them?

Mr. BROWN: There is a certain amount of land still available. Our light land has been proved to be profitable. I could show the Minister large areas of sandplain country that in the present wet season are growing payable crops.

The Minister for Lands: Would you take up such land yourself?

Mr. BROWN: Certainly I would if there was no other.

The Minister for Lands: You would push it on to some other man.

Mr. BROWN: I could show the Minister a light land crop in my district that is superior to the crops on the rich land, simply because the man handling the land knows how to farm it. The Department of Agriculture is to receive an increase of £10,706 this year. I rejoice that a little extra money is being made available for that department. It is a very important department, and we shall have to encourage it for all we are worth. The new College of Agriculture should be the means of educating many young men to be practical farmers and should prove a great advertisement for the State. When the rest of Australia realises the value of the work at that college, it must prove one of the best possible advertisements for the State. The increase of £10,706, however, will not go much further than the vote of past years. Under the control of the Minister for Lands is also the Stock Depart-

ment. The economic loss from sheep and other stock diseases is considerable. I give the departmental officials credit for doing their best to ascertain the cause of the sheep disease. At the same time the Government must be prepared to spend a great deal more money on this investigation. Probably they will have to provide better laboratories. The officers of the department are working hard and I hope that before long they will discover the cause of the disease from which sheep are dying. When we discuss the items I shall have some remarks to offer on other matters. I urge the Government not to hesitate when little requests for the provision of a trucking yard or other facilities that will not involve great expenditure are made by the settlers. Such little conveniences should not be turned down on the plea that funds are not available. Above all the Government should not hesitate to spend a few pounds to advertise Western Australia in the other States. I congratulate the Government upon the sound and flourishing state of the finances, which I hope will continue in that state.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 10.30 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 26th October, 1926.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:

- 1, Married Women's Protection Act Amendment.
- 2, Shipping Ordinance Amendment.
- 3, Co-operative and Provident Societies Act Amendment.

QUESTIONS (2)—MINE WORKERS' Relief Fund.

Hon. J. E. DODD asked the Chief Secretary: How much money has been contributed to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund to the 30th June, 1926, by (a) the employers; (b) the employees; (c) the Government?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: The contributions made to the Mine Workers' Relief Fund up to 30th June, 1926, have been—(a) By the employers, £59,611; (b) By the employees, £59,470; (c) By the Government, £66,125.

State Insurance Claims, etc.

Hon. H. SEDDON asked the Chief Secretary: 1, How many claims have been made on the State for mining employees (a) on account of accidents; (b) under the Third Schedule, since the inception of State insurance? 2, What is the total amount of compensation paid under each heading? 3, What amount is still outstanding under these claims if full compensation is paid? 4, What amount has been paid in premiums?

The CHIEF SECRETARY replied: 1, (a) 272; (b) 14. 2, (a) £2,929 2s. 11d.; (b) £174 8s. 9d. 3, The information is not at present available. 4, Though premiums are assessed annually, most of the mining companies are allowed to pay the annual premium in instalments, some monthly, some quarterly. 5, The annual premium income from mining companies is £45,938 19s. 7d., and the instalments paid up to date total £18,204 6s. 2d.

NOTICE OF MOTION—CITY MARKETS.

Order read for the moving of the following motion by the Hon. C. F. Baxter:—

That all papers relating to the establishment of city markets be laid on the Table of the House.