

Legislative Council,*Wednesday, 31st July, 1929.***BILL—SUPPLY (No. 1)—£1,900,000.**

Received from the Assembly and read a first time.

*Standing Orders Suspension.***THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M.

Drew—Central [4.36]: I move—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Supply Bill to be taken into consideration forthwith and passed through its remaining stages at this sitting.

The authorisation granted by Parliament last session is exhausted, and although occasionally this Government and previous Governments have gone into August before seeking authorisations, still that is not desirable, for it is not strictly constitutional. Owing to the earlier meeting of Parliament this year, we are in a position to approach Parliament in good time. I shall be glad if the House consents to the suspension of the Standing Orders in order that the Bill may be considered and, if thought fit, passed through all its stages during the present sitting.

Question put and passed.

*Second Reading.***THE CHIEF SECRETARY** (Hon. J. M.

Drew—Central) [4.40] in moving the second reading said: This is the usual Bill at this period of the year. Two months' Supply is asked for. It is based on estimated requirements for the first two months of this year under the following heads:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	850,000
General Loan Fund	720,000
Sale of Government Property ..	
Trust Fund	30,000
	<u>£1,600,000</u>
And for Treasurer's Advance ..	300,000
Total ..	<u>£1,900,000</u>

This is slightly less than for same period of last year. Last year Supply was:—

	£
Consolidated Revenue Fund ..	850,000
General Loan Fund	750,000
Sale of Government Property ..	
Trust Fund	10,500
Treasurer's Advance	300,000
Total ..	<u>£1,910,500</u>

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

QUESTION—RETIRING ALLOWANCES AND PENSIONS.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM asked the Chief Secretary: What was the amount of—(a) retiring allowances; and (b) pensions paid by the Government during the financial year ended 30th June last?

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: With your permission, Sir, I should like to make a brief personal explanation.

The PRESIDENT: It is very unusual, but if the hon. member is brief, I shall accept it as a personal explanation.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: I know it is unusual to supplement any formal question with remarks. My object is to assist the Chief Secretary in making his reply. At present this State is receiving from the Federal Government something like 1¼ millions per annum in pensions to disabled soldiers and war widows and old age pensioners, and I think the public should know the amount of money circulated amongst people who contribute nothing to the revenue and who, in many instances, receive free hospital treatment and accommodation. Therefore I ask the Leader of the House to supplement the information as to the amount granted by the Federal Government by letting us know how much is paid by the State Government in pensions and allowances.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I shall be pleased if the hon member will postpone his question in order to give me time to secure the information.

Hon. Sir EDWARD WITTENOOM: Yes, certainly, for as long as the Leader of the House likes, provided he gives us a satisfactory reply.

The Estimates have been drafted, and are now under revision. They may be presented before further Supply is asked for. There is no variation in the general Estimates for this year. It is the Government's intention to deal with amounts placed in suspense during the last two years pending the passing of the Financial Agreement Bill. Members will be given an opportunity to decide on the allocation of this money. During the year a further amount of £350,000 was added to the Suspense Account, making a total of £700,000. There is also an amount of £150,000 held in reserve for group settlement losses, having been placed there in 1926-27. It is, to be regretted that last year did not turn out as satisfactorily as was expected. This was the result of the season not being favourable in certain districts. Revenue fell short of the estimate by £274,761. This shortage was divided between two divisions, namely Land, Mining, Timber, Territorial and Public Utilities. Each head of Territorial was below the estimate, land rents by £11,775, mining by £1,275, and timber by £61,235. The shortage of land revenue was directly attributable to the unfavourable season; that of mining was unimportant, but the falling off in timber receipts was serious. The timber trade was very depressed last year. Export showed a serious decline, the value being £304,048 below the previous year. This in turn reacted on the Railways, timber haulage being one of the most profitable lines. Bunbury Harbour, where the bulk of timber exported is handled, also suffered, the revenue being only slightly more than half of the estimated amount. The principal deficiency was, however, in the railways, the collections being £416,508 less than was anticipated. This was offset to a certain extent by a saving of expenditure of £49,432. The loss on the railways was due to the two causes already mentioned, viz., partial failure of the season, and depression in the timber trade. With the exception of the items mentioned (Territorial and Railways) the revenue was well up to expectations, and in a majority of cases exceeded the estimate. On the expenditure side there was a saving of £93,091, most of departments keeping within their votes. As a result of the Hospital Bill failing to pass, there was an excess of approximately £7,000 on that division. The Police vote was exceeded by approximately £8,000, the result of the re-

cent award. Expenditure was closely watched and kept well in hand. The child welfare vote was short of requirements by approximately £26,000, principally for outdoor relief. Prospects for the coming year appear bright. To date the season has been most favourable in the farming and pastoral areas. Wheat prices, which were so low recently have improved, and there seems no doubt that they will be much better than was expected a few months ago. The timber trade also appears to be improving. A greater interest is being taken in mining, particularly in the North-West. Recent developments in tin mining in Yilgarn are promising. I move:—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

HON. SIR EDWARD WITTENOOM (North) [4.47]: Although I do not intend to oppose the Bill, there are one or two points arising out of it that we might well consider. I refer to the expenditure in connection with unemployment, and the method of conducting the railway system. I do not know how much has been spent on the unemployed, but whatever has been spent in that direction has to a large extent been unnecessary. We should do away with the Arbitration Court. That tribunal has set up a rate of wages which very few people are able to pay, with the result that numbers of persons are out of employment. Were it not for that court hundreds of these men, particularly those who wish to work, could get employment. Instead of obtaining work, they find that foreigners are allowed to come in, because the court has fixed wages that the employers cannot pay to other people. These wages the Britisher dare not accept because of the leaders of the unions. It is illegal for a worker to accept a wage that is below the award rate. We also know that the heads of the unions would come down quickly upon him if he did accept it. My theory in regard to unemployment is that, if a rate of wage were current that employers were able to pay, there would be plenty of work for all without it being necessary to employ foreigners. I admit that some of the unemployed are unemployable. This is a matter that should be carefully considered by the Government. The next point is that the railways are not paying. They are in the hands of a Commissioner. The Government are not supposed to interfere with him, but they are continually doing so.

They commenced last year by giving long service leave, which cost a lot of money. The Arbitration Court also increased the basic wage by 2s. a week, which means a further burden upon the railways of £52,000. This matter, too, requires careful consideration. The financial position not only of Western Australia, but of the whole Commonwealth, demands that rigorous economy and efficient administration should be the order of the day. All these things should be carefully looked into and handled in a manner very different from what has been done in the past.

HON. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [4.50]: The Bill should not be allowed to pass without some observations from members. I am glad to hear Sir Edward Wittenoom's views. The Chief Secretary indicated that the authorisations previously granted had now been exceeded. I was hopeful that, having regard for the serious financial strain cast upon some of the other States, and the conditions in connection with the various primary and other industries in the different States, rigid care would have been exercised with our finances, and that the Chief Secretary would not have had to report that the authorisations had been exceeded. The Government have found themselves in the position that the estimated revenue, notwithstanding the buoyancy of our State, has not been realised. I venture to think that, in making up the estimates of revenue, the Minister in charge of a department should be guided, not by the buoyancy of the State itself, but should face the worst possible position the State could reach. If the manager of a company were asked to make an estimate of production on a certain basis, he would exercise care to see that this was made on conservative lines.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Do not you think the Government have done that?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I feel, from the fact that the Estimates that were anticipated by Ministers were not reached, this is evidence that a conservative method of making them up was not used. That care which could have been exercised in a matter of this kind does not appear to have been taken. A careful and rigid supervision ought to be exercised monthly of the expenditure of all departments, so that

the possibility of the estimates of expenditure being exceeded might be avoided. I am glad to hear from the Chief Secretary that in certain departments the actual expenditure allotted to them has not been exceeded, and that, in fact, it has not been reached. That is highly commendable, and stands to the credit of Ministers in control of those departments. We are passing through such a stage when we require to exercise the greatest care in all financial questions. It is not sufficient for us to be unduly buoyed up by the hope that we are going to enjoy a bountiful season that must react to our benefit. That should be no justification for the Government spending money extravagantly. There is every reason why abundant care should be exercised, and everything possible done to put our finances into a proper condition. We are borrowing from year to year. In the course of a few years we shall find that our interest bill has mounted up to a largely annual increased liability. It was estimated, when we were dealing with the Financial Agreement and other financial questions, that we would require to borrow about five millions a year. Out of this a certain proportion would go towards repaying loans that might be maturing, but the larger part would be used in public expenditure. The Chief Secretary will tell us that the expenditure will be directed into proper reproductive channels. I do not know how far it may be reproductive. I hope Ministers fully realise that we are adding to our national debt. We are leaving behind us a legacy of a big interest bill, and are increasing that bill from time to time. The more we can bring to bear upon matters of government the ordinary business rule of living within our means, and making our revenue and expenditure balance, the better will it be for Governments at large. I have no intention of opposing the Bill, for the affairs of Government must be carried on. I suggest, however, we should have a double assurance from Ministers that greater care will be exercised in all financial questions than has been exercised in the past. I may quote as an instance of the necessity for this, the great amount of waste that has taken place in connection with many public works. If that can be avoided the State will benefit. That will tend to prevent the piling up of debt, and the more we can do that the better will it be. I shall vote for the second reading of the Bill.

HON. W. J. MANN (South-West) [4.57]: It is not my intention to oppose the Bill. I fully endorse the views of previous speakers as to the necessity for economy. Whilst the Chief Secretary was speaking, a statement that was made to me came to my mind, indicating that in some departments those in authority are not following the best methods for conserving the interests of the State, and are not using as profitably as possible the opportunities they have at their command. The matter I refer to concerns an area of land in the South-West that was taken over for forestry purposes. On this area is growing a considerable quantity of jarrah of second-class quality. There is not enough timber to justify the erection of a mill, but quite sufficient to justify sleeper cutting and the marketing of the timber by that means. I understand that a sleeper contractor approached the Forests Department when he knew the timber in question was to be ringbarked, and asked for a permit to cut sleepers from it. He was met first of all by an inspector and was told he might go on hewing at a royalty of about 16s. per load.

Hon. J. Nicholson: In the square or in the round?

Hon. W. J. MANN: I cannot say, but the point I wish to make is that it was not a payable proposition for the man to go in and hew. The position is that the timber has been ringbarked and will remain there and die. Had the Forests Department seen fit to accept a reasonable royalty, a number of men would have gone on hewing and that would have had some effect in the way of reducing unemployment and at the same time the State would have been receiving the advantage of the product in other directions, principally by the money that the work would bring into the State, while incidentally the railways would have derived some revenue. That is only one instance that has been brought under my notice recently and while I do not know whether the Government are aware of it, I contend that instances of this description should be inquired into and the department concerned should be told plainly that it is their duty to make the best possible use of the products over which they have control. I support the Bill.

HON. A. LOVEKIN (Metropolitan) [5.3]: I would not have said anything on this Bill had it not been for the remarks of Sir Edward Wittenoom and my colleague

Mr. Nicholson. Sir Edward Wittenoom put up a problem which I am afraid even a wise Solomon could not solve. We must face the position. To begin with we are confronted with a very high cost of living for which this State is not in any way responsible; it has been brought about by legislation over which we have practically no control.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: The Arbitration Court.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I refer to the tariff as being responsible for the high cost of living and then comes in the point raised by the hon. member. Men must have a living wage; everyone will admit that, and in order that they may have a living wage we have Arbitration Courts that go into the matter and say that so much is the smallest amount on which a man can live in ordinary comfort. Then it is decreed that that man shall be paid a certain wage. I do not think any objection can be taken to that.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: They do not take into account what the employer can afford to pay.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: It is not a question whether the employer can afford to pay in that connection, although it has something to do with it, but we have first of all the high cost of living and secondly we must keep the man alive. When we have kept the man alive we find that he cannot produce sufficient of a marketable value to pay the wages he receives, and no industry can be carried on unless it is conducted at a profit, certainly not at a loss as one of the unemployed declared at the meeting in the Town Hall the other night. The only alternative is that the man cannot be employed, and so we move along a vicious circle. Men have still to be fed because they have no employment and heavy calls are made upon the Child Welfare and other departments to keep body and soul together. Thus, in order to recoup the Child Welfare and other departments, additional taxes have to be imposed.

Hon. J. R. Brown: What has that to do with the Bill?

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: It has a good deal to do with it. More taxes have to be imposed and so we further cripple industry. I do not pretend to be able to find a solution of the question, and I do not think anyone else can. There are, however, some ways in which we can ameliorate the position. Mr. Mann has just referred to sleeper cutting and the payment of a royalty of 16s. The

cutters were willing to give this, but on the other hand—and this is our fault—there is 12s. a load to be paid by way of insurance premiums. This is the amount required to insure men who cut sleepers. It has been found by the insurance companies that to insure these men the rates must be put up to 400s. per cent.

Hon. E. H. Gray: The State Department has not done that.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: If the State do not put up their rates, the taxpayer is called upon to make good the difference because the average number of accidents is the same whether it is an insurance company that is affected or the State Department. It has been found on investigation by the insurance companies, and perhaps hon. members will be surprised when I tell them this, that Southern Europeans, who are more callous of their bodies than Englishmen, have been known to cut off one or two or more of their fingers or toes in order to secure the insurance money. Then they go home to Dalmatia and other places and on the compensation they have received set themselves up as farmers. In consequence of the heavy lossess sustained by the companies and added to by the wicked arrangement we have in the Act in connection with the medical fees—

Hon. J. Nicholson: Call it folly.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The companies are obliged to put up their premiums to £20 per cent. to cover timber hewers, and that means 12s. on every load of sleepers turned out.

Hon. J. Nicholson: It means crippling the industry.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: So that in consequence of the cost of the sleepers it is not possible to export them to South Africa and other places, and, as Mr. Mann has pointed out, the timber is ringbarked and allowed to go to waste, instead of being turned to account. At the same time we have a number of unemployed in our midst who could well be engaged in cutting the timber. The Chief Secretary can verify what I have said; in fact I can produce a statement that has been circulated among those of us who are connected with insurance companies. It is a serious state of things and is capable of being altered. We ought to be able to do something to check the abuse of the Workers' Compensation Act, and reduce charges that are responsible for the inflation of premiums.

Hon. J. R. Brown: On a point of order. I would like to know whether the hon. member is debating the Address-in-Reply or the Bill before the House.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member is discussing the Bill before the House. On the granting of Supply to the Government discussion can be unlimited.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I am discussing one of those Bills in which I take it, the debate can travel from Dan to Beersheba. There is another direction also in which we can economise. I notice that whenever a department requires another officer, a request is sent along to the Public Service Commissioner and the position is advertised, and later a new appointment is made. There should be some check on that kind of thing. This is not the time, faced as we are with a deficit, when we can afford to extend our service by making what I might call more or less fancy appointments. Then as a means of alleviating unemployment we should tackle the Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: And do away with the Arbitration Court.

HON. J. CORNELL (South) [5.11]: I had intended to let the Bill go through without speaking, but some remarks of hon. members, particularly those of Sir Edward Wittenoom, may create a wrong impression unless they are rebutted or criticised. We are all agreed that not only Western Australia, but the whole of Australia is up against a very hard time of financial stringency and that we have a long way to go before we can turn the corner and again enter the road to prosperity. It is generally accepted that up to the last 12 or 18 months Australia has not felt the aftermath of war as it has been felt by other countries that were closer to the seat of action. Then there is another factor that is responsible to some extent for our present position and it is chargeable to the citizens as well as to any Government that may be in power. I refer to the manner in which we have been living beyond our means. We have only to go into St. George's Terrace to see the number of automobiles.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: How do you find out that people are living beyond their means?

Hon. J. CORNELL: By daily contact with them, and perhaps a knowledge of the salaries of individuals. It is well known that after periods of good times there fol-

low bad times, and that therefore we should guard against extravagance, not only on the part of the citizens, but of Governments. Taking mankind in the gross, we find that he rarely begins to think until one part of his anatomy is affected, that part being where he tightens up his waist belt. We talk glibly about how to rectify economic difficulties, but this is no new problem; it is as old as mankind. Reference has been made by Sir Edward Wittenoom to the Arbitration Court having fixed a wage that employers cannot pay, and he proceeded to say that if wages were lower, employers would employ more men.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Quite right.

Hon. J. CORNELL: There are industries that can pay any wage the court might fix.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Very few.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Still there are some, and conversely there are some in which any wage could not be paid.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Then why the present unemployment?

Hon. J. CORNELL: An incident occurred the other day that is well worth recounting because it goes to show the present position in regard to wages employment and the law of supply and demand. A little time ago the Court of Arbitration fixed the basic wage at the peak point in the history of Western Australia. The whole Marxian theory of socialism is based on surplus labour, that is to say, where surplus labour prevails, the employer will force down wages. We in Western Australia have reached the peak point in the basic wage and also the peak point in unemployment. This shows that in connection with the fixing of wages there is nothing in the Marxian theory. It has been exploded. The employer has not forced down wages.

Hon. A. Lovekin: What is the peak point of unemployment due to?

Hon. J. CORNELL: It is due to a variety of causes. I do not say that unemployment here is due to migration from the other States. I heard a very prominent man say that migration conducted to unemployment.

Hon. E. H. Harris: The Premier himself said that.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If so, another fallacy has been exploded.

Hon. J. Nicholson: But some 4,000 persons have come over within the last few months.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am glad of those interjections because experience gained during the phase through which we are passing has punctured a lot of shibboleths and false premises. If migration from the Eastern States has caused unemployment here, there is a complete answer to it—that we should not allow immigration.

Hon. A. Lovekin: That does not follow.

Hon. J. Nicholson: That is an abnormal condition.

Hon. J. CORNELL: One of the chief causes of unemployment is—

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: The price of wages causes unemployment.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The price of wages does not cause unemployment.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: Well, I think it does.

Hon. J. CORNELL: An American once said to me that the theory of wages was to get back what you paid and a little more.

Hon. J. R. Brown: And the boss sees that he gets it.

Hon. J. CORNELL: If ten men each put a thousand dollars into a concern and employ men at ten dollars a day and they do only eight dollars worth of work, it does not need any elaborate calculation to determine that such a concern will soon go broke.

Member: Why talk in dollars?

Hon. J. CORNELL: Well, pounds if the hon. member prefers it.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Does the workman give back the value of wages paid to him?

Hon. J. CORNELL: I am arguing on the basis of the worker doing so.

Hon. H. J. Yelland: If he gives value, the higher paid man is the cheaper man of the two.

Hon. J. Nicholson: You do not mean that there should be sufficient margin to repay capital, but that there should be a sufficient return on the capital.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Of course. If you pay a man £10 a week and you get only £10 worth of work, there will be no margin or surplus for the industry. In British-speaking communities to-day the legitimate employer of labour and the only employer worth considering is satisfied with a fair margin of profit on the capital invested, and desires no more. An employer that wanted any more would be better out of it. I am satisfied that is the general feeling of all decent employers throughout the English-

speaking world. Now I come to the point raised by Sir Edward Wittenoom that a lower wage would solve the problem of unemployment because employers cannot afford to pay high wages. I know and Mr. Glasheen and other country members know that throughout the agricultural areas to-day there are settlers paying more for clearing than the Agricultural Bank allows. Unemployment being rampant, they are content to pay more and even stint themselves because the work is worth it, though the amount paid is more than the Agricultural Bank is allowing. I move about a good deal and come into contact with many working men. Just as the employer of labour is satisfied there is something wrong with the economic system, so the average thinking workman is desirous of bringing about a better state of affairs. Many of them are not enamoured of the system of arbitration. They consider that so far from solving the economic problem, arbitration has absolutely failed, and I do not think any critic will dispute that. Let us consider the position of the Eastern States to-day as compared with that of the early nineties. From information I have received, unemployment there to-day is almost as rampant as it was in the late eighties and early nineties, and yet the base wage is the highest ever reached in the history of Australia. Our system of arbitration has not solved and never will solve the economic situation. The average working man is just as intelligent, honest and conscientious when he gets an opportunity to express his views—when no one is by to put a hand over his mouth—as is any other section of the community. I am satisfied that the worker is equally anxious as any other section of the community to find a way out of the impasse that has been reached. Why he hangs on to the arbitration system, however, is from fear that if he loses it and has no tribunal to approach, unscrupulous employers may take advantage of the position and force him to work for a mere pittance. It is necessary for us to meet on common ground and tell the working man that if he is prepared—as I believe he is—to meet employers and other citizens with the idea of finding a way out of the present difficulty—

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: That has already been attempted.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The time is not far distant when the wisdom of that course will be recognised. What is retarding progress

in that direction is that many trades union officials who ought to know better are employing arguments that were used 30 years ago but have no application to-day in order to keep the worker where he is.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The red rag element is keeping him there.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I do not say the red rag element.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But I do.

Hon. J. CORNELL: I consider the red rag element is pretty honest. We know where they stand; we know what they are going to do and thus we are able to deal with them.

Hon. G. W. Miles: They are leading the Eastern States unions to-day.

Hon. J. CORNELL: The working man is advised to resist any reduction of wages on the ground that what was done to him 30 years ago would be repeated to-morrow. That doubt ought to be removed and, if it could be removed, I am satisfied the working man would show himself as anxious as any other member of the community to find a way out of the difficulty. It can be conclusively proved that a workman receiving 9s. per day 30 years ago was better off than a workman receiving £5 a week nowadays. Thirty years ago a man on 9s. a day could build a house for himself, but to-day he cannot do so on a wage of £6 a week. I have made these remarks because I am jealous of any statement going forth from this House that might admit of two constructions being placed upon it. The time has come when we should reason together on the economic situation. We ought to be candid enough to admit our mistakes and fallacies. Not many years ago I said I was of opinion that the economic problem could be solved by Parliament. I am now convinced that the economic problem is something entirely apart from politics and that no political congregation will ever solve it by Act of Parliament. It can be solved only by mutual trust and co-operation between employers of labour and the men they employ.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY (East) [5.28]: I have listened to the debate with great interest, especially the references to the unscrupulous employer—

Hon. E. H. Gray: Especially the farmer.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The unscrupulous employer who we have been told took advantage of his employées 30 years ago while at the same time the wage then paid

was much more advantageous to the employee than the wage now paid. If the employee was better off 30 years ago than he is on the wage he receives to-day, I fail to see how the employer of 30 years ago with all his worries and troubles could have been accused of being unscrupulous.

Hon. J. Cornell: Thirty years ago he could keep what he was getting.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The troubles that the employer had thirty years ago were just as numerous as troubles he has to-day. But certainly he was not faced 30 years ago with so many of those added burdens that he has to take into consideration to-day. It is due to the fetish that has grown up during the last 30 years of borrowing money, and keeping on borrowing in order to pay interest on loans which have gone west. Thus the employer to-day is faced with largely increased burdens. Whereas the employees have obtained advantages through the Arbitration Court, the employer now has to conform to rules laid down irrespective of the amount of work obtained in return for the wage he pays. As remarked by one hon. member, it comes back to this, that the economic position must be faced. Mr. Gray interjected that the agriculturist is not paying a reasonable wage, or something to that effect.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Mr. Gray does not go in for farming, I notice.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: I assure Mr. Gray that if he got well and truly out amongst the farmers he would realise that they are the backbone of the country. It is the fall in the price of wool and the fall in the price of wheat that have made the Federal Government come to their senses and look into the question of where their revenue is to come from. Mr. Gray should realise that most of the farmers who have employed labour are struggling hard to retain their employees. But the farmers themselves are hard hit. Their one object now is to carry on; and it is extremely unsatisfactory to find that in the case of any employees whom they cannot keep on, work is refused on Government jobs being carried out in the locality. I understand there is an instruction from headquarters that local men are not to be employed on such jobs, and that Government funds furnished to local bodies shall be appropriated exclusively to the employment of men sent from the city. Those circumstances make it increasingly difficult for the people in the country districts and for men who have gone out from the city seeking

work there to understand the attitude of the Government. Men bona fide looking for work in the rural districts find themselves robbed of the opportunity of getting good local Government jobs unless they first return to the city. Thus considerable numbers have been forced back into the metropolitan area and are swelling the ranks of the unemployed there. They realised that they could remain out of employment indefinitely unless they returned to the city. I hope the position has been rectified, but I know that it did exist. In fact, it was mentioned to me at several centres. The country is screaming for men to do work, but a number of men are not prepared to go into the rural districts and perform the class of work available there. I was indeed sorry to hear from various leaders, the Premier in particular, that the influx from the Eastern States, plus the foreigners, was responsible for putting so many of our people out of work. In my opinion it is a golden rule that the more work done, the more work there is to do. And it does not matter by whom the work is done. The harder people work—whether they are foreigners, or men from the Eastern States—the more jobs there will be for others.

Hon. E. H. Gray: It takes some time to create the jobs, though.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We know that while many men are walking about unable to secure work, numbers who go to the right quarter find work. However, work is not to be got at the high rates fixed by the Arbitration Court, with all the attendant troubles such as the compensation sections of the Workers' Compensation Act.

Hon. E. H. Gray: There is no arbitration in the bush; you are on your own there.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Nothing of the kind. We are subject to the rules. Such things as the 44-hour week, which has been granted to the railway employees, have a demoralising effect and tend to swell the cost of governing the country. We know there has been a great falling off in the value of production in the directions I have mentioned, and it is matter for surprise that we should be asked to grant the enormous sum of money calculated by the Government to be necessary for Supply during the next two months. Every employer throughout the country has had to curtail his anticipations, and desires to see some similar action on the part of the Government. If the Government adopt the attitude of refusing to curtail their expenditure, the position will

be most unsatisfactory. I grant that the Chief Secretary said the expenditure now proposed was about £10,000 less than for the corresponding period of last year. The Government ought not to proceed at the same rate of spending when they know that incomes will be reduced during the current financial year. No one can escape the land tax, but I am sure that returns from income tax this year will be much smaller than previously. It is not only the Government who are setting a bad example; I understand that borrowings by practically all our local bodies are greatly in excess of previous experience. The local bodies are not storing up their revenues. Their calculations of the cost of work are much like those of the Government; the estimates always go wrong. In many instances they are exceeded by as much as 100 per cent., or even 150 per cent. To what is that due? Is it that the whole community is running riot? Or has something gone wrong with the Arbitration Court, owing to the inability of that tribunal to dictate how much work shall be done in return for the stipulated wage? I am inclined to think that that is what is wrong. We must take stock of our position. The Government must resort to severe curtailment of their expenditure, and public bodies will have to do the same, seeing that all private individuals are compelled to do it. Many persons are experiencing the greatest difficulty in getting through on their reduced incomes. I am convinced that many employers are playing their part. It is not their intention to reduce hands. But if they have not the money to pay the hands, they cannot go on employing them. Just as they expect a fair deal from the workers, so they are playing their part in carrying on, developing and improving. There is a general desire throughout the community to do one's share, but people do not want to see the Government encouraging reckless waste, or preaching a doctrine which will cause many members of the community to become dissatisfied.

HON. E. H. H. HALL (Central) [5.42]: Following on the remarks of Mr. Hammersley, I do not think any of us would accuse the present Government of indulging in reckless or extravagant expenditure. In my opinion the members of the present Ministry are fully seized of the importance and necessity of making every endeavour to carry on the functions of the State as economically as possible. It is the experience

of the Eastern States and other countries that during such a period as we are now experiencing, one of the worst things that can happen is that those in charge of affairs should get into a condition of panic and embark on wholesale retrenchment. I am not afraid to express any difference of opinion I have with the powers that be, but I have every faith that the present Government will not be stampeded into any action of that kind.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: Do you think these speeches will stampede them?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am somewhat sorry that Mr. Cornell has just left the Chamber. I believe I am right in saying the hon. member stated he would not have spoken on this measure, which I regard as of great importance, but that he wished to rebut some remarks made by Sir Edward Wittenoom. Perhaps I may be excused for repeating the well-worn phrase that finance is government and that government is finance. It is strange to find an experienced member of the Chamber declaring that he would not have spoken on the Bill but for such a consideration. I regret also that Sir Edward Wittenoom is not present at the moment, because I consider the Chamber should be grateful to him for having initiated the present discussion. During my brief service in this House I have heard Mr. Cornell speak only a few times, but his utterance to-night certainly represents the best speech I have heard him make. His was a very sensible and well-reasoned speech, one that should appeal to every member of the House. I am not positive as to which particular remarks of Sir Edward Wittenoom Mr. Cornell wished to rebut, but in the course of his speech, he said that we had only to go down the streets of Perth to note the extravagance of the people. We often hear references made to the extravagance of the people, but when he makes such a suggestion as that, I would ask Mr. Cornell if it is not a fact that the Savings Bank returns that are published in the Press periodically, do not disclose the fact that Australians are just about as thrifty as the people in any other part of the world. How do those returns square with his statement that we are indulging in a reckless orgy of expenditure? How does it square with the suggestion that the people are living far beyond their means? Mr. Cornell's remarks caused me to wonder who are the people that can find money

to put away in the Savings Bank. I have come to the conclusion that those who are most likely to be able to save money regularly are the wage earners.

Hon. J. T. Franklin: Hear, hear!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am glad to note Mr. Franklin's approval of that remark, for I should say he is a man who should know something about the question. I am satisfied it is not the primary producer who is in a position to put away his savings regularly. I guarantee that if we could get a return dealing with the people who are able to put away money in the Savings Bank, we would find very few primary producers among them.

Hon. J. R. Brown: They have the money and the leisure.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: We are often told that the primary producers represent the backbone of the State, the people who are producing the wealth of the State. The fact is that many of those men are able to carry on only by the good graces of the financial institutions.

Hon. E. H. Gray: But those institutions have good security.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: That may be so, but the trouble is that the primary producers have not got sufficient money at their disposal to improve their holdings in the way that is necessary if they are to absorb the unemployed.

Hon. J. R. Brown: They have spent their money in buying up-to-date motor cars.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: It is cheap and easy to say that. Within the last few weeks the effect of building up an interest bill by the State has been impressed upon me by virtue of the position confronting many of our farmers. Recently it was my painful duty to interview the Managing Trustee of the Agricultural Bank on behalf of two farmers who are highly respected in their particular district and who are by no means in a state of bankruptcy. The Agricultural Bank trustees had insisted upon taking out bills of sale over their property merely because it was claimed that the time had come when the State must insist upon them reducing their liabilities. If a State department is to adopt that attitude, what right would the State have to complain if our bankers adopted the same attitude towards Western Australia. If the older members of this Chamber, such as Mr. Cornell, who, I am glad to see, has returned to the Chamber, were to sit silent and allow such a huge

authorisation as that covered by the Supply Bill to pass in silence, the want of confidence that exists among some sections of the community in regard to members of Parliament would receive an additional filip. At one stage of the debate I heard it suggested that a member was speaking to the gallery.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: There are not many in our gallery.

Hon. E. H. Harris: Surely not to our gallery!

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Hon. members know to which gallery I refer. If we remain silent when important measures are placed before us, then we shall fail in our duty to those who sent us here. As a new member of this Chamber, I have been encouraged to speak on the Bill because Sir Edward Wittenoom initiated the discussion.

Hon. J. R. Brown: He was merely jesting.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Sir Edward Wittenoom referred to the Estimates of railway expenditure having been exceeded and we were told by the Chief Secretary that the excess was on account of an Arbitration Court award. Why do we pay £2,000 a year to a gentleman occupying the position of Commissioner of Railways, if he is not to have any control over the amount of money required to conduct his department?

Hon. C. F. Baxter: He can have no control over the Arbitration Court.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I am in accord with the remarks of members who have asserted that we must admit, irrespective of party politics, that Arbitration Courts throughout Australia have proved failures. Here we have a highly paid officer in charge of the State's largest business undertaking, and he is unable to control the expenditure of his department.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: And he is free from political interference.

Hon. G. W. Miles: He is supposed to be free from it.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Whenever the position of the Australian States is referred to, we are always reminded that we have a fine asset in our railways. In England they are owned by private companies, but in Australia they are State-owned. Although we are in a fortunate position from that point of view, we find in Western Australia that the control of our so-called business undertaking is taken out of the Commissioner's

hands by the Arbitration Court, the members of which cannot be expected to know the inner workings of a department, the intricacies of which have been made a life-study by the Commissioner. Under those conditions, is it any wonder that the Treasurer frames his Estimates and presents them to Parliament only to find them exceeded and himself placed in the position of having to say, "I am sorry the estimates have been exceeded because of Arbitration Court awards."

Hon. V. Hamersley: The Arbitration Court did not grant the reduced hours.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And who gave the railway men their long-service leave?

Hon. E. H. Gray: Your party promised it to them.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Arbitration Court cannot be saddled with the blame for granting those concessions to the railway men.

Hon. G. W. Miles: Neither can the Commissioner.

Hon. E. H. Harris: That was the price for the Government coming back.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The Supply Bill should not have been allowed to pass without discussion, if only because of the necessity to consider the serious unemployment problem. To my mind, for a man like the Premier to attribute our unemployment difficulty to the unemployed from the Eastern States, is absurd. I fail to see how the Premier, who is a man of perspicacity, can advance such a suggestion.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Well, prove that he is wrong.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If there is any logic in the Premier's remarks, how is it that in all the States there is the unemployment difficulty? If the Premier claims that our unemployment problem has been created through people coming here from the Eastern States, then Queensland, where the people have enjoyed the benefits of Labour rule for many years until quite recently, will be able to say that in that State everything would be all right if it were not for the unemployed from New South Wales and Victoria. Other States could say the same thing. It is absolutely absurd!

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: You are quite right: it was only an excuse.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: It was a mighty poor excuse, too. I realise it is useless to

endeavour to fasten the blame on the Government. No reasonable man would wish to do that. At the same time we desire some better excuse than that advanced by the Premier. We want some better reason for the Government failing to realise the seriousness of the present position. It is idle to suggest, as we have heard, that if the Government were to provide work for all the unemployed who are here to-day, there would be a few thousands more in this State in a few days. Mr. Fraser himself, when moving the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, expressed the belief that the Government could have done more for the unemployed. I am sorry that the Government have not given us some indication in connection with the authorisation under the Supply Bill of what they intend to do to assist the unemployed. Something should be done to set aside the necessary money right here and now. The unemployed difficulty is apparent in all parts of the world to-day, and the Government need not be ashamed of its presence in this State. It is a world-wide problem that has merely become acute here in recent days. What have the Government done to solve the difficulty? To our shame be it said that in Western Australia it has been left to a band of women to take concerted action to see that hungry men were fed. It is high time the Government gave consideration to steps that will relieve the situation.

Hon. J. R. Brown: Do not you think they are doing it?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: The hon. member can answer that question for himself. He knows the Government are not doing it. We constantly hear it said that the unemployed do not want work. I do not believe that statement. There may be a minority of them who are not very anxious to go into the country districts to secure work. I believe Mr. Hamersley said there was plenty of work available in the country districts. I can speak of the Geraldton district only, and there is not plenty of work there.

Hon. G. W. Miles: And Mr. Hamersley did not make that statement, either.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Yes, he did.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: There are many foreigners out of work in the Geraldton district.

Hon. E. H. Gray: They can look out for themselves.

Hon. E. H. HALL: I do not see any sense in that interjection. One foreigner I have in mind has been in Western Australia for 20 years. When I was in Geraldton recently he approached me in my capacity as a member of Parliament, and asked me what was wrong. He told me that he had been in the State for 20 years and never before had he found it so hard to get a job. It is not a question of cheap labour with these foreigners, as many of our political opponents would have us believe; it is a question of the work not being available for men who want it.

Hon. V. Hamersley: There is plenty of work to be done, but the farmers have not the money to pay for it.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: Sir Edward Wittenoom said there was no work because wages were too high.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: There are many farmers who would be only too glad to put men on, if they had the money available to pay for the labour. That is why I say it is very necessary that members should not be crying out to the Government to go in for wholesale retrenchment and cut down expenditure just at a time when things are a little slack, but the prospects are quite bright.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: You think the Government are going to do that?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I do not think the Government will take very much notice of any pessimistic agitation. This thought has occurred to me—and we have the example of Great Britain before us: anything is better than to keep men in idleness. I have been told there would be serious opposition from the Labour Party to the carrying out of this idea, but I think that rather than have these men in Perth living on charity—and they themselves say it is not charity, but work, that they want—the Government should set apart as many thousand acres as their experts think necessary in various parts of the State, and put on the unemployed men to work it. First of all they could clear it, and then set to work growing the food they would eat.

Hon. E. H. Gray: Why do you say the Labour Party would be against that?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I have talked over this idea with a few people, and they have said, "Well you will get serious opposition from the Labour Party." I am not

saying it, I am only repeating what I have been told.

Hon. J. Cornell: But that scheme has been tried for the last 12 months.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: If so, it has not been carried out in the way I have proposed.

Hon. J. Cornell: Well then your idea is quite different.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: Yes. I say that instead of keeping those men in idleness in Perth, causing them to come into conflict with the police, and causing the people of the city to give them food—which is charity, and so objected to by the men themselves—let us give them implements and send them out into the country where they can prepare the land to grow the food for them to eat.

Hon. V. Hamersley: They would sell the implements.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I do not think so. They would be learning something, and would grow marketable produce.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: A lot of them have never used any other implement than a pen.

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I remember some years ago when there was retrenchment in Perth, many men from offices were placed on the land; and, as Mr. Franklin reminds me, they made good. We never know what we can do until we try. It is up to the Government to make some attempt to provide employment for those men rather than to get them employed by others. Speaking from experience as a member of the Geraldton Municipal Council, I may say that when we went to the Government in an endeavour to have work provided for the unemployed, we were given a grant provided that we paid pound for pound, and that for every local member of the unemployed we took also a member of the unemployed from the city. Those men were put on relief work, road work, and the result was anything but satisfactory. The work was not by any means well done, and when we complained about it the reply was, "Well, it was put in hand only to find work for the unemployed." That is not a very sensible plan. Better would it be to put the unemployed out on farms, where they could be instructed how to grow the food they consume. They would not be hanging around the city in idleness. If there is one thing more than another that caused the defeat of the Baldwin Government it was the fact that they did not make any real statesman-

like effort to cut out the dole and deal directly with the unemployed.

Hon. W. T. Glasheen: Will the present Government do that?

Hon. E. H. H. HALL: I think they will make some better attempt than was made by their predecessors. Unless the present Government rise to the occasion in this regard, I feel sure they will go out.

HON. E. H. GRAY (West) [6.6]: I wish to say just a word or two in rebuttal of various remarks passed by certain members. What, more than anything else, has brought me to my feet is the contention that the working man is the cause of all our trouble.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: I did not say that.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: And that low wages will meet the difficulty and bring us back to prosperity. Of course, that is utterly fallacious.

Hon. E. H. Harris: But no one said that.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Low wages have been advocated by Sir Edward Wittenoom, who says that wages should be reduced, and who adds that the men are not doing a fair thing. I suggest that some attention should be paid both by the Government and by private enterprise to the question of supervision. I do not believe in extravagance. There are all sorts of reasons why at present we are in a little bit of trouble. Yet I do not altogether agree with the miserable tales told here to-day. One of the principal causes of unemployment in this State is what the Premier has declared it to be.

Hon. V. Hamersley: It is the high tariff.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: As the Premier has said, there have been bad seasons in the Eastern States, and in consequence large numbers of men have been displaced from their employment. And, of course, all good Australians will always go where the work is. Because this State is to hold Centenary celebrations this year, it has been advertised throughout the Commonwealth more than ever before, and so quite naturally men are coming over here looking for jobs.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: It is the Arbitration Court that is the trouble.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: Of course I should say that men from the Eastern States are more welcome here than are those from overseas, if only because they are better used to the conditions of the country. Then something can be brought to the door of the

Federal Government, which is supported by most of those members of this House who speak against the working man. The Federal Government have been carrying out a wildly extravagant policy during the last six years, and have squandered enormous sums of money. I suggest that they are the cause of some of the unemployment. Anybody who troubled to peruse the return of the money sent out of this State by Southern Europeans during the past year or two would be amazed. Those men send back to their own country a sum of money that in the aggregate is quite immense. That in itself has contributed to the economic crisis through which we are passing. Ten years ago it would have been difficult to find a Southern European on any Western Australian farm, but to-day they are everywhere to be found. The gospel of low wages has been preached to the farmers to some effect, and until quite recent times those farmers have always offered low wages and in different conditions. According to some of the arguments used this afternoon, we should be revelling in the lap of prosperity, if only because farmers have sacked Australians and Englishmen and employed Southern Europeans, who are ready to accept anything that is offered.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: That is not correct.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It is correct. We have been bringing in Britishers from overseas to work on our farms. To-morrow morning I could show any member sufficiently interested nearly 100 young Englishmen who were brought out here for farm work, and who received very little wages, because the farmers defrauded them. They have been starving in the bush while their places on the farms have been taken by Southern Europeans. The farmers of this country have not given Australians and Englishmen anything like a fair deal.

Hon. Sir Edward Wittenoom: How can an employer pay a man more wages than he earns?

Hon. E. H. GRAY: It would be a poor worker who could not earn more than the average farmer these days is prepared to pay. Some criticism of the Arbitration Court has been indulged in. Arbitration has not proved all that was hoped of it, but the workers will not allow it to go without a struggle, for they realise it is a bulwark in support of the Australian standard of living. It is very ominous when we see em-

ployers throughout Anstralia clamouring for the abolition of the Arbitration Court, because it is quite obvious that they want to do away with it and so expose the workers to low wages.

Hon. G. W. Miles: But even if the court reduces wages the men go on strike.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: We do not believe in strikes.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You do, and you lead them.

Hon. E. H. GRAY: This is the first time since I have been in the House that we have had so lengthy a debate on a Supply Bill. I rose merely to protest against the imputations cast upon the workers, and to say that we will not agree to any suggestion of lower wages. We are going to maintain the existing standard of living. To-day we are suffering from the effects of the war and from the effects also of the National Government at the head of the Commonwealth, whom members opposite have supported for a number of years. Also we are suffering from the effects of bad seasons in the Eastern States. In due time we shall get over all our troubles, but what we have to do meanwhile is to see that money, whether supplied by the Government or by private enterprise, is made to go as far as possible and that there shall be no waste and no extravagance.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew—Central—in reply) [7.30]: We have had some long and most interesting speeches on the second reading of the Bill, longer and more interesting than I can remember having listened to over a period of years. I am only concerned with those speeches in so far as they affect the Government to which I am attached. They deal with all manner of subjects, but I am only interested in any censure or criticism that may be levelled at the Government. After a careful analysis of my notes I find there is very little to complain of. There are one or two mild critics. Sir Edward Wittenoom complained of the expenditure on the unemployed. There does not appear to be unanimity in this House on that point. Mr. Hall says we are not doing enough for them. Are the Government to follow Sir Edward Wittenoom or Mr. Hall?

Hon. E. H. Harris: I do not think you will follow either.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: We are anxious for advice on such an important question, but we should be in an awkward position if we were guided by the advice of both gentlemen. I do not know what Sir Edward Wittenoom means by his reference to there being too much money spent on the unemployed. We are spending money in providing moderate sustenance for the wives and children of the unemployed. Does Sir Edward Wittenoom object to that? Would he have us allow the wives and children to starve? In addition we are providing employment for those who are in need of work. If a man refuses work when offered to him the sustenance is cut off from the family. We have not done so very much for single men. We contend it is not the sole responsibility of the Government to provide work for the unemployed, but that it is a matter for general concern. Business people and others, municipalities and road boards, should co-operate with the Government to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to work. Sir Edward Wittenoom stated that the Railway Department had been harassed by the Arbitration Court, and that the tribunal should be done away with. That institution was established by Parliament many years ago. The question of arbitration has been before both Houses from time to time, and the principle was re-affirmed no later than 1925. The hon. member received support from Mr. Hall, who also believes that the court should be abolished. Sir Edward Wittenoom wishes to see it go because the basic wage was recently increased by 2s. a week. The court was established to investigate the basic wage each year. It went fully into the matter a few months ago, when it discovered that owing to the increase in rentals 2s. a week extra was due to the working man. That was strictly in accordance with the law. Because the cost of living has increased, due largely, if not entirely, to the high tariff imposed by the Commonwealth, and in part to the higher rentals, the worker should be entitled to an advance in wages to assist him in bearing the burden.

Hon. E. H. Hall: The farmer does not get it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Parliament has said so, and, until Parliament otherwise determines, the principle must remain, despite what Sir Edward Wittenoom or Mr. Hall may say. These two gentlemen are in hearty accord that the long service leave

provisions granted to railway employees and other sections of the service should be abolished. Long service leave is either good or bad. If it was just that it should be given to the railway clerks, it was equally just that it should be given to the railway porters.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Two wrongs do not make a right.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: I could understand those hon. members advocating the total abolition of long service leave, but when they contend that whilst the railway clerk and the civil servant should have it, but the railway porter and the men engaged on permanent ways should not get it, they are illogical.

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Why did not the Government bring down the question of long service leave? We were never asked to vote upon it.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: It has been part of the system of the State almost from the very beginning. No member of Parliament has ever contended that it should be abolished.

Hon. G. W. Miles: The clerk is a salaried officer, whereas the other receives overtime.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Because one man works overtime and the other is paid for overtime that is no argument against the principle. Civil servants rarely work overtime and yet they get long service leave.

The PRESIDENT: Order! During the whole of the debate the Chief Secretary never once interrupted any of the speakers. It is only fair that members should hear the Minister in silence.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: The teachers get long service leave, but do not work overtime. The same thing applies to gaolers. Either long service leave should be abolished altogether, or should be applied fairly all round. Mr. Nicholson stated that there should be careful supervision over the finances. The Government have in an unmistakable manner exercised such supervision. Were the Government to be guided by the advice of all members of Parliament, representing as they do every party, the finances would be in a worse position than they are in to-day. Members of the Country Party and the United Party press me for expenditure on education, expenditure which would no

doubt be justified if the financial position permitted. In some cases they have displayed great indignation because their requests have not been granted, but, in order to keep the finances under control, I am obliged to refuse them. There is no such thing as approaching the Minister, and urging him to exercise economy. When deputations put in an appearance, a member combines with it to extract as much money as possible from the Government. That has been my experience since I assumed office, and has been the experience of every other Minister. Mr. Nicholson says the interest bill is increasing. He is consistent. He is always very cautious when any measure is submitted that entails increased expenditure. Mr. Hamersley is different. He takes up the attitude session after session that new railways should be constructed, and is not concerned about the increased interest bill. It is quite probable that during the session he will submit to the Government a programme of expenditure that would send up the interest bill £200,000 or £300,000. It is only on occasions like these that he submits a protest. Mr. Hall is staggered by the amount of expenditure involved in this Supply Bill. The measure merely provides for a continuation of the Estimates approved by this House last year. It is not exactly a continuation because the amount is £10,000 less than last year for the two months. We are building harbour works at Geraldton. We have more than doubled the expenditure and increased our interest bill in consequence, without so far getting anything in return. Does the hon. member advocate that this work should stop?

Hon. E. H. H. Hall: Expedite it.

Hon. G. W. Miles: You are not consistent.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: That has been the cry for the last six months. Let us expedite this work, treble the expenditure involved, but complete the undertaking so that the manganese mine may operate successfully. Mr. Lovekin contends that more machinery should be provided in order that new appointments may be reviewed by Parliament. If he could have shown that any new appointments were not justified he would have been on sound ground, but he has not done so. He simply makes the bald assertion.

If we pass legislation in this Chamber which creates new positions members cannot be disappointed if the new appointments are made. They are necessary in order to administer the Act. The country is progressing, more business is being done, and consequently greater staffs are needed in the departments. The Public Service Commissioner is charged with this responsibility. He performs his task with thorough conscientiousness. He is constantly moving around amongst the departments, and is only too willing to exercise economy if he sees the opportunity.

Hon. G. W. Miles: A very conscientious man.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Mr. Hall contends that the Commissioner should be excluded from the operations of the Arbitration Act. That would be a nice example for the Government to set the rest of the community. I am sure the hon. member could not have been serious when he made the suggestion. To suggest that, because the Railways Commissioner is free from political control, he should also be free from the operations of the Industrial Arbitration Act, is not sound reasoning. Many of the speeches this afternoon were not relevant to the Bill, although they were instructive. I feel sure that after the explanation I have offered, members will give their support to the measure. The expenditure is not being increased in any way. The Bill merely provides for the payment of the wages and salaries to public officials, and enables railways and other public works authorised by Parliament to be carried out.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Most of the money has already been spent.

The CHIEF SECRETARY: Everything provided for here has already been authorised by Parliament. The Bill gives the Government no authority to engage in any new work, only to carry on those works that have already received the sanction of Parliament.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee, etc.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

Read a third time and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

HON. W. T. GLASHEEN (South-East) [7.50]: I am rather sorry I am on my feet to-night to add my little contribution to the debate. I had no intention whatever of speaking so early, but it did appear to me yesterday that the House was out to establish a new record in the direction of quickly despatching the debate on the Address-in-reply. You, Sir, seemed to be on the verge of declaring that the "ayes" had it, and to save that record of the quick despatch of the question being created, I rose to my feet and saved the situation by getting the adjournment. I have hardly had any opportunity to prepare anything like a connected address and the best I shall be able to do to-night is to get through somehow. Before saying anything further I wish to associate myself with the expressions of pleasure heard from other speakers in regard to your return to this State. I am sure that all members of this Chamber are very pleased to see you back, particularly as you have returned looking so much better. You will also find pleasure in learning that that good discipline that has been characteristic of your Presidency of this Chamber suffered nothing in your absence; it was in the very safe hands of the Deputy President, Mr. Cornell, and I think he displayed conspicuous ability and good sense and tact while presiding over the deliberations of this House during the time you were away. It will be admitted as a truth that those who are privileged to travel over considerable parts of the world—if they travel with the right mind, and I am sure you did, because we know you to be a reader and a thinker, and also to have an observant mind—must on their return to resume their public duties perform those duties with a better understanding of them. I am sure that you, Sir, have profited by your trip. I hope that after your brief visit to your native land you will admit you have come back to what, to use a euphemism, is God's own country. The only speech that has been delivered on the Address, save, of course, that of Mr. Fraser who moved the adoption of the Address, was that of Mr. Baxter which we heard yesterday. I was very interested indeed to hear his complimentary references to Mr. Fraser. Mr. Baxter, however, appeared to me to get off the beaten track. I think I have known him not to be a back-scratcher, and I was wondering, during his complimentary refer-

comes to Mr. Fraser's speech, whether he was scratching that hon. member's back or whether he really meant what he said. We will assume that Mr. Baxter meant what he said and that his remarks gave a young member like Mr. Fraser much encouragement and pleasure. I believe that in years as well as in political life Mr. Fraser is the youngest member of this House, and such complimentary references, coming from one of the oldest members of the Chamber, would give Mr. Fraser much encouragement. But the conclusion of Mr. Baxter's remarks rather spoilt the compliments he paid Mr. Fraser because he said that Mr. Fraser had not enough sense to belong to the best party. The reason Mr. Baxter gave for that conclusion was that the hon. member belonged to a party that stood for a 44-hour week, high wages and less work which, he said, were the principal contributing causes to the unemployment problem. At that stage of Mr. Baxter's remarks I interjected, "What about payment by results?" And he appeared to think that that system, if universally adopted, would solve most of our industrial ills. It seemed to me he said that the whole of the blame for the absence of payment by results or the antagonism of the trade unions towards that system, rested with the Labour party or the people they represent. I disagree with that because I have in mind a personal experience many years ago on the goldfields. I say without reservation that in my opinion the rebellion against payment by results or the piecework system is no more the Labour people's fault than it is the fault of the employer. As a matter of fact I would be inclined to say that the fault is that of the employer of labour. I will tell hon. members why. I believe that the first rebellion against payment by results in this State was on the goldfields. I worked as a miner and received 13s. 4d. a day, which is £4 a week. One day someone had a brainwave and suggested that we might take on contract work and earn more. We took on contract work. The result was that being merely men and getting paid by results, we became indiscreet in regard to our health. We rushed into smoke, grime and filth, where we never would have gone in other circumstances, and instead of earning our £4 a week or £8 a fortnight, we earned double, and of course did double the amount of work. Then those wise people called mining directors—and some of the mines at that time were turning out a ton of gold a month—saw the pay sheets and

said, "What about this; here are men making £8 a week or £16 every pay-day; we cannot stand that." The result was that the piece-work man who was sacrificing his health had his contract price gradually whittled away from him, and it was not long before he found himself slaving away on piece-work and making what he was previously earning on day work. That is an absolute fact, and I believe it is an absolute fact all over Australia. In the course of some remarks on the position Mr. Bruce said recently he did not blame the Labour people in their rebellion against piecework because of the very foolish employers of labour who, as soon as it was demonstrated that the men could make more by working much harder and applying their mentality as well as their muscles to the job, brought their men back to a contract price, which was no better than the day wage. That did happen, and is still happening. Mr. Cornell told us to-night that in his opinion one of the solutions would be for the employer and employee to get together, discuss the whole situation and the potential war that seems to exist, and endeavour to arrive at an estimate of the trouble and an estimate of the remedy. Mr. Cornell expressed nothing original when he suggested that, because only last year Mr. Bruce called a conference of both sides to discuss those very questions, and evolve some solution. In all my experience and reading I have never come across any kind of bigotry, religious or other, greater than the political bigotry displayed at that conference by people who ought to have known better. All sorts of records of sayings and doings were dug up from the remote cobweb corners of history and utterances of public men; all sorts of suspicions were raised in all kinds of places that it was an attempt by the capitalist class to undermine trade unionism, and as a result the conference fizzled out. But we must give Mr. Bruce credit for realising the difficulties that exist, and for taking some steps at least to get a conference together to see if something could be done. At the very beginning of the Governor's Speech, which of course is the speech of the Government, we are told that everything in regard to finance is entirely satisfactory. The statement takes just a little bit of believing. I understand the State has a deficit this year of about £270,000, and I say without reservation, all the relative circumstances being considered, that is one of the

biggest deficits in the history of the State. It is certainly not as big in pounds, shillings and pence as a deficit we had during the war, but at that time everything was chaos, and the whole industrial and commercial world was upset. I believe a record in pounds, shillings and pence was then established, and we had one deficit of £600,000. That occurred, however, in a set of circumstances that made State finance and State activity of any kind quite impossible. The current deficit has been arrived at after the longest sequence of bounteous years, correlative with the highest prices we have experienced for a number of years for our principal products, as well as being correlative with the greatest amount of Federal grant money that the State has ever received. In spite of all these circumstances that should have been happy circumstances, we finished the year with a State deficit of £270,000, and the Premier tells us that everything financially is quite all right. I read recently a new definition of a pessimist. It defined a pessimist as a person that continually associates with optimists. If that is so, members can write me down as a pessimist right away, because if there is any consensus of opinion that we are optimistic regarding the finances of the State, in that atmosphere of optimism I must say once again that I am a pessimist. I am surprised at the Premier because, with that state of affairs existing, we must not forget our Federal obligations. Mr. Collier recently attended a Premiers' conference in Melbourne where Mr. Bruce put up some startling figures for his consideration. I am not much good at figures; I do not like them, and I am not going to indulge in them to any great extent to-night, but I wish to quote one or two of Mr. Bruce's big figures. He told the conference at which Mr. Collier was present that during the last eight years the Commonwealth had borrowed 300 millions of money, and that during the next year 70 millions worth of loans floated principally overseas would be falling due. Mr. Bruce also said that in 1913-14 the total production of the whole Commonwealth amounted to £221,000,000, and the ratio of taxation to that production was 10 per cent., whereas in 1928 the total production had risen to £450,000,000, and the ratio of taxation had increased to between 19 and 20 per cent. Those are alarming figures. Yet Mr. Collier comes along and tells us that the finances give no cause for

concern, that they are quite all right, and that everything in the garden is lovely. If we are going to accept his assurance that everything in the garden is lovely, I must compare our attitude of mind with that of the mad old Nero, who sat and scratched his fiddle and danced a jig while Rome was burning. That is just about the position in which we are placed. I wish to say a few words regarding the Vermin Act. I am not going to indulge in any criticism of the measure because the time for that has passed. I hope the Chief Secretary will pay particular attention to what I have to say as I intend to support my remarks by relating a personal experience. The measure was passed and last year the total amount collected from the tax was in the vicinity of £42,000, while the total amount expended was about £38,000. The personal experience illustrating how ineffective and lacking in value the measure is is this: Last Sunday morning on my farm I set out for what I thought was going to be a pleasant walk. I had not gone very far before I came across one of my best sheep mangled almost beyond recognition by some dog. On looking around further I found 17 of my very best sheep foully murdered and mangled, presumably by the same dog. I yarded my sheep that night in a small paddock near the house and in spite of the fact that they were practically against the door of the house, and we heard no disturbance or barking to indicate that the dog was about, in the morning I found that five more sheep had been killed. My point is that while we in settled areas are paying the tax, it is of absolutely no benefit to us owing to the basis on which the tax is levied. It is levied for the sole purpose of paying a bonus on the scalp of dingoes and for the destruction of other vermin. It cannot be used for anything else, and it is in this respect that the Act requires to be amended.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: A dingo would not go right up to your door.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: I wish I could find out whether a dingo or a tame dog was responsible for the slaughter.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: More likely it was a tame dog.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: My experience has been the experience of many other settlers as regards the menace of the dingo, and the allocation of the money collected

for its eradication. The dingo is an awful animal. I do not know whether there are many other members who have had my experience, but nothing makes one feel so helpless and hopeless as the depredations of this pest. It has all the instincts of cunning; it never comes out to slaughter excepting on pitch dark nights, and it generally comes when there is a storm raging and the chance of detecting its presence is least. We have no chance of catching that dingo unless we have the knowledge possessed by the professional dingo trappers, who closely guard their secret. Once a dog has come to a given area, an expert trapper can catch it in a night, whereas a layman such as myself might spend two years in trying to poison, trap, shoot, or otherwise catch the brute and miserably fail. This is my trouble, and I believe it is the trouble of hundreds like myself. Under the provisions of the Act the funds cannot be applied to anything but payment for scalps. My position in the difficulty I have just expressed is this: I rang up a man in Narrogin, 50 miles distant from where I live. I was so concerned about the losses I might incur as well as those I had already suffered, that I offered him £20 to come out and catch the dog, he being a man with some knowledge of the subject. However, he was then engaged upon a contract, and could not come. I believe I would have paid him £50 to come. I brought this subject before our party organisation yesterday, and they were so convinced of the force of my reasoning in regard to it that they promised to do all in their power to induce the Government to bring a small amending Bill before Parliament during this session. That amending Bill will have for its purpose the provision of at least £1,000 from the vermin tax for the appointment of two or three expert dingo trappers, who would be stationed possibly in the Narrogin, Wagin and Katanning zones and other defined areas. Then the persons in my present unfortunate position would be able to ring up the professional dingo trapper employed by the State, and he would probably catch the dog on the first night, and so prevent it from doing immense damage. I ask the Chief Secretary to keep that point in mind. If such an amending Bill should come from another place to this Chamber, I hope hon. members will give it the consideration it deserves. While on the question of vermin,

I may mention what I consider the most absurd piece of sentimentality in the way of legislation ever inflicted upon Western Australia. I refer to the Act for the preservation of kangaroos and brush. From some absurd sentimental fear that some day the native game may be eradicated and that we shall be great losers thereby, that measure is on the statute-book. Yet we have our illimitable bush—it takes about two days to fly from here to Adelaide, and in the North there are thousands of miles still untrodden by human feet—absolutely teeming with kangaroos and brush. Then why enact a law dictated by the extremely remote fear of our last kangaroo being caught? There is no other vermin—whether rabbit or dingo or any other kind—that creates an aggregate loss comparable to the loss caused by kangaroos and brush, especially where the damage is least able to be borne, namely, by people struggling on the edge of settlement. The chief trouble, however, is the royalty, the miserable royalty collected by the Government from a settler's little boy or from a humble bare-footed nigger who has caught a few kangaroos for food and then buys something with the produce of their skins. Settlers' children and niggers are charged sometimes 20 per cent. royalty on little bundles of skins. Kangaroos refuse on principle to be caught; they are very hard to catch. When a person has caught one, there is not much profit left in the skin. The royalty collected by the Government constitutes the profit, and because of the collection of that royalty kangaroos and brush are roaming through crops and destroying thousands upon thousands of pounds' worth of wealth every year thus depriving the Government of revenue from production, depriving individuals of profit, and depriving the railways of freight. Those losses must aggregate 20 times the paltry amount of the royalty. In closely settled districts nowadays there are as many kangaroos and brush destroying crops as there were 20 years ago. In view of the heavy losses incurred both by settlers and by the State through the vermin, it is high time to repeal the protective Act and also the measure imposing the royalty on skins. After the many impassioned speeches that have been hurled at the simple little Bill that usually passes without comment, the Supply Bill, I am disposed to conclude that we have made wonderful progress to-night with the Address-in-reply debate. Your ruling on a point of order, Mr. President.

has enlightened me somewhat. Before it was given, I thought the discussion on the Supply Bill was circumscribed within narrow limits. However, seeing that one can run the whole gamut of politics, economic and world questions, and seeing that under your ruling, Mr. President, members have availed themselves of that privilege, I find myself wondering what those same members can have to say on the Address-in-reply. I hope that after the highly interesting speeches delivered to-day, this Address-in-reply debate may not drag out to such length as has happened in the past. Many references have been made—not necessarily here, but through the columns of the Press—to our wonderful standard of living. Mr. Gray to-night made special reference to it, and appeared to be highly proud of it, perhaps rightly so. I entirely dissociate myself from some opinions expressed by Sir Edward Wittenoom this evening. The hon. member said that the cause of unemployment was the high wages portioned out by the Arbitration Court. If there were any fundamental truth in the convictions that Sir Edward Wittenoom apparently holds, one would expect to find some concrete evidence of their truth. And when one goes a little further afield and finds that the country paying the highest wages in the world—the United States—is the most prosperous country in the world, one cannot help disagreeing with Sir Edward Wittenoom. If there were any truth in his conviction that low wages cause prosperity and produce employment, one would expect to find those conditions obtaining in China, where millions of men can be got to work for nothing. Yet we know that in China people are piled up in the streets in heaps starving to death. Therefore I disagree entirely with those opinions of the hon. member. Reverting to the standard of living, I am sure we are all proud to think that our people can have better food, better clothing, better education and better homes, so long as the standard is on safe economic lines. We have never had a standard of living based on scientific foundations. It is true we have a standard of living, but the only enduring foundation for such a standard is a profit over the cost of doing anything, that profit being utilised for all the pleasures and advantages constituting the standard. That has never been the case in Australia, but because of Australia's great potentialities and its enormous inherent wealth we have been able to borrow millions of money.

The Commonwealth is mortgaged to the extent of 1,100 millions sterling, principally on the security of her great resources; and we have never yet reached the stage of producing the cost of our standard of living. We have had this potentiality of borrowing, and every time we ran short and wished to support our standard of living, we did it on a false economic basis by running to the money lender and getting a few millions to keep us going. To me that seems a very great pity indeed. In view of the obligations confronting the State, and in view of all the dogmatic assertions as to the need of reducing taxation, a thinker must realise that it is easy to wish for something to be done but very difficult to accomplish the desire. So far as I am able to visualise the position, unless we go in for repudiation we must meet our commitments. We are in the grip of circumstances, and I do not think one Government can be much better than any other Government in dealing with those circumstances. We are head over heels in debt, and our interest commitments have to be honoured. I desire a reduction of taxation, but for the life of me I cannot see how it is to be brought about. If someone just comes along and says, "I am going to reduce taxation," my natural question is, "How is it going to be done?" I am afraid that when a solution or an explanation is asked for, it is not obtainable.

Hon. J. Cornell: You will be asked to give notice of the question.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Only yesterday the Chief Secretary, in reply to a question by Mr. Cornell, said—and I was indeed glad to hear the hon. gentleman say it—that the survey of the Karlgarin-Lake Grace line, the construction of which is long overdue, having been authorised during the last session, is to be commenced within the next three weeks. This will give pleasure to Mr. Cornell, and more particularly to the poor settlers themselves. I hope that, with the completion of the survey, little time will be lost before the construction of the line is put in hand. I know of no other section of the community that has waited more patiently, or more richly deserves railway communication than the people I refer to.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: For how long have they waited for their railway?

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: For donkeys years.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: Not for so long as that!

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: In my opinion the best type of settlers we have anywhere are to be found in that area. I feel confident that if we could only assess what those people have paid for the transport of their wheat and their ordinary requirements to and from Karlgarin and Kondinin, over distances varying from 25 to 40 miles, it would amount to a sum sufficient to pay for the construction of the line. Years ago the Hon. W. C. Angwin, after returning from an inspection of the conditions obtaining in the district, when he gained an idea of the potentiality of the land and the type of settler on the holdings, said that in his opinion the line I refer to was one of the first that should be constructed. I hope that before the end of the session these people will have a definite assurance that the construction of the line will be in hand this year. While dealing with the railways, I would like to point out that it is wonderful to contemplate what new values and new securities for the indebtedness of the State seem to have been set up almost unconsciously. We now find that in the South-West our policy of development has been all topsy-turvy. We now know that we have incurred expenditure that should not have been incurred. Instead of clearing colossal trees from holdings at a huge expenditure of money and thus bringing about over-capitalisation in the process, ploughing up sour land and attempting to sow clover seed and signally failing in the ultimate results, we now find that all that expensive procedure is unnecessary. The solution has been arrived at by a few men who have plodded quietly along without much scientific assistance. These big discoveries are generally made by laymen and, of course, the scientists sometimes follow their lead! These simple plodding farmers have discovered the best way, and certainly the cheapest way, to secure the best results, notwithstanding that the method does not cost within anything from £5 to £20 per acre compared with that incurred under the policy that has been pursued. These people simply cut the undergrowth and let it dry till the following summer, when they set a fire through it, having left the trees standing but ringbarked. They sowed the clover on top of the ashes, in conjunction with superphosphate. Then almost with the

rising of the sun and the passing of the showers, there appeared rich carpets of clover. Their work has changed the outlook in the South-West, where we have had such a regrettable experience. According to the "West Australian," which published particulars of the writing down of the capitalisation of a number of the group settlement blocks, a huge sum is involved, and we have to realise that that capitalisation was brought about through doing work that is now regarded as absolutely unnecessary. I do not know what the total amount written down will be in the end, but I will make a shrewd guess and say that the values of the blocks will be written down to about £8 or £10 per acre. I am afraid that the total load of indebtedness that the people of this State will have to shoulder, because of the writing down process, will be not much less than £2,000,000, if not more.

Hon. C. F. Baxter: It will be well over £6,000,000.

Hon. G. W. Miles: It represents two thirds of the value, according to the statement in this morning's paper.

Hon. J. R. Brown: All this was discussed long ago.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: Many matters that were discussed long ago will bear repetition. Is it not indeed regrettable that such huge expenditure was incurred upon unnecessary work, seeing that better results are being secured by a very simple process? This discovery has made all the difference in the wide world in the economic value of every acre of land in this State capable of growing clovers. I believe the potentialities of this State have been added to by millions of pounds, representing a figure almost beyond calculation, which will augment our national credit. This process has made of economic value land that formerly could not have supported a black snake or a lizard. With the expenditure of not more than £3 or £4 an acre, in some instances perhaps less than that, by virtue of the new process, much of that land will be built up with clovers so as to be capable of carrying as many as four and five sheep to the acre. Bankers are always regarded as conservative people and we have it from them that the economic value of land that is capable of carrying a sheep to the acre, is £5 an acre. Certainly I think the economic value is more than that, but accepting the conservative

basis of the banker, hon. members will appreciate that with the illimitable thousands of acres we have available in this State that can, by virtue of the simple process I have indicated, be converted from an economic value of nothing to one of £5 per acre, a wonderful change will be brought about. With land brought to a carrying capacity of four sheep to the acre, it will mean that the economic value of millions of acres will be raised from nothing to £20 per acre. The point I wish to make is that one of the biggest factors that has contributed to the magical effect—it is almost like something out of the "Arabian Nights"—that has followed upon the discovery of the new process, is the part played by superphosphates. That being so, there is but one conclusion we can arrive at with reference to the part to be played by the Government. We must appreciate that large areas of the land I have been referring to are held by poor people who are incapable of carrying out the necessary work to bring their holdings into full carrying capacity, because they have not the funds available to provide the superphosphate necessary to bring about that result. Does it not occur to member that if we have the means of creating an economic asset that at present is valued at nothing but which can be raised to a value of £20 per acre, it would be a statesmanlike attitude for the Government to adopt to assist those people in connection with their superphosphate supplies. We have adopted a very liberal attitude in assisting the wheat producers, and the Government should give consideration to a proposal to issue long-dated loans on easy terms to the settlers so as to enable them to procure adequate superphosphate supplies and place their holdings on a profitable basis. I trust that that matter will be given serious consideration during the present session of Parliament. A good deal has been said about the policy of protection. Some have claimed that it is the cause of unemployment. I have as great an objection to protection as anyone could possibly have. Since ever I was capable of reasoning for myself, I have taken an interest in social problems, and particularly in those associated with economics. I never could understand how, by means of a policy of protection, which aims at making goods dearer—even if that policy does not aim at doing so, it has that

effect—we could ever hope to tax our way into prosperity, with high wages and a high standard of living. That is what is happening under Australia's protectionist policy. It is taxing the people in respect of food, clothing, housing; it is making production of every kind dearer. Yet it is held out as a solution of our unemployment problem. When the Leader of the Federal Labour Party (Mr. Scullin) visited Western Australia, he told the people here that the reason for unemployment and congestion in the principal capital cities throughout Australia was because the tariff was unnecessarily low. He told the people that if they were to give the Labour Party the reins of Government, his Cabinet would see to it that the tariff was made so high that the clothing, boots and food of little children, and every other necessary, would be so dear that unemployment would disappear from every capital city. That was a most extraordinary statement to make. When I consider the problem, it seems to me that there is something fundamentally deeper in our social system that is causing unemployment, something deeper than either free trade or protection. At present England nearly approximates a freetrade country, yet, despite that, our unemployment trouble is a mere bagatelle compared with the problem confronting Great Britain. If we peruse the pages of history, we find that in practically every country in the world, irrespective of whether the dominant policy is that of freetrade or protection, there is not any appreciable difference in the number of unemployed under one policy than there is in a country where the other policy obtains. I am forced to the conclusion that there is something deeper at the bottom of our economic ills than protection or freetrade that causes poor wretches who are looking for work to be unable to find it. Without going any further, my own conviction is that the social ills that produce poverty must somehow be connected with the land laws of the world and of this State. I will just leave it at that. It is a crying commentary on the system of protection. Because when first protection was instituted in Australia we were told it would be self-contained, it would bring us high wages, plenty of work, and a high standard of living. But the wretched sequence has been that after about 40 years experience of protection in Australia, we have mortgaged Australia to the extent of eleven hundred millions of

money. If that is the effect of protection all I can say is the result has been a very strange one indeed. I should like to add that the first results of the wretchedly false economic principle of protection as it affects this country, were apparent at the very beginning. I have read something of the appalling conditions in the textile industry in the Old Land in regard to sweated labour. But the first application of protection in Australia was just like the first application of three or four whiskeys that a man will take. He is elevated, and everything in the garden appears to him to be lovely. So it was in Australia. In the first application of protection, buildings and factories sprung up, and everything became active until the vicious circle started to operate. People said, "This is bonzer; we all have work, and we are all going to get it forever afterwards." But those with a knowledge of the sequence will be reminded very clearly that after six or eight years of protection there were to be found in protected Victoria worse sweating conditions than ever existed in the Old Land. Then there appeared a remarkable result in the coming of our first strikes. It will be within the memory of members how strikes began in Australia. One of the first we had was the shearers' strike in Queensland. At that time protected Victoria, that was going to bring us all this prosperity, was the only protected State in the Commonwealth, all the others being freetrade. Do you, Sir, remember how that shearers' strike in Queensland was broken, just when the shearers appeared to have won it? It was broken by the simple expedient of going off to Victoria, where they had all been promised the millenium as the result of protection, and getting scabs to come and take the places of the strikers. They chartered a special train, picked up all the scabs they needed, and took them over and with them broke that strike in Queensland. The same thing happened in relation to the boot operatives' strike in New South Wales. The employers imported scabs from Victoria, and I presume those men would not have agreed to act as scabs if they could have got other work. The maritime strike in Adelaide and the miners' strike at Broken Hill were beaten by exactly the same factors. Even in that early history those were the sequences of that wretched economic fallacy, protection. The whole place was full of people so hard up

that they were prepared to scab on their fellow workers. When gold was found in Western Australia, protected Victoria, in spite of the statement that everybody in Victoria was going to be prosperous and contented for the rest of their lives, sent more people to Western Australia than were sent by all the other States of the Commonwealth. So you see how many evidences we have of the rotten results of protection. I suppose we shall get reform only on the same basis from which reform springs in any part of the world, namely the basis of poverty. Every reform has its root in poverty. So the State will have to be poverty stricken before we get this much needed reform. But according to Mr. Bruce's figures we have borrowed 300 millions during the last eight years, and so presumably we are fast arriving at that stage where we shall be so wretchedly hard up that we shall become intelligent enough to blow this fallacy of protection clean out of existence in Australia. We have foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech legislation that will be introduced this session along lines similar to the Redistribution of Seats Bill that we passed last session. In this instance it will have application to the franchise of this Chamber, and we shall have a re-allocation of the boundaries of our Provinces. The instructions given to the Commissioners under the last Redistribution of Seats Bill had the result of bringing five goldfields seats into the already well-represented metropolitan community. One can only visualise the same reasoning in regard to this contemplated legislation. But I do hope that the Commission that will be appointed to make recommendations regarding the boundaries will not go out shackled by the same allocation of representation as obtained when the last measure was before Parliament. Since that measure robbed a rural community of five seats, we can only conclude that it is the intention of the foreshadowed Bill or its sponsors to take away a couple of Council seats from outback communities and give them to the over-populated city.

Hon. J. Cornell: The Constitution will prevent that.

Hon. W. T. GLASHEEN: The Constitution was mentioned in the last discussion, particularly in another place. It appeared that the Constitution gave us an assurance that any allocation of boundaries in a redistribution of seats must be a collateral one, inasmuch as altering the boundaries of the Assembly seats, it at the same time

altered the boundaries of the Council Provinces. That constitutional point was raised and disallowed. Apart from that, I hope and trust the same reasoning and allocation will not be part and parcel of the Commissioners' instructions when they got out to fix the boundaries of the Council Provinces. Before sitting down, I should like to say a word or two about the difference in the economic value of our southern lands, particularly in the vicinity of the Kalgan Plains, due to the application of superphosphate and the sowing of clover seeds. All around that centre there is a vast area where really good settlers have demonstrated that it is practicable to fully develop that land by those means. That land dressed with super and sown with clover is capable of carrying at least one sheep to the acre, while much of it will carry two sheep to the acre. There is a vast extent of that country, I do not know how many thousands of acres, but not far from its termination over the Stirling Ranges we come into one of the highest production wheat districts in the State. There we touch the Borden country and the Gnowangerup country. In consideration of the proved value of those lands by settlers on the spot, I am hoping that there will be constructed a continuation of the Karlgarin-Lake Grace railway from Lake Grace through the Stirling Ranges over the Kalgan Plains and right down into the Port of Albany. That is a national job, and I hope an entirely new classification of those lands will be made. We have had a most unfortunate classification down there. I am not complaining of it, but it was arrived at before we knew anything of clovers or of the natural effect of superphosphate. Since the application of those two factors, the whole economic value has been changed and we have now justification for building a line through what was thought a few years ago to be almost valueless country. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

On motion by Hon. E. H. Gray debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 31st July, 1929.

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

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL WATER SUPPLIES.

Mr. THOMSON (for Mr. Latham) asked the Premier: 1, What amount of money was spent on the Narembeen water scheme under the Migration Agreement? 2, What amount was spent in the Esperance district on water supplies under the Migration Agreement.

The PREMIER replied: 1, £63,488 8s. 1d. 2, £64,961 15s. 11d.

QUESTION—ALSATIAN DOGS.

Mr. LINDSAY asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, Is he aware of the resolution carried at the conference of Ministers of Agriculture, held recently in Melbourne, regarding the introduction of legislation in the various States to destroy or sterilise Alsation dogs? 2, Does he intend to introduce a Bill this session in conformity with that resolution?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Agriculture) replied: 1, Yes. 2, The recommendation contained in the resolution is receiving consideration.

QUESTIONS (2)—APPRENTICES.

Trade Quota.

Mr. SAMPSON asked the Minister for Works: 1, What is the quota of apprentices to journeymen in the different trades for which the State Arbitration Court has made