

any big schemes. It is far better that the Government should confine their attention to one patch of 10,000 acres and not interfere with the rights of individuals right throughout the State. In many instances the water is unfit for irrigation purposes. There is no reason why we should arbitrarily take away the rights and privileges that people have and place over them inspectors and people who are likely to interfere with them. I shall give the measure favourable consideration in the hope that we can induce a little consideration from the Government who are certainly willing to do what they can to help one of the industries of the State.

On motion by Hon. H. P. Colebatch, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 5th November, 1912.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Honorary Minister: Regulations under the Criminal Code (Preventive Detention).

By the Premier: 1, Regulations under the Boat Licensing Act; 2, Return re karri country applied for during the past two years (ordered on motion by Mr. O'Loghlen).

QUESTION—STATE GOVERNOR.

Mr. DOOLEY asked the Premier: 1, Has he received any official intimation of the transfer of His Excellency Sir Gerald Strickland to New South Wales? 2, If so, in consideration of the view that effective economy could be achieved by combining the functions of His Majesty's representative in this State with those of the Chief Justice, does he intend to request the Imperial authorities to give effect to that view?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Representations were previously made to the Imperial authorities by the late Hon. T. Price when Premier of South Australia. The reply received from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and a copy of which was transmitted to each of the other States, contained, *inter alia*, the following:—"The change which is suggested is a very far-reaching one—more so than, perhaps, appears at first sight; and it could not, I consider, be entertained in any case unless it is to be applied to all the Australian States, and not to one alone, and until public opinion in Australia is demonstrated to be overwhelmingly in its favour." Also:—"There is, no doubt, much to be said in favour of the Canadian system under which the Central Government appoints provincial governors, and if the people of Australia were to desire to adopt a similar system His Majesty's Government would in all probability be disposed to advise His Majesty that the necessary steps should be taken to carry out their wishes. So far, I understand, there has been no indication that the States, whose contention is that they remain sovereign States, would desire that their prerogatives should be diminished, and the evidence of such sovereignty is in part secured by making the appointment of governor in the same manner and on the same terms as prior to Federation." This Government believe that it is the wish of the people of Western Australia, and of Australia as a whole, that the position of State Governor should be open to citizens of the State, and, in order to obtain the concurrence of the other States, at the last Premiers' conference

(held in Melbourne in January last) submitted the following resolution:—"That this conference approves of united action being taken by the State Governments to secure approval from the Imperial Government of such a change in the present method of appointing State Governors as would permit of citizens within their own State occupying such high and responsible positions under the Crown." This motion had been placed on the agenda paper by the South Australian Government whose representatives were unavoidably absent. Unfortunately, however, none of the other States' representatives supported the resolution, but the following amendment was carried, viz.:—"That the further consideration of this matter be adjourned until the next Conference." Further representations, however, are now being made to the Imperial authorities on behalf of this State, in order to ascertain whether they still adhere to the previous decision respecting the absolute necessity for unanimity amongst the States of the Commonwealth.

BILL—AGRICULTURAL BANK ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Minister for Lands and read a first time.

BILL—SUPPLY £492,225.

All stages.

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriation in connection with the Bill.

Standing Orders Suspension.

The PREMIER (Hon. J. Scaddan) moved—

That so much of the Standing Orders be suspended as is necessary to enable resolutions from the Committee of Supply and Ways and Means to be reported and adopted on the same day on which they shall have passed those Committees, and also the passing of a Supply Bill through all its stages in one day.

Question put and passed.

Committee of Supply.

Mr. Holman in the Chair.

The PREMIER moved—

That there be granted to His Majesty on account of the services of the year 1912-13 a sum not exceeding £492,225.

As will be seen by the Preamble of the Bill it is proposed to charge £287,468 to revenue and £204,757 to General Loan Fund. In order perhaps to avoid considerable discussion I might explain that we are making no provision for Treasurer's Advance or Loan Suspense Account. The amount provided under revenue is in accordance with the Estimates which are before the House at the present time, and from General Loan Fund based on one-twelfth of the amount expended last year.

Hon. Frank Wilson: How long will that carry you on?

The PREMIER: I anticipate it will carry us on to the end of the month, and I hope that the Estimates will by that time have passed the House; indeed I hope that most of the legislation will have passed by that time.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Not if you keep on bringing it in.

The PREMIER: I am sure the leader of the Opposition will join me in the wish which I have just expressed. While the Estimates are before members they will know how the money is being expended. At the same time it is necessary in order to have legal authority to operate on the public accounts, that this Supply Bill should be passed because we only obtained authority to the 31st October.

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported; the report adopted.

Committee of Ways and Means.

On motion by the PREMIER resolved, "That towards making good the Supply granted to His Majesty for the services of the year 1912-13, a sum not exceeding £492,225 be granted out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund of Western Aus-

tralia and from moneys to credit of the General Loan Fund."

Resolution reported; the report adopted.

Supply Bill, introduced, etc.

In accordance with the foregoing resolutions, Supply Bill introduced, passed through all stages, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

BILLS (2)—THIRD READING.

- 1, Money-lenders.
- 2, Timber Lines Traffic.

Read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1912-13.

In Committee of Supply.

Debate resumed from the 29th October, on the Treasurer's Financial Statement and the Annual Estimates; Mr. Holman in the Chair.

Vote—*His Excellency the Governor* £2,746:

Mr. TURVEY (Swan): I do not desire to let this general discussion on the Estimates conclude without having a little to say in connection with them. The leader of the Opposition in his criticism of the Budget Speech, was most anxious to explain to the House at considerable length the various reasons for the delay in the delivery of his respective Budgets, and also for the respective deficits, and, whilst admitting the lateness of the delivery on his own part, he was ungenerous enough to absolutely refuse to listen to any reason that might be offered on the part of the present Treasurer for the delay in connection with this year's Budget speech. The Premier is deserving of the greatest praise for his action as Colonial Treasurer in so boldly facing the situation and placing before the people a truthful and clear statement of the financial position. He was not afraid to anticipate a deficit, and I have no doubt that he, like the leader of the Opposition, when he occupied the position of Treasurer, could, had

he so desired, have shown a statement of accounts which on paper might indeed look considerably better than the statement he recently presented; but he pursued an honourable course, insofar as he refused to transfer to loan expenditure many items which in the past were charged to loan expenditure, and should have been charged to consolidated revenue.

Mr. Nanson: Can you mention them?

Mr. TURVEY: I will leave that to the Premier.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What about the £34,000?

Mr. TURVEY: The Premier will no doubt deal with the £34,000 when he has an opportunity of replying. However, I am confident that the people of Western Australia will appreciate to a very great degree the fact that they have now a Treasurer who, instead of estimating a surplus on paper, is game enough to face the situation and give a truthful statement of the accounts as he anticipates they will be. It would have been easy for the Premier in his position as Colonial Treasurer, to have tickled the ears of the people of Western Australia as they have been tickled by past Treasurers with a plausible tale of an alleged surplus. The Premier showed a deficit and he anticipates a further deficit.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He will get it all right.

Mr. TURVEY: It will be much better than doing as the hon. member did and showing a surplus.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What did I do?

Mr. TURVEY: I will come to that later. The Premier also showed his unbounded confidence in the resources of the State. He has courage and faith sufficient to know that money judiciously spent in the development of the resources of this State, though for a time it may increase our deficit, will be to its betterment in a much greater degree than were he to assume an attitude of despair and doubt and tighten up the purse strings. As the Premier pointed out, he does not belong to the Little Australian Party, nor to the party who are ready to cry stinking fish at the slightest provocation, but he showed his confidence in the State,

and that he was not prepared to retard the State although he had to face a deficit. I can assure the leader of the Opposition that I think the people of the State generally will appreciate the fact that the Premier intends pursuing his policy of developing the resources of the State and, after all, the deficit announced by the Premier is but as a drop of water in the sea when one comes to think of the magnificent resources we have in this State of ours. The people of Western Australia have not forgotten how the leader of the Opposition in his position as Colonial Treasurer, when delivering his Budget speech in 1906, posed, as he now poses, as the financial genius of this State, and told the people of Western Australia then that he would show a surplus at the end of the year of £3,514, and he actually finished the year with a shortage of £88,829. On that occasion he commenced the year with a deficit of £119,900 and he estimated that at the end of the year it would be reduced to £116,386, instead of which the deficit had accumulated to £208,729. In the following year, 1907, after such a shock he did not dare to anticipate a surplus, but managed to increase the deficit from £208,729 to £211,094. In the next year, 1908/9, he boldly assured the people of the State that he was going to do things, and on that occasion he announced his intention of showing a surplus, this time to the tune of £2,526. The leader of the Opposition a moment ago asked wherein he had failed. Let us see how truthful to the people of Western Australia he was on that occasion. He commenced in 1907 with a deficit of £211,094 and at the end of the year that deficit had not been reduced as he anticipated, but it had increased to the enormous amount of £312,631: so that, instead of showing a surplus of £2,000 odd, as he said he would do, on the year's transactions, he allowed the transactions of the State to drift behind to the tune of £101,537 in that one year. In other words the leader of the Opposition, who poses as the financial genius, who has the audacity to say the present Colonial Treasurer is incapable, misled the public on that occasion, or rather was out of his reckoning

on the balance of the year's transactions to the amount of £104,063, while the present Treasurer on the year's transactions is only out to an amount of £16,758. I said just now that I had no doubt the present Colonial Treasurer could have shown a much better result on paper had he resorted to some of the tactics adopted by the last Premier. I believe the leader of the Opposition when Colonial Treasurer on one occasion redeemed a loan of local inscribed stock due in 1910 by issuing a similar amount of local inscribed stock, to be redeemed in 1925, at par, after gazetting and after having received the approval of the Governor, and though it was advertised to be issued at par, one holder of £500,000 of the new issue was given in a very questionable manner a bonus of £20,000 in addition.

Mr. Foley: Who was that?

Mr. TURVEY: Probably the leader of the Opposition will be able to give the hon. member the information. There is the amount, and although a bonus was given, and I believe it was commented upon by the Auditor General, he deducted it from subsequent loans of local inscribed stock. Further, one cannot but commend the action of the Treasurer in deciding to legalise what is known as the Treasurer's Advance Account. It is a well-known fact that in the past Parliamentary authority has not been obtained and through the Treasurer's Advance Account our Suspense Account had been built up, notwithstanding that the Auditor General in his annual report year after year pointed out the illegality and unconstitutionality of such a procedure, absolutely no notice was taken by past Treasurers, and I think the present Treasurer is to be commended for having taken the precautions suggested by the Auditor General. I wish to emphasise that whereas the accumulated deficit was £208,729 on the 30th June, 1907, £211,094 in 1908, and £312,631 in 1909, the accumulated deficit for the present year was only £121,110. I do not wish to reiterate the very cogent reasons advanced by the Premier to account for the deficit referred to. Members on both sides know perfectly well many of the reasons accounting for that deficit. They

know the very bad season the Premier had to face, and indeed some hon. members sitting in Opposition and the people of the State generally applauded the Premier and his colleagues for their magnificent work in coming to the assistance of the farmers in the late dry season. One cannot do what was done by the Treasurer in this respect without heaping up the deficit and, after all, compared with the deficit in 1909 of £312,631, the present deficit of £121,110 is little to be afraid of. Considerably more assistance has been given to the farmers of the State during the past year than in any previous year, and no less a sum than £95,833 has been asked for this year for assistance to the farmers. This is nearly £33,000 more than was expended last year. I feel it would be unnecessary for me to take up the time of members in pointing out the good work that has been done by the present Administration, and which would indeed more than recompense for any slight deficit that may have accumulated. For instance, the leader of the Opposition and his colleagues had promised the people workers' homes. Of course he told the Colonial Treasurer a few nights ago that he was only carrying out work which had been initiated by him. It had perhaps been promised; it is one thing to promise but it is indeed another thing to do.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Promises before an election.

Mr. TURVEY: The leader of the Opposition and his friends made many promises on the eve of the election. I notice the leader of the Opposition in criticising the Budget speech the other evening went so far as to suggest that the action of the present Administration in raising the wages of the lower paid railway servants was nothing further than a political move. Fancy the leader of the Opposition daring to accuse the Premier of that being a political move when one comes to the consideration of his own actions just prior to the last election. Whilst he, prior to the election, took the opportunity of giving an increase in wages to a body of men who, after all, were fairly well paid—I do not say they were not entitled to the increase, but

others were more entitled—whilst he did that and says nothing on his part as to it being a political move, he accuses the Premier of political moves for having raised the minimum wage of railway servants. Then again, the Ministry have made provision and expended certain moneys in connection with the establishment of a consumptive sanatorium. I believe that also was promised by the leader of the Opposition and his friends, but the Premier and his colleagues have gone a little further than promises, the work is already in progress. I have no doubt that before long the sanatorium will be established and should have been established in my opinion many years ago. Then again, we find the leader of the Opposition also promised State steamers.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: If necessary.

Mr. TURVEY: They are here.

Mr. Foley: That was before the last election.

Mr. TURVEY: The State steamers are doing good work, and though the leader of the Opposition and his colleagues may look on this as a socialistic move, I would like to point out to the leader of the Opposition that only in to-day's newspaper we find an announcement from the Federal Fruit Commission which is being held in the Eastern States, and is visiting all the States, favouring a proposal of even putting on Commonwealth vessels to export our fruit, and urging on the Government to step in and take the fruit export out of the hands of the monopoly in which it is now placed. Then again, it is well known these steamers were put on with a view to assist in the reduction of the price of meat. That reminds me that the leader of the Opposition the other evening was ungenerous enough to make reference to the fact that a joint of beef—I think the first that was purchased at the State butcher's shop—was, after purchase by the Premier, put in a State motor car and taken home. I think that ungenerous. Not that the public will take notice of it, but if notice is to be taken of that, then notice should be taken of the various uses that the Government motor cars

were put to during the time the leader of the Opposition was in office, and they would be found astounding indeed. The leader of the Opposition also pointed out that whilst there was an increase in the expenditure in connection with the railways, there was a decrease in efficiency. I do not agree with the hon. member in his statement as to efficiency. I do not think his statement will be borne out by facts. There certainly has been an increased expenditure and an increase in the direction I have already pointed out; and I think the action of the Minister for Railways in having given second-class sleeper accommodation to the people on the goldfields is to be commended. Matters such as these cannot be carried out without somewhat increasing the expenditure. The salaries of the police force have been raised and the salaries of the school teachers of the State have also been raised. I believe that much more remains to be done, still, at the same time, the Government have done something in that direction, and have already raised the salaries of the lower-paid teachers in our State schools. Members opposite, some of them, have advocate for a considerable time the establishment of open markets. That again was another promise, and it remained a promise; but it remained for the present Government to repurchase land at West Perth, and already the site is arranged. I can remember in my election campaign my opponent pointing out that he had advocated open markets for several years, but it remained for the present Government to do something beyond promises. I am indeed pleased to know that they have now purchased a site, and no doubt when the time is opportune commodious markets will be erected which will be of much benefit, not only to the producers but also to the general community. Increased assistance has also been given from the Agricultural Bank under the present administration—an increase of over £100,000. The leader of the Opposition in a somewhat sarcastic manner referred to it as being an increase of "only" £100,000. However,

the fact remains that advances have been increased, and it goes to show, with the other items I have referred to, that the Government are doing all that any Government could possibly do to assist the farming industry of Western Australia. I do not intend to go into details in connection with the assistance given by way of increased votes to hospitals and the relief of widows, and by increased votes for the Medical and Health Department, but there are one or two matters that perhaps ought to be referred to at this juncture. Promises were made by the previous Government and also have been made by the present Government to grant a greater measure of citizenship to public servants, and while I still think that the public servants are denied the rights of citizenship that should be given to them, at least the present Government can take unto themselves the credit of having gone a step further than previous Governments in this direction. I can remember well, as an old civil servant, the time when one dared not to open his mouth on public matters because he was afraid, in his position as a Government servant, he would be perhaps offending the department in which he was engaged.

Mr. Foley: Especially if he was on one side.

Mr. TURVEY: That particularly applied. I am pleased to know that provision is made in the Estimates for a sum of £10,000 to be set aside to assist the fruit growers of Western Australia by way of advances on fruit to be exported from the State.

Mr. Allen: We want all the fruit that we can get at present ourselves.

Mr. TURVEY: The hon. member has evidently not followed the export trade of Western Australia. Perhaps he is unaware that the fruit from Western Australia has for some years past brought the highest prices on the London and Continental markets, and even in the Western Australian market. I sincerely hope that the Minister will pursue his course and render some assistance in this direction, and thereby enable the State to maintain the prestige that Western Australian fruit already has in the London market;

because with the increased amount of fruit that is being raised in this State, the time will come, if it is not already here, when with the rush of fruit it will be necessary for the Government to exercise a stricter supervision over the export trade than it has done in the past. It is regrettable indeed that the leading daily paper in this State, the *West Australian*, should adopt such a different attitude towards the Premier in connection with his Budget speech from the attitude adopted in the past. I quoted some figures this afternoon showing that in 1909 a deficit had been built up. The *West Australian* on that occasion did not do as they are doing now in their leading article, try to belittle in every possible way the Treasurer and his colleagues and make a mountain out of a mole hill, but we find in a leader in September, 1909—

The Treasurer has accurately caught the tone of economic tendencies in the State. He has realised that the flowing tide is already with us, and that prosperity will increase. He has therefore estimated for the current year a considerably increased revenue and anticipates a surplus on the year's transactions of £49,494.

And further, in 1910, the *West Australian* in a leader went on to say—

The public burden can be expressed in terms either of loan indebtedness or of annual taxation. The gross debt is £23,527,253; the net liability being £73 4s. 11d. per head. On paper a high but not an intolerable burden, this load of debt is easily carried in such times as these, since the profit from the trading concerns of the State practically pays the whole cost of the national debt.

I think the Premier has shown clearly that the trading concerns of the State at the present time are showing a profit, and showing a profit in a much greater degree than they were on the occasion to which I have referred. Then again the *West Australian* went on to say—

The whole question seems to be: "Is it better to stop the public works for which revenue is unable to provide, or to carry them on with loan money?" And with a State which is in a pioneer

stage and with the brightest prospects ahead there is surely but one answer. The Premier has given that answer in announcing his intention of pursuing, notwithstanding the deficit, that policy of developing to the very highest degree, the resources of Western Australia. The *West Australian* also pointed out—

Were there no increase in population at all there is a natural tendency for debt expenditure to rise. Men cannot grow old in the same positions or at the same salaries, and work invariably augmented with the years, especially as new legislation, constantly imposes new duties upon the officers of the State.

If that were the case then it is much more so now. With the increased trading concerns and the increased responsibility upon Ministers and upon their departmental officers, there is increased work, and that must necessarily carry with it in some cases an increase in salary. I may refer to the fact that the leader of the Opposition, when announcing that he was going to show a surplus of some thousand pounds and finished up with a deficit of something like £100,000, said, "The tide is flowing with us." In fact, I think the leader of the Opposition even quoted the words of the late W. E. Gladstone, "The tide is flowing with us." He even quoted the illustrious poet Shakespeare in these lines, "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune." He seemed to become quite poetic in his peroration. May I be pardoned for commending to the leader of the Opposition a few lines which would have been certainly more apt on that particular occasion? "I have ventured like little wanton boys that swim on bladders far beyond my depth." Wolsey in the words of Shakespeare goes on to point out how he ventured too far until he was placed at the mercy of the waves which must for ever hide him.

Mr. Nanson: Your quotation is rather hard on your leader.

Mr. TURVEY: I commended it to the leader of the Opposition as one that would have been more apt on the occasion referred to than the quotation he gave. I have nothing further to say beyond the

fact that I think the people of Western Australia appreciate to the fullest degree that they now have a Treasurer who is honest enough to place before them a clear and concise statement, and not to show a surplus on paper by methods which are rather questionable, but rather to place a truthful statement before the people even though it shows a deficit. Further, the people must appreciate the fact that notwithstanding that deficit, the Premier and his colleagues still intend to pursue the policy of developing to the fullest degree the resources of this magnificent State of ours.

Mr. FOLEY (Leonora): I do not intend to take up much of the time of the House, but there are three subjects on which I wish to touch. One of these, mining, was touched on very lightly by the leader of the Opposition. In reply to an interjection by the member for Kalgoorlie, the leader of the Opposition said that the hon. member could take himself and the goldfields of the State and dump them in the Eastern States for all the good they had been to Western Australia. I contend that an hon. member who would use language such as that when speaking of the mining industry of the State has not the interests of the State at heart, and is what he called the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green), namely, a traitor to Western Australia. The development of all the industries we have at the present time has been due to mining; indeed, those industries owe their very existence to mining. It may be said, too, that mining has been responsible for the population of the State. The Treasurer has provided in his Estimates certain amounts for the encouragement of mining. The Minister is well aware that wherever mining exists it has its periods of depression. In Western Australia to-day mining is suffering from a depression, but there is no one who can say that mining is not going to be again, not what it was in the boom time perhaps, but still the best industry in the State, or that it will not remain the best industry in the State from a wealth producing point of view. The Treasurer, having that in his mind, and having be-

hind him the support of Cabinet, has decided to assist mining to a greater extent than did the past Administration. In 1886, or 26 years ago, the population of the State was 39,000. At the present time it is over 305,000. Had it not been for the advent of mining, many people who are to-day among our best farmers would not have been in Western Australia at all; because the energy with which farming was carried on before that time would never have led anyone to think that Western Australia was other than a mere desert. Farming is with us and is going to stay, and none of us regret that fact. Each and every one in the Chamber is equally desirous of seeing that the farming industry should be developed to its utmost capacity. Much assistance is needed for the farming industry; much assistance has already been provided during the term of office of the present Government, and much assistance is provided on the Estimates for the ensuing term. But the leader of the Opposition has pointed out one little amount which he considers has been given to the mining industry, because the Government were convinced that assistance was needed and were generous enough to provide cheap water in order that the low grade shows on the fields might be satisfactorily worked. The hon. gentleman, who, whenever there has been an agricultural railway before the House has had the support of every member on this side, finds fault with the Government who believe that the mining industry requires support, and denounces the support given as practically a crime on their part. In my opinion it was merely a good turn done. In respect to State batteries, the leader of the Opposition could make no charge against the Government, so he fell back upon a flimsy old tale that the late superintendent of State batteries was sacked for political reasons.

Mr. Monger: Give us the reasons.

Mr. FOLEY: Whenever I make a statement, I am honest enough to give my reasons for that statement. I now challenge the leader of the Opposition to prove that the officer was displaced for political reasons, and I challenge any hon. member to bring a tittle of evidence to show

that the Minister for Mines took that officer's political views into consideration at all.

Mr. Monger: Why was he dismissed?

Mr. FOLEY: The leader of the Opposition has made a charge that the officer was dismissed for political reasons. It is the duty of the leader of the Opposition to bring evidence before the House to show that the Government have been corrupt enough to get rid of an officer for political reasons, and it is not for me as an ordinary member to do anything else than justify the action of the Government. I do that because I find that the gentleman who was appointed to the vacant position is opposed politically to the party to which I belong. Incidentally I may say I was one of the strongest advocates for the appointment of the present superintendent of State batteries, because I was and am convinced that he is the most competent man for the position, and, irrespective of what his political belief may be, we want the best and, if we are paying for it, we should get it. I think we can let the question rest at that, but I maintain that if any hon. member has anything which would prove that the officer was sacked for political reasons, it is his duty to bring it before the House. In any case, against that it will be remembered that the late Minister for Mines (Mr. Gregory) was conducting an electioneering campaign at one time, and that by a coincidence a civil servant was granted a holiday at the same time, and spent his holiday in strenuously supporting the candidature of the then Minister for Mines. Moreover, as far as the mining industry was concerned, alleged batteries were erected on the eve of the election, batteries that scarcely ever crushed a ton of stone in the district; batteries, indeed, that were scarcely capable of crushing a ton of stone, for the reason that they were obsolete and valueless. Yet we have the leader of the Opposition, who was the then Premier, displaying the audacity to say that the present Government are capable of doing things for political reasons. The strongest language would not be too strong in condemnation of the hon. member's action,

and it is a pity that one is not allowed to use in the House the language which that action merits. I think the gentleman who now holds the position of superintendent of State batteries has proved his worth, and I am glad to say he has the support of practically every man who uses the State batteries of Western Australia.

Mr. Monger: He is "one of us" I suppose.

Mr. FOLEY: Nothing of the sort. I have already made that clear. I desire to deal a little further with mining, because the leader of the Opposition said practically nothing at all about it. Why? I have my own opinion. The support of the industry is as solid for the present Administration as it was when the mining industry placed the present Administration in power. In 1886, the State produced gold to the extent only of £1,148; in 1889, the production rose to big figures, and in 1903 it touched the highest total. In 1910 it came down to a value of £1,467,413, and in 1911, to £1,353,117. So when we consider these figures and take into consideration the fact that other minerals exported total £1,446,000 odd, we find that more than a third of the value of the exports of Western Australia has been derived from gold and other minerals. That is, since 1886, and we will allow everything else, all the other exports, to be taken into consideration, since Western Australia first started to export anything. We find that since 1834 the total exports of the State have been 146 million pounds and that gold alone has been instrumental in giving us an export trade of over 51 millions out of that sum. Yet the leader of the Opposition will rise and say that it would be well if the member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Green) were to take himself and his goldfields and dump them in the Eastern States, for all the good they have been to the State.

The Minister for Mines: *Hansard* does not say that.

Mr. FOLEY: Well, if I am wrong, I hope I will be corrected, but I took particular notice of the remark.

The Minister for Mines: You are right and *Hansard* is wrong. It has been corrected, apparently.

MR. FOLEY: I cannot help that. During the regime of the late Administration the State Batteries Department was in a very bad way, and when the present Minister for Mines came into office he had all this to see to and to remedy. And although in one year gold to the value of £5,451,000 was exported from this State we find that the assistance given to State batteries during the year under review and provided for in the Estimates is more than that in any other year in the history of mining in the State. Now, if the present Government are accused of doing nothing, these figures actually prove that although they do not go round the country boasting of what they are doing, their work speaks for itself in that direction. Although mining is in a depressed state at the present time, we have reason to believe that a good time for mining will come again, and that for many years yet mining will still be paramount among the industries of Western Australia. There is one other matter on which I wish to speak and that is the question of State Governors. For some time I have held that the office of State Governor is a useless one, as far as the States of Australia are concerned. It is now nearing time when the term of office of the gentleman occupying that position in Western Australia will fall due. I have heard the explanation of the Premier to the question asked this afternoon and to a certain extent it takes a great deal of the wind out of one's sails. But I think this is a question regarding which not only this State, but every State in the Commonwealth, should agitate. I do not wish to see this matter dropped, because I believe that the money now paid for the upkeep of Government House and the salary of the Governor, could be better utilised. In the other States the question is agitating the minds of the people, but many people hold that a man is disloyal and wishes to "cut the painter" if he speaks in favour of the abolition of State Governors. When Federation was brought about, Joseph Chamberlain said he con-

sidered it was the duty of Australia as a whole to appoint a Governor, and that the finances of each State in Australia should be utilised to allow the gentleman appointed as Governor General to form the link between Australia and Great Britain. That was good advice, and I trust after hearing the remarks of the Premier that Western Australia will keep this matter before her Parliament and before her people. I do not think the fight on this question will be ended until a referendum of the whole of the people is taken as to whether they desire State Governors. Then if the people of Australia decide in favour of the abolition of the office, I think the powers would not for one moment think of sending a Governor to places which did not want them.

Mr. Dooley: What is the matter with each State deciding for itself?

MR. FOLEY: That is impossible according to the reply given by the Premier this afternoon. In the Victorian Parliament, Mr. Towtcher, member for Ararat, has brought this matter forward three times, and on each occasion Parliament has voted in favour of the abolition of the office of State Governor, but when it came to doing anything the Government found they were powerless for the reason that the Premier gave in reply to the question this afternoon. It needs the whole of Australia to speak on the question, and I trust that the whole of Australia will speak in no uncertain voice, and without bringing any personalities to bear on the question, for if a man has done good service for a State each and every one of us is desirous of giving him credit for it. The office of Governor has been temporarily filled by the Chief Justices of the various States at many times when the Governors have been absent on holidays or leave. Even that aspect of the matter is open for criticism sometimes. In Australia each and every man takes some prominent or small part in politics, and I know of one occasion in one of the States when the Chief Justice was holding the position of Lieutenant-Governor certain actions on his part would not have met

with the approbation of the people of Australia generally if they had been fully aware of them. I trust this question will be kept before the minds of the people until a referendum is taken and the people are able to decide once for all whether they intend to continue the present system or not.

Mr. Dooley : It is only a rubber-stamp function.

Mr. FOLEY : I quite agree State Governors are useless.

The Premier : I can assure you that is absolutely wrong.

Mr. FOLEY : I have given my opinion on the question, and have endeavoured to outline what I think will be the best means of bringing about a remedy.

The Premier : It is only a change in the method of appointment; you must have a Governor.

Mr. FOLEY : I do not think it is necessary to have a Governor appointed under the present system because it is only using up the money of the State. I want to find a remedy for this, and I believe the people of Australia want a remedy for it. The matter will not be settled until each and every elector of this State and of Australia has an opportunity of voting whether he believes in continuing the office of State Governor. There is another matter I wish to touch on, and that is the question of a grant of £1,000 to the High School. When on the hustings I told the electors that I believed in free and secular education. I believe it is the duty of the churches in this State to apply themselves to the spiritual wants of their people; I believe that no church should be subsidised for the education of her people. I believe, further, that it should be the birthright of every Australian to aspire to the highest educational position possible.

Hon. J. Mitchell : The High school is not a church.

Mr. FOLEY : I am against the present subsidy to the High School because there are other schools in this State which are doing equally good and better work than the High School is doing at the present time, that is, taking into consideration the number of candidates who pass for

University honours. I am leaving out of the question reference to Rhodes Scholarships; most people, I think, know my opinion of Rhodes Scholarships, and I do not wish to re-open that question except to say that any school might get Rhodes Scholarships. What I want to point out is that the High School cannot get the same percentage as two other schools in University examinations in Western Australia.

Mr. E. B. Johnston : You do not know what you are talking about.

Mr. FOLEY : The hon. member went to the High School.

Mr. Taylor : What does that prove ?

Mr. FOLEY : I think he was educated by a gentleman whom he told the House during the last session believed in instilling gentlemanly ideas into the scholars. I do not think the hon. member would make such an interjection if that education had done him any good. Regarding the High School there is one matter I would like to see cleared up. A Bill was before this House—

The CHAIRMAN : The hon. member is not in order in discussing a vote which is not on the Estimates. The vote to the High School is by special Act and cannot be considered under the Estimates.

Mr. FOLEY : I would like to ask whether, as the High School grant of £1,000 is on the Estimates, I am not in order ?

The CHAIRMAN : If there is a special grant, certainly.

Mr. FOLEY : It is a special grant, shown on page 18 of the Estimates.

The Premier : That is under a special Act, showing the balance.

Mr. FOLEY : Am I in order, Mr. Chairman, in speaking on it ?

The CHAIRMAN : No; page 1st not under discussion; the discussion starts on page 20. The hon. member is not in order in discussing a grant made by a special Act.

Mr. FOLEY : Under what Standing Order do you rule that I must abstain from speaking on this vote when it is on the Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the ensuing term? Has not any member of this House a right to

any one item whether it is made by special grant or not, equally as much as any other item?

The CHAIRMAN: In discussing the Estimates, members will realise that they can discuss the administrative portion, but not the legislative, and any vote dealt with by special Act cannot be discussed under the Estimates here.

Mr. FOLEY: If you rule me out of order, it is useless to attempt to go on.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You have made an attack we will not be able to answer.

Mr. FOLEY: I was put in a position like that this session by one not far from the hon. member's row. I am sorry I cannot speak on that subject because I believe there will be a further amount, and the actions of the present or any future Government will be liable to be criticised in connection with a measure already before Parliament. I am sorry I cannot speak on it, but as I cannot I do not intend to occupy the time of the House. In conclusion I wish to say that, though the Estimates in some cases are very high, the Premier has been honest enough to place before the people of Western Australia the fact that there will be a deficit this year. I trust that with the good season which is coming—and I hope the agricultural centres will experience many more good seasons—and that by the prosperity of every industry in Western Australia the Estimates of revenue will exceed the Premier's anticipations, and that the balance will be on the right side of the ledger at the end of the financial year.

Mr. MALE (Kimberley): It is not my intention to offer many remarks on the Estimates. After listening carefully to the Premier when he delivered his Budget speech the other evening, I could only come to the conclusion that the affairs of the country were in a rather bad way, that our administrators were no business men, that they had shown no desire to make both ends meet, and we are carrying out a policy that in private business life would quickly spell bankruptcy. Those were the conclusions I arrived at.

The Premier: How long did it take you to arrive at them?

Mr. MALE: It did not take me long. The Premier: Before you saw the Estimates.

Mr. MALE: In the Estimates the Government have wilfully and with their eyes open increased the expenditure of the country considerably. We have only to look at the general summary of expenditure to see that there is an increase of £634,000 for the present year, but we can find that no attempt whatever has been made to cut down expenses. We are to be burdened with additional taxation. We are promised additional taxation on our land and on our incomes. We find that our railways are to produce £153,000 more than they did in the previous year, our water supplies are to provide £200,000 odd more than previously, and our State steamers are to return a revenue of some £71,000 odd, and there are a number of other items, nearly all of which show an increase, and in addition to all this increased revenue, which we are to anticipate, we are to be burdened with extra taxation, and yet we are to finish the year with a deficit of nearly £300,000. I think that is anything but a glorious record for the Treasurer to bring before the House. If I had to deal with a board of directors, and even if I considered the estimates of revenue that I had presented fair and proper, I think I would blush with shame at the tale I would have to tell of my stewardship. Economies nil, expenditure lavish, and the outlook, so far as I can see, is still even more unpromising than this disastrous statement itself. We are told, to use the words of the Premier, that he is not ashamed of his deficit, because there is the prospect of a glorious season which is practically assured, and with a good harvest during the succeeding year he ventures to predict with some degree of certainty the extinction of the deficit within 24 months. What is it after all? It is a question of gambling with seasons to come, gambling on markets unknown. On those grounds our financial Micawber, hoping against hope, promises to wipe out the deficit in so short a time.

Mr. Dooley: What items of expenditure do you think are unnecessary?

Mr. MALE: I do not think this promise of wiping out the deficit in so short a time would even convince the most optimistic of our bankers. Even the British money lenders will require somewhat better security from the Treasurer than the promise of good seasons to come before lending money at a reasonable rate of interest.

Mr. Dooley: They know of the development that is going on.

Mr. MALE: And I think, also, that our friends in the Eastern States will not be easily gulled, even though they will have the persuasive tongue of Mr. Gardiner to listen to. They know the differences in the Australian seasons, and they know the value of them before they advance money on such security. That the leading financier of the State should build up his Estimates on so insecure a basis is sufficient to alienate all feelings of security the public may have either in our finances or our financiers. What would my banker tell me, what would be his attitude, if I asked for a loan on such flimsy security with a knowledge that I was increasing wages considerably and that I was increasing my expenditure and making no attempt to economise?

The Premier: That is not so in our case.

Mr. MALE: Would my banker tolerate such a position if I said I required more money, and that I would promise to pay him because I was certain that I was going to have a good season next year, and that then I should have lots more money with which to pay him back. Why, the child in the street would ridicule such a proposal. If this is an example of the methods of our leading financier, if this is the best he can show us, I think it is time we passed the Accountancy Bill and insisted on the Treasurer himself qualifying before being allowed to continue further in the office of Treasurer. The Treasurer himself on a previous occasion gave us a quotation from Thorold Rogers, who said, "If there was anything that would make me distrust a politician it was the fact that the politician continually boasted of the splendid natural re-

sources of his State and used it for the purpose of obtaining more money."

The Premier: Hear, hear.

Mr. MALE: It is indeed an apt quotation to be used by the Premier, a quotation which I think can very well be applied to him now. We have heard a good deal about the period of introducing the Budget, and it is amusing to read the Premier's own remarks on a Budget debate on a previous occasion, and compare those remarks with his attitude to-day. In criticising the Budget of 1910 delivered by my friend, the leader of the Opposition, the Premier then said—

I think the time has arrived when we should introduce our Estimates at the commencement of the term for which those Estimates will apply. (Mr. Jacoby: We cannot do it.) The member for Swan should know that it can be done and is done in other parts of the world.

How well the Premier has done so, and how he has shown himself capable of doing so has been evidenced. But the man who twitted the present leader of the Opposition for not doing so has failed himself to do it. The Premier when leader of the Opposition then went on in his remarks to complain that certain items appeared in the Estimates which could not be deleted, as portion of the money had already been expended, and he went on to say—

For four solid years I fought this question most strenuously, and each year received exactly the same statement from country members on the Government side as to the reason why they could not support the deletion of the item. "We will warn the Government that it must not occur again," they said, but each year the same thing has happened. The Treasurer ought to be in the position early in July to submit the Estimates of receipts and expenditure for the current year just as well as he can in October or November.

The Premier: He ought to be.

Mr. MALE: And I say that the man who twitted our leader ought to have been in the same position according to his own line of argument. Personally I do not

think it is possible to bring down the Estimates in July, the very moment our financial year finishes. I do think the Premier should try and be a little consistent. He as a member of the Opposition rubbed it into us because we did not do certain things, but when he is put in the responsible position himself how sadly does he fail.

Mr. Taylor: Wait till next year.

Mr. MALE: The same old cry. Let me again quote our friend the Premier—

The time has arrived when the House should make it known to the Government that in future we must meet earlier in the year and receive the Estimates not later than August when the Treasurer should be in a position to submit his financial proposals

Here we have five months of the current year gone and we have not touched the Estimates.

Nearly as bad this time.

We are going on in that haphazard method year after year and yet Parliament, particularly the Legislative Assembly, boasts that as representing the people it has control of the finances of the country. It has nothing of the kind. Parliament's control of the finances is only a farce. We are getting into that position now that the finances of the country are in the hands of and are absolutely controlled by five or six Cabinet Ministers.

The Estimates come down as late as ever, and still the Cabinet of five or six Ministers are, to all intents and purposes, controlling the finances. Last year the Premier told us that the Government during the recess intended to give careful attention to departmental administration with a view to making improvements and effecting economies. Let us hope we shall see a better result next year than we have seen this year, but what I am afraid of is that the Treasurer has found his position as Treasurer somewhat similar to the position he finds himself in as Premier, for did he not candidly admit to a deputation of unemployed which waited on him the other day that the State was too big for one Government to manage.

The Premier: I did not say anything of the kind.

Mr. MALE: It read in the newspaper very much like that, and I am afraid that our Treasurer has also found that the position of Treasurer is too big for one man to fill.

Mr. Dooley: He is doing very well.

Mr. MALE: We have not heard that anything is too big for the Federal Government and perhaps that might explain why to-day our State Savings Bank is going to be handed over to the control of the Federal Government.

Mr. Dooley: Would you have two banks?

Mr. MALE: It appears to me that we are going to hand over this bank so that the Premier may be relieved of some of that great burden which is on his shoulders.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. MALE: I was remarking that we never hear of anything being too big for the Federal Parliament, although we have heard that the State was too big for the State Parliament to manage, and I was pointing out that perhaps this explains the reason why our savings bank is being handed over to the Federal Government for the reason that it might relieve the enormous strain and great pressure of work that is being imposed upon the Colonial Treasurer. In 1911, not so very long ago, the Premier then remarked—

I view with great alarm the loss of such an institution, but we realise that we are individually and collectively "State Protectors," and must look after our people's welfare in this and other matters. Therefore, I do not desire to say anything which can be viewed, construed, or accepted as being in the nature of a threat, but we view the question with such seriousness that I have already considered ways and means for carrying on our State Savings Bank apart altogether from any Commonwealth buildings or assistance. Personally, I think we can make use of our many schools in the various districts, and in many cases of the teachers established at those schools.

At that time the Premier was very strong on the point that the Savings Bank should be retained to the State, but what is the

attitude we find him taking up at the present time? What were the words the Premier used in his speech the other night when he told us to be lion-hearted? Apparently we must be lion-hearted in our generosity to his Federal friends, as, for instance, in the giving away of our State Savings Bank. To-day he tells us—

But the question arises as to whether it is wise for the State to either join in partnership or hand over control of the Savings Bank to the Commonwealth, recognising as we do the magnificent benefit the institution has been to the State.

The Premier went on to say that he must admit, after considering the proposals of the Governor of the Commonwealth Bank—he was not at liberty to disclose them in detail—if we obtained some modification of some of those unknown terms, he thought it would be wise for us to allow the Commonwealth Government to take over the control of the Savings Banks. What different words from those we heard from the Premier last year!

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There may be different conditions.

Mr. MALE: It may be so; I do not know. But at that time last year the Premier had already thought out ways and means so that we could be independent of Federal buildings and Federal men. We were, in fact, to use our own State schools, and their teachers, if necessary, rather than allow our State Savings Bank to be taken from us by the Commonwealth. The Premier has often twitted the leader of the Opposition with improperly using moneys received from the sale of Government property. In connection with that matter, I find when referring to it, he said—

It is well to consider also that the present Government, as well as the Moore and Rason Governments, found a considerable amount of money from the sale of Government property—property which was bought by the use of Loan Funds—and, instead of using the proceeds of the sale of that property for the purpose of the redemption of our loan or meeting the sinking-fund charges on loan (which I contend is the

proper way of dealing with them), they have used them for general revenue purposes, and for the construction of roads and bridges and in other like ways.

In turning to the pages at the end of the present Estimates, it appears to me that the Premier is continuing to do that which he so strongly condemned, and which was improper when done by us. I am open to correction if I am wrong, but it does appear that he is continuing that very practice which, when performed by us, was absolutely wrong and improper. How easy it is to find the mote in the eye of one's brother, and how difficult to see the mote in one's own eye! We find this same kind of thing continued right through the Estimates. Practices that were criticised when the Premier was in Opposition are still being carried on by him.

Mr. Heitmann: You can criticise them now in your turn.

Mr. MALE: It does appear to me that the whole thing is nothing more nor less than a chapter of humbug and hypocrisy. Let us take another instance of this humbug. Here are the words of the present Premier, when criticising again—

The policy of the Government is one of just doing what they choose with the funds of the State, so long as they can depend upon all their members when the Estimates are brought down. Only the other evening, when discussing the Southern Cross-Bullfinch Railway, we had the admission of the Premier that he was going to anticipate what Parliament would do in the future, and provide the money for the construction of this work out of Loan Funds. Without any authorisation from Parliament he was going to do an illegal Act. As I said previously, if the people claim anything at all from constitutional Government, it is the right to control the expenditure of public revenue, but in actions like these, where is the safety from the public standpoint? There is none whatever. The Government can do what they like and rely on their supporters not only acquiescing but eventually legalising what was an illegal act. Mr. Taylor: What year was that?

Mr. MALE: Those were the words of the present Premier in November, 1910. What is the position to-day? Have the Government received the authority of Parliament to buy steamers, and run a State Steamship Department? Have they authority to run butchers' shops and the many other trading concerns which they have initiated since Parliament last met? They have absolutely no authority whatever, unless it is the authority of the Trades Hall.

The Premier: The authority of the people.

Mr. MALE: The authority of the Trades Hall, and the knowledge that their supporters will vote with them when the matter is brought up. It is absolutely as the Premier alleged against his predecessors, "a policy of doing just what they choose with the State's money." His own words can be quoted against him, and strike home every time. I have already said that I am no believer in a policy of State enterprise in the way of trading concerns; I say again that I do not believe in that policy. I believe the principle is a bad one, and wiser men than I have thought so long ago.

The Premier: You do not believe anything of the kind in your own heart.

Mr. MALE: I do. It absolutely eliminates what is most essential in business, and that is the element of wholesome competition.

The Premier: Would you abolish State enterprise in connection with our railways?

Mr. MALE: I would be prepared to consider that. I am sure that, if we had had private enterprise controlling our railways, we would have had more railways constructed than at the present time, and the country would have been opened up quicker. I object to State butchering shops. I object to the purchase of a sausage machine, although the Minister assured us that it would soon pay for itself. Let us hope that it will. Has it come to this that we must advertise State sausages as a source of revenue to meet this deficit? It reminds me of the reference made by Adam Smith, the great political economist, in his *Wealth of Nations*,

which is so well known to the Attorney General.

Mr. Carpenter: He is dead.

Mr. MALE: He is dead, but his work lives, and he is still regarded as an authority on many political and economic questions. Adam Smith in his *Wealth of Nations* says—

The sovereign, like any other owner of stock, may derive a revenue from it, either by employing it himself, or by lending it. His revenue is in the one case profit, in the other interest. The revenue of a Tartar or Arabian chief consists in profit. It arises principally from the milk and increase of his own herds and flocks, of which he himself superintends the management, and is the principal shepherd of his own horde or tribe. It is, however, in the earliest and rudest state of civil government only that profit has ever been made to form the principal part of the public revenue of a monarchical state. Small republics have sometimes derived a considerable revenue from the profit of mercantile projects. The republic of Hamburg is said to do so from the profits of a wine cellar and apothecary's shop. The state cannot be very great of which the sovereign has leisure to carry on the trade of a wine merchant or apothecary.

The point I want to make is that the State cannot be so very great of which the Ministers have leisure to carry on the trades of hotel-keepers, butchers, dairymen, and many other like trades. Has it come to that pass that we must resort to these old practices, that we are to seek our revenue from our butchers' shops and other like ventures. Are we indeed going back to those dark old ages, to the methods which they adopted then? Then all I can say is—alas, alas, for the benefits which we should have derived from our system of compulsory and free education; if it cannot promise better methods than that it is time we should look to other methods for improvement.

Mr. Heitmann: Are you against the State providing warships to defend you?

Mr. MALE: That is not a method of profit. There is no analogy whatsoever.

The hon. member would not like to compare that with a butcher's shop. Our State ventures will not be the success anticipated, and in my opinion much more good could have been achieved by the Government with less expenditure of money, and with the money expended in a different manner. We cannot make the net profits which have been anticipated by the Treasurer out of old steamers, neither will charters to New Zealand reduce the price of meat in Perth. The Government are undertaking work which they do not understand; and were there the enormous profits to be made which we hear of in connection with these State ventures, then I can only say that the business men of Perth and Fremantle have sadly missed their golden opportunity and should to-day be wealthy men instead of still following their various vocations. The Premier predicts the wiping out of the deficit in two short years. I predict, and I think on equally good grounds, and as sound logic as the Treasurer advanced, a deficit of nearer half a million at the end of the time than the balance the Premier predicts. I trust the House and the country will appreciate the Estimates for what they are worth, and I feel sure that when they realise fully the future outlook they will insist on some attempt being made to adjust our finances and not to allow the present methods to continue.

Mr. LEWIS (Canning): I congratulate the Premier on his straightforward and honest statement of anticipated revenue and expenditure for the current year. I have noticed in regard to the criticism directed against the Government that those on the Opposition benches have never attacked the principles for which the money is to be expended, but they have simply indulged in croaking and whining and whimpering that they do not to-night occupy the Treasury benches. In fact, the "breezy optimism" that the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) possessed when he was a Minister of the Crown has now all vanished, and we find from the speeches of those on the Opposition benches that they are continually indulging in croaking and, in my

opinion, doing a great deal to destroy the confidence and credit of this great State to which we belong. In fact, they have conveyed the impression that they are something like the babes in the wood; melancholy and sad they wander through a mass of figures, they embark through a thicket of taxation and become entangled in a network of pessimistic prophecies, and they get scared at the socialistic tiger and become almost frightened to death by an old bogey named "confiscation," and at last have wandered into the pools of "stagnation"—as the Premier so very aptly described the leader of the Opposition when he referred to the stagnation in the Lands Department, and said that when the leader of the Opposition walked through the corridors of that department there were mirrors there and the honourable gentleman looked into one and saw "stagnation." Unfortunately that is the position the occupants of the Opposition benches are taking up in regard to this Government. During the twelve months they have been in Opposition wandering through the woods they have become footsore and weary, and they have sat down by the knotty old tree of "vested interests" and consoled themselves with a refrain. In fact I can hear the member for Northam singing to the leader of the Opposition—

Sussex, Sussex, I've been thinking
What has become of me,
Bath and Scaddan are doing better
Than ever I hoped to see.

And we find the member for Sussex replying—

Northam, Northam, I've been thinking
I can never hope to dream,
To sit upon those benches yonder
Now occupied by Scaddan's team.

Now, the leader of the Opposition in his criticism was most inconsistent in some of his reasoning. He twitted the Government with the fact that they were looking after their supporters and their own class interests in exempting in regard to income tax the men receiving £5 a week; and then, in the next breath, he condemned the Government for introducing a land taxation measure that does awya with exemptions and rebates and doing

away with the class incidence of that particular taxation. The reasoning was not consistent.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You could not understand it, that was the trouble.

Mr. LEWIS: The leader of the Opposition referred to the report of the Commissioner of Railways that although the expenditure had increased there was no corresponding increase of energy or effort on the part of the railway staff. That statement cannot be borne out by facts. I will absolutely defy contradiction in saying that in our railways we have a large body of intelligent, energetic, and careful men; and this can be proved by the fact that, first of all, on last Show day, we carried something between 30,000 and 40,000 people on the railways without hitch or accident of any kind, and in the second place because of our immunity from accidents. Is it not far better to pay these men fair wages and give them fair and equitable conditions of labour than to pay out a fairly large amount of money by way of compensation, as is the case in Victoria and in the other States of the Commonwealth where accidents have occurred involving the State in large sums of money? I will quote a few figures from the Commonwealth Year Book for 1910-11. In New South Wales during the year there were 46 killed and 368 injured; in Victoria there were 49 killed and 829 injured; in Queensland there were 16 killed and 104 injured; in South Australia 13 killed and 215 injured; and in Western Australia, a record for the lot, there were 13 killed and 114 injured.

Mr. Taylor: How does that compare with the number of passengers lifted?

Mr. LEWIS: It compares very favourably indeed. There is this feature about it: owing to the vast development of this State many of our stations are not interlocked, consequently the men have to incur greater risks. It is only of recent years that the system has been brought into existence in the State. Further than that, we find that the railway men have had to contend with congested yards, want of engine power and shortage of rolling stock. I have known shunters to

break up one train owing to the scarcity of rolling stock and make up another train. The testimony of records so far as immunity of accidents is concerned justifies the Government giving that increase in order to encourage the men to make themselves efficient so far as their duties are concerned. I contend that the statement of the Commissioner of Railways was more like a reflection on his own administration. We can say that so far as the railway staff are concerned the great bulk of them have done their duty conscientiously and have carried out their duties faithfully and have done all the work right up to the hilt. Consequently where could increased efficiency come in? Therefore the statement of the Commissioner means that the administration in the past have allowed the staff to loaf. In fact the Commissioner infers that much by his statement. He infers that the staff in the past have been loafing and idling.

Mr. Taylor: He does not infer that.

Mr. LEWIS: He says as much, because he says he has seen no corresponding increase of efficiency or effort despite the fact of increased wages. We have in his own report that there are no defalcations and that the men have acted honestly. I think that is also a tribute to the men. I repudiate the statement made by the Commissioner where he infers that the railway men are idling their time away.

The Minister for Mines: He does not infer it at all. He says there is no increased efficiency.

Mr. LEWIS: He infers that they were doing it in the past.

The Minister for Mines: If you like to read that into it, you can, but he does not say so.

Mr. LEWIS: I contend he does.

Mr. Taylor: It is more reasonable to infer that the railway men were working to concert pitch before.

Mr. LEWIS: These are the Commissioner's words—

The various items improving the financial position of the staff at large as detailed above total £107,300. It is with extreme regret that I have observed no general increase of energy

or effort corresponding with such a large increase of expenditure.

The Minister for Mines: That does not say they are idling.

Mr. Swan: If he did not accuse them there he does it somewhere else.

Mr. LEWIS: In the past they have done their duty and done it faithfully and well.

Mr. Taylor: They were worked hard before the increase was given, and he could not get any more out of them; that it altogether different.

Mr. LEWIS: At the end of the report he compliments the staff on the work they have done. In my opinion these two statements are inconsistent. There is another matter I would like to refer to in connection with the administration of our railways. I realise that in a vast organisation where there is a large number of men there always will be a small percentage of what may be termed wasters, but we find that the Commissioner and the heads of branches view the men with suspicion. Instead of working with the staff in a co-operative way, realising that it is largely due to the efforts of the staff to get a good result from the railway system, they view almost every man with a certain amount of suspicion. I think that is regrettable. If we want to see good results from those employed in the railway system, we want to encourage them and try to get co-operation. Now there are many ways in which expenditure could be reduced to make up for some of these increases justly given to the railway service. I notice there was £662 last year for the renewal of choppers, £500 for the renewal of side chains, and a host of other details which, by careful watching, might be excised with a view to reducing expenditure. Yet in our system we have inspectors going round and reporting hard working station masters for not removing cobwebs from along the verandah. Again, I contend the Railway Department could adopt a more businesslike attitude in regard to our train service. We have had, on the suburban service between Perth and Bellevue during 1911-12, owing to the wonderfully increased development of the suburbs along that line, an increased expenditure of some-

thing like £10,973; but despite that increase there are very few additional trains. In fact, the train leaving Maylands at three minutes past seven in the morning is overcrowded to such an extent that there are 15 and 16 passengers in a second-class compartment, and very often the trains right through the day are similarly overcrowded. I have repeatedly made representations to the railway authorities with regard to an improved service, but I get the same old stereotyped departmental reply, "It is under consideration." We have also on the South-Western line, on the south side of the river, a district which has been neglected, an increase between Perth and Armadale during 1911-12 of something like £1,763, notwithstanding which we have to wait very often from 2½ to 3 hours for a train during the day.

The Minister for Mines: There is Belmont, too, where we are losing 3s. per train mile.

Mr. LEWIS: In answer to that I contend that travelling facilities create traffic. Establish a decent service and you can develop districts which otherwise would not be developed. In Victoria, on the outer circle railway, the department give a man a ticket for 12 months in order that people may be encouraged to reside in the outer suburbs, where they can live under more healthy conditions amid genial surroundings. All you have to do is to give an improved service, and you will have other suburbs similar to those between Perth and Fremantle. In regard to the proposed abolition of the State Governor, this is a question which was discussed when the Federal Constitution was submitted to the people of the State. One of the main arguments urged in favour of adopting that Constitution was that it would bring about a decrease of expenditure so far as the State Governments were concerned. The term of the present occupant of that position is about to expire, for he has been promoted to another State. In regard to the occupant of that position, I would like to congratulate the State to which he is going on having secured a very able man, a man who has generally, during his

occupancy of the position in this State, shown wonderful tact and marked ability, and has fulfilled the duties of his position with credit to himself and satisfaction to the people of the State. At the same time I would like to see the Government endeavour to give effect to the proposed abolition of the office. I know there are many constitutional difficulties in the way, but I would like to see the Government exhaust every method to bring about the proposed change. This question was ventilated at the last election, and the people thoroughly endorsed it. I would also like to see the abolition of that old, fossilised, obstructive Chamber, known here as "another place."

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in referring to another place in that manner. The hon. member must withdraw.

Mr. LEWIS: I withdraw. In regard to the ferry services, I appreciate the action of the Government in nationalising the service from Barrack-street to Mend-street, South Perth. Since that service was nationalised a number of people have gone over there to reside who, under other conditions, would not have done so. I regret, however, that the Government are not moving as quickly as I would like with the nationalising of all these ferry services. We have a service to Coode-street; then we have Como, with a magnificent beach. All that is necessary is to institute a ferry service, and I venture to say it will pay handsomely during the coming summer. Como has a very clean beach, and by instituting a ferry service there we would develop the place and get excellent results. I sincerely hope the Colonial Secretary will fulfil his promise to nationalise this service at an early date. One thing I have to complain about is in connection with administration, in regard to the dealings with correspondence in the various departments. The same old methods of circumlocution and hanging up things exist to-day that existed previously, in fact one can write in and expect to wait five or six weeks before an answer is forthcoming. It is remarkable that we have a Press in the State, and certain business firms, which can furnish a prompt

reply to correspondence affecting the Government of the State, whereas it takes the under-secretaries five or six weeks to fessick out an answer of any sort.

The Premier: Some of these outside people give answers about things that have never happened.

Mr. LEWIS: Farmers can write to the *Sunday Times* and get replies to questions affecting Administration and matters connected with the Government, whereas they would have to wait weeks before getting an answer from the department. I am very well pleased with the proposals submitted in the Estimates. In regard to the expenditure on the various trading concerns which have been brought into existence, it is too soon, yet, to be able to realise what an advantage the State will reap from these enterprises. No doubt in 12 months' time the Opposition will be squirming when they see the profit that will have been made.

Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle): I regret that we are not hearing the fullest expression of opinion from our friends on the opposite side. I do not know whether they take it for granted that their leader, in that exhaustive criticism which he delivered last week, also exhausted his followers and said all that they would like to say if they were as well able as he. It has been interesting, as it usually is, to hear the ordinary criticism on the Treasurer's financial statement, and particularly to hear that of the ex-Treasurer. We must set a Treasurer to catch a Treasurer. The ordinary member of the Committee is not so conversant with the intricacies of State finance as is the man who has been for some time in charge of the Treasury, and so we have to look, and rightly so, to the ex-Treasurer to point out just where the present Treasurer has failed. The trouble always is that so much depends upon whether the Treasurer or the ex-Treasurer is one side or the other. It is somewhat amusing to refer to the speeches of former Treasurers or former leaders, and find how they laid down the sound principles of finance whilst somebody else had charge of the Treasury. It does not apply exclusively to either

side of the House, or to any party; my experience has been that the reports are equally good, and the only ill-effect if ill-effect it may have at all, is that it somewhat mystifies the ordinary taxpayer when he finds that, one after the other, the Treasurer and the ex-Treasurer, as time goes on, takes continual exception to the manner in which certain expenditure has been made, or certain payments have been withheld; and the only consolation is that, in spite of it all, we rub along somehow and still keep afloat. The present Treasurer has, in my opinion, made as clear and plain a statement of the finances as any of his predecessors: in fact, I think I can go further and say he has strained every effort to put the matter before the country in the clearest possible way. I contend that the ideal financial statement is one which will make the state of the country's finances as clear to the average artisan, say, as a statement of his own week's work and income; or so simple and plain that the average housewife would be able to understand it as easily as she would understand the statement of her household accounts. When you can put it as clearly as that you will remove a good deal of suspicion which the average taxpayer has to-day for the Treasurers of both parties. We have become accustomed to deficits. I think sometimes we lose sight of the fact that we have never yet readjusted our State finances since the very serious disturbance caused by the advent of Federation. Previous to that time we had in this State an enormous income from Customs.

Mr. HEITMANN: And, still earlier, some deficits.

Mr. CARPENTER: That may be, but, just prior to Federation we had the pleasure of spending revenue on public works. With the advent of Federation we had this very serious change, that whereas the State revenue from Customs at about that time was, I am not quite sure, but I believe, between £7 and £8 per head, the Commonwealth, when it came, gave us only between £3 and £4 per head. That meant a very serious diminution in our State income.

While efforts have been made since then with more or less enthusiasm to square the ledger, it is remarkable that for some years past we have had deficits rather than surpluses. If members will look at the return No. 10—I will not quote any of the figures—they will find that taking the seven years with which that return deals—it sets out the figures month by month—of the 84 months in that return we have had a monthly deficit on 78 occasions and a surplus on six occasions only, so I say we have never yet readjusted our finances and the danger, if there be any danger at all, lies here, that we are liable to sit down under it and argue that seeing we have got along for so many years and shown a deficit, we need not worry to take anything like extraordinary means to square our ledger. I suppose most of us would be better pleased if this year or last had shown a cash balance on our State ledger, but, while I have no wish to excuse any Treasurer from either side of the House, it is only fair to remember that we are engaged just now in developing a very big business concern and we are in the same position as a business man would be building up his business if he found it paid him better to have a deficit in his ledger at the end of the year so long as by doing so he was putting more into his capital account and securing a larger income in future years. In that respect he would be justified. We are in that position, and I think members generally will recognise that it has been considered unwise to cut down our expenditure for the mere sake of showing a cash surplus. It may have been done, it was done two years ago and it was done under stress. To show what a strain it must have been, members might cast their minds back to the fact that almost immediately after that cash balance was shown just prior to the last general election, the expenditure mounted up again and we had a large deficit the next month. I was saying we have not yet adjusted our finances and in time to come we shall have to face this question whether we are content to receive the very small amount we are receiving at present in direct taxation or do as we

are doing, make our State revenue depend upon our trading concerns. I am quite aware that some members on the other side of the House are altogether against the State entering upon these trading concerns, and for those who take up that attitude it is a very fair question to ask, in the event of this not being done and a profit not being made from these concerns what means do they suggest for obtaining revenue? We cannot go on for all time showing deficits. In spite of the excuses we may make or the reasons we may give for present deficits, the time will come when with further development we should be showing a balance on the right side, and members who do not agree with the State entering into these concerns have it cast on them to show in what way they would derive revenue if the profit is not going into the Treasury from State trading concerns.

Hon. J. Mitchell: We balanced the ledger last year.

Mr. CARPENTER: I have pointed out that the strain was so great that as soon as the critical time was over the expenditure jumped up again and there was a strong suspicion that there had been cheese-paring to secure that surplus. I am not going to detract in the least from what the ex-Treasurer did. I remember the great booming of the little surplus of £13,000 all over the country and in the following month up went the expenditure and the surplus vanished.

Mr. Allen: As soon as your Government came in.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am not regarding the matter from the party point of view. We have to face the question whether we will be dependent upon our State trading concerns for our State revenue.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Do you suggest we should?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in interjecting while out of his seat.

Mr. CARPENTER: I am pointing out to those who say we ought not to enter upon State trading concerns that the obligation rests on them to show in what way we are going to get sufficient revenue to carry on the concerns of Government.

Hon. Frank Wilson: We have done it in the past.

Mr. CARPENTER: There are only two means, direct or indirect taxation. The indirect taxation is taken from us as far as Customs duties are concerned, and we have land and income left upon which to levy direct taxation. We have also dividend duties, but land and income taxation must be our chief sources of income. Will those members who say they do not agree with State trading concerns advocate raising our revenue by direct taxation? If so, some of them will have to revise their tenets of taxation before they get back on the Treasury benches.

Mr. Heitmann: Charging school fees for instance.

Mr. CARPENTER: I have heard about that, but the leader of the Opposition realised that public opinion was contrary to it.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Fancy running the State on the profits from sausages.

Mr. CARPENTER: I question the wisdom of allowing ourselves to drift into this habit of raising our revenue from our State trading concerns. Perhaps I do not take up that attitude from the same point of view as members opposite. As one who believes in State socialism, I want to see State industries established, not for the sake of making profit to save revenue, but for the sake of giving to the people the full benefit of these concerns as against those privately managed. If we are going to make the railways bring in half a million a year of revenue, that means we are getting out of the people a half a million more than the value of the service we render and that half a million is taxation. If we extend our operations into State ferries or jetties or hotels or steamships or tramways or things of that sort, are we going to continue the policy of making these concerns a lever to extort taxes from our people under the guise of profits? From the point of view of one who wants to see these things nationalised so that we can get the fullest benefit from them, that is to say just to give us a margin to come and go upon and apart from that margin let all the rest be devoted to giving the

best possible service for the least possible cost, unless we do that we are handicapping our State concerns, and those who believe in the State control of these enterprises as the best thing have that obstacle placed in their way, that the people do not get the full benefit in those matters which we have always claimed would be cheapened to them once they passed under State control. I submit this for the consideration of members on my own side of the House that in my opinion we are drifting into a wrong policy altogether in raising so much of our revenue, which is not really an honest revenue at all, but which is simply profit, that is, something in excess of the value of the services we give to the people for which we make them pay. So long as we continue this we cannot wonder at this happening: if the railways, for instance, are turning in half a million surplus every year—

Hon. J. Mitchell: Are they?

Mr. CARPENTER: Well, say a quarter of a million, that is nearer the mark. We cannot wonder at the employees, especially those on the lower rung of the ladder, saying the Government are getting a profit out of their labour—

Mr. Harper: The farmer pays for that.

Mr. CARPENTER: The farmer pays like anybody else, he pays for the services he gets and a little bit over, and everyone else who uses the railways pays in the same way. That is the point. We are raising from those who use the services something in addition to the ordinary taxation. The people who do not use the railways escape to that extent their fair share of the taxation. So long as we are making a big profit from a trading concern the men engaged in it are justified in asking whether they are getting a fair return for their services to the State when the State is making so many hundreds of thousands profit out of the concern. So long as we are doing that the workers might say that either they are being robbed, or, that those who use the service are being robbed, or, in other words are paying more than the value of the service given to them. I put it from the point of view of one

who wants to see these services giving the greatest satisfaction, that I am afraid we are going on wrong lines in making them increasingly a source of revenue and so avoiding our obligations. We are saying the government costs so much and the people get full value for anything they pay in taxation to carry on the government, and they must pay what the government costs. I do not think our government is quite honest in that we take from them in the way of profits something for which we do not give them anything in return.

Hon. J. Mitchell: You are losing on the sausages.

Mr. Heitmann: Where would you increase the taxation to make up for it?

Mr. CARPENTER: I am suggesting that it is an obligation which rests upon the hon. member as well as myself. If the hon. member wants a taxation policy outlined, I will suggest some means by which money could be raised. I believe in direct taxation to a greater extent than we have it to-day.

Hon. J. Mitchell: On the land?

Mr. CARPENTER: The land will have to pay its share.

Hon. J. Mitchell: It does now.

Mr. CARPENTER: It does not and we are doing something to adjust the incidence by our modest proposition to make the present land tax all round. I do not think members will say we are asking the land holder to pay a fraction more than he should pay.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What about leasehold?

Mr. CARPENTER: It is arguable whether the taxpayer himself does not prefer to have the money taken out of his pocket without knowing it. I know public opinion has to be educated up to the point of direct taxation, but if we once get people to see that they are actually saving money by paying their taxes directly instead of indirectly, then the objection to direct taxation will be over and we shall have an honest and more direct method of taxation than we have at the present time.

Mr. Wisdom: Do you believe in free-trade?

Mr. CARPENTER: I do not want to go back to the time which the member for Kimberley (Mr. Male) quoted when he referred to a dry-as-dust economist of 120 years ago. We have got past that and there is no such thing as that now. The man who says he believes in free trade simply declares that he is a long way behind the times. I am very glad indeed to see that one item on the Estimates for the current year has not been interfered with, and that is the education vote. If there is one subject that the people of Western Australia will not tolerate interference with it is our system of education, and any Treasurer, I do not care who he is or to what party he may belong, would become unpopular indeed if he said, "I want to save money and I am going to take £50,000 off the Education vote." We must regard this as one of the best investments, and I am pleased that the Government have provided for education £272,500 and for the University £13,500, a total expenditure of £286,000. We can well afford it, even in the face of a deficit, which amounts after all to only 11s. per head of the population. That simply means not that we are that much the poorer, but that instead of straining a point to show a balance we are going on spending capital knowing that the investment will be a good one and that in the next two or three years we shall reap an abundant harvest from the investment of money which we might have saved now if we had adopted a cheese-paring economy. This brings me to one other matter, that is the increasing demand for State employment. I am glad to belong to a party which has in theory at least tackled the question of the right of our people to work, and I am quite aware that when we have shown the courage to put that on our fighting platform it means that we shall not rest until we have solved the problem, and it will not be solved this year or next year or for some years to come. In fact, I say until the Government controls practically the whole of the industries of the State there will be no solution to this great problem, but we have to face it and we have to recognise

that the unemployed are merely a symptom of the present industrial system which is inseparable from it. Our present industrial system demands a surplus of labour, and as long as we have the present system to deal with we must have that surplus, in other words it may be charged against those private captains of industry, who may recognise no responsibility for the man once his labour has ceased to be profitable to them, and it is for the State to step in and say, "Seeing that private industry makes no provision for your continuous employment, we must recognise that it is our duty to see to it that you are not for a long period kept out of work." Whilst I must admit that the subject is full of difficulties, and whilst I hope on some future occasion to have the matter thoroughly discussed in this House with the view of finding out at least the best means of taking steps towards solving the problem, yet I say the Government will not shut their eyes to the fact that we have a number of men finishing certain work on which they have been engaged, and who have nothing to do immediately afterwards. Of course, I recognise there must be a limit to Government expenditure. Our own expenditure, which has been considerable and will be so for the next few years, has its limitation, and even the men themselves must recognise that it is impossible for the Public Works Department to keep them continuously employed. We have this feature outstanding, that the men do six, nine or twelve months work on a particular job, and at the end of that time a considerable number have to be put off, and they expect naturally that other work will be found for them as soon as the work on which they are engaged is completed. As things are at present, it is next to impossible for any Minister for Works or any Government to provide regular and continuous work, and, when men find no avenue of employment in private industry, the Government are justified in spending as much money as possible in keeping those men and seeing that their wives and children do not come to want. This, however, is too big a subject to be handled on a Budget Speech,

and I am hoping that consideration will be given to the question in the near future in the hope of seeing whether we can devise some means whereby we might soften some of the worst features of the unemployed question, because it is to the detriment of the State if a considerable body of our wealth producers are idle and the work which they should be producing is being lost to the country. Taking into consideration all things, I am satisfied that the Treasurer has done his very best and his colleagues with him also, and they need not be ashamed of the fact that the ledger will not show a credit balance at the end of the current year. I believe that the country too is convinced of that and is prepared to place confidence in the present Treasurer and give him an opportunity during the next two, three, or four years to put things right.

Mr. Monger: How long?

Mr. CARPENTER: As long as he wants in order to put things right and redress the grievances which accumulated during the time our opponents held the Treasury bench

Progress reported.

BILL—LAND ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the 31st October.

Mr. THOMAS (Bunbury): I am pleased that at last the time has arrived when we have the opportunity of indulging in free and full discussion on this very important measure. I may say that I regard the Land Act Amendment Bill as the most important proposal that has been placed before this Chamber, or is likely to be placed before it in the future. On the creation of wise land laws, on the development of our primary industries, and on the success of those industries, depends the future prosperity of Western Australia. I want to make it perfectly clear in whatever remarks I may make in connection with this matter that my great object, and I honestly believe the object of all other members on both sides of the House is to do all they can to provide legislation

which will be best for the true development of Western Australia. I appreciate the evidence of calm deliberation and patient thought displayed by the Minister for Lands in introducing this Bill. He showed evidence of careful consideration and proved that he is a profound student of the subject that he sought to deal with. On the other hand, I must say with every kindly feeling that I listened to the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) with a very keen sense of disappointment. I became convinced of the fact that while the member for Northam may have a profound knowledge of the science of agronomics, he is as free of the knowledge of political economy as a frog is of feathers.

Mr. Monger: That is an old saying.

Mr. THOMAS: Yes, but some of those old sayings are very new. I know my hon. friend who interjects with kindly feelings rarely gives us anything new, and I may be pardoned for doing the same thing. It has been asserted, not so much inside this House as outside, that members advocating leasehold throughout the whole of this State as the only system of land tenure, were actuated by the basest of motives. I of course indignantly repudiate that, but it would be strange indeed if differences of opinions could not exist without unfair motives being imputed. I am pleased that this Bill is before the House, because its provisions are published broadcast for the benefit of the people of the State, and all those wild charges made against this party on the hustings at the last elections now stand exploded.

Mr. Monger: They will be repeated in a stronger form on the next occasion.

Mr. THOMAS: I believe the hon. member will be capable of repeating the unjust and unfair gibes and misrepresentations which were indulged in before, to achieve, if possible, a return to power. But I do say that it was a very noticeable feature when my friend the member for Northam was speaking the other evening on this question, that he was very mild indeed, and never indulged in some of those statements which he used so frequently upon the platform when it was not pos-

sible for a member on this side of the House to be there to offer a repudiation—many old charges that we were going to rob the people of their land. Not only were we going to introduce a system of leasehold which would make it impossible for any farmer to ever prosper, but we were going still further and take the land from the people who already held it. It is a curious thing that on the floor of this House, where all men, I am pleased to say, stand equal, and where we have an opportunity of replying to any statement, my hon. friend should forget all about this charge. He never on one occasion asserted that we were going to rob anybody. Now that was an extraordinary piece of restraint on the part of the ex-Minister for Lands. He never accused us of robbing anybody.

Hon. J. Mitchell: Oh yes, I did.

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member said in one breath that this particular policy was going to prevent the settlement of the land, and in the next breath he stated that we were too generous and were robbing the State. I have always thought that the hon. member, no matter what else he may have, has not a logical mind, and when he makes two such conflicting statements as those it is obvious that he is very much at sea. The hon. member quoted figures to show the progress that had been made in Western Australia under the existing land laws. So long as he adhered to that argument nobody could gainsay it. The progress of Western Australia has been phenomenal, but it must not be forgotten that it could not be otherwise with our magnificent heritage, and when we remember the enormous area that we still have to dispose of, and that it was impossible for Western Australia with a population of 200,000 to reach the limit of its possibilities. But the hon. member amused me. He asked what was the necessity for introducing a system of leasehold tenure when the object that we seek could be achieved by a land tax. Now my hon. friend was returned absolutely opposed to land taxation. He got into Parliament on that cry, but untrue to his speeches on the hustings he consented to the imposition of a land tax later on, and when he last

went before the people he stated as one reason why he should be re-elected that he was going to do away with the land tax. And then he asks us why we introduce a system of leasehold tenure when we could achieve our object by imposing a land tax.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: He so nearly went out last time that he thought perhaps the people wanted it.

Hon. J. Mitchell: If I thought I was such an idiot as you I would go out.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw.

Hon. J. Mitchell: I withdraw.

Mr. THOMAS: It seems to me that the hon. member is, as he ever was, delightfully inconsistent. Now I confess that in certain circumstances I am an ardent land taxer. I have been for years a reader of Henry George and I suppose I give as much admiration to the writer of *Progress and Poverty* as I do to any author I know of. I believe that very great benefits can be achieved by a land tax, but I do not believe that the objects we seek to achieve by means of non-alienation can be achieved by virtue of a land tax alone. I am firmly convinced of that, and for that reason I advocate this Bill with all the force at my command. In order to arrive at a just estimate of the position we must agree on one or two basic principles. First of all we must acknowledge that the land as a whole belongs to the bulk of the people. I do not suppose that even a member of the Opposition will dispute that fact. Assuming, then, in the first instance, that the land belongs to the people as a whole, and that the Ministry for the time being are the directors of the people's company limited, they hold the position in which they are by virtue of the fact that, if they have any conscience, they are compelled not only to do justice to the man who is purchasing, alienating, or leasing the land, but also to the vendors, who are the people as a whole. If the people as a whole are the original possessors and owners of the land, any Ministry in power must consider their claims when they are disposing of their birthright. If we accept that as being correct, if we accept

the fact that the land belongs to the people and that not only this generation but countless generations to follow have the same claims and rights, we have a basis on which we can discuss this great question. In order to have some appreciation of the conditions in Australia, and in order to judge what we should do in the way of legislation, we must of necessity study the history of the past, and our judgments based on that history of the past will enable us to legislate in an equitable manner for the future. If we take the example we have in the older English-speaking portions of the world we find by reading Henry George—and I presume the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) has a passing acquaintance with that author—that in America 30 years ago when he wrote that work, the hand of the land monopolist was even then being felt, and it is being felt, to a very much greater extent, to-day. We need not consider that country very much, but can come closer home to the British Empire, and take as a first instance the much advertised little island of Ireland. On looking up the question we find that in the early portion of last century Ireland had a population of something like eight millions. To-day there are in that island only four million people. Nearly every writer on political economy and the land question admits that the depopulation of Ireland is due almost entirely to one factor, and that the worst form of land monopoly.

Mr. Broun : Not so.

Mr. THOMAS : Perhaps the hon. member will tell me why Ireland has lost her population.

Mr. Broun : The people are buying back the freehold to-day.

Mr. THOMAS : I have not the slightest doubt that if they got the chance the people of Ireland who are working the land would be very glad to own some of it.

Hon. J. Mitchell : They are getting the chance.

Mr. THOMAS : But at the expenditure of countless millions of money, and when all the land is repurchased in that way the capitalised value will be so enor-

mous that I doubt whether the people who get the land will derive any benefit from it. That is one of the points we have exemplified in Australia. We have repurchased estates, sold them and repurchased them again, and if we live long enough we will, I have no doubt, see the process repeated many times over. Ireland has a total area of 20 million acres, of which eleven persons own 170,000 acres; 12 persons between them, 1,297,000 acres; 292 persons, 6½ million acres, or one-third of Ireland, 744 persons, one-half of Ireland, and 1,942 persons own two-thirds.

Mr. Broun : Those figures are 40 years old.

Mr. THOMAS : If the hon. member can oblige me with later figures I will be very much obliged. Under 2,000 persons own two-thirds of Ireland. Although the land laws in Ireland are not exactly analogous with those in Australia, they have had there in times past an unrestricted system of alienation. In Australia, no matter what small differences there may be in the different States, the system of alienation throughout is practically unrestricted, because if a man has served a certain time on the land he is perfectly at liberty to dispose of it to whomsoever he pleases. Obviously landlordism is rampant in Ireland, and as a result the population has decreased from eight millions to half that total. Then we may turn to Scotland, where are to be found the most hardy farmers in the world. Scotland has a total area of 18,946,000 acres, of which one person owns 1,300,000; 12 persons, nearly 4½ million acres; 70 persons own one-half of Scotland, 330 persons own two-thirds of Scotland and 1,700 persons own nine-tenths of the whole country. Of course the hon. member for Northam would say, "In Western Australia we have 624,000,000 acres, and why need we worry about this sort of thing? Look at all the millions of acres we have still to alienate." The hon. member when he indulges in those lofty flights of imagination, of which he is so fond, is prone to forget that there is a limitation to land, if there is not a limitation to anything else, and as I shall show later on the

evidence of the grip of the landlord is fairly constantly to be seen in Western Australia. However, to revert to Scotland, we find in that country not only that one person owns nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ million acres, but that 17 persons own nine-tenths of the total area. Although it may be delayed for many years to come, assuming that the present Bill is not passed, it must be obvious that if the system of alienation goes on the time must come—not to-day when we have a population of only 300,000, but when we have a population of five millions, which I hope is not far distant—when the whole of our public estate will be alienated, and must inevitably accumulate in large estates, and though possibly not in a similar degree to what we see in Scotland to-day, yet we will have the same conditions in Australia. What can we look forward to under such a condition of things? In England and Wales, without including London, there is a total area of 37,000,000 acres, of which 12 persons own over a million acres. One hundred persons own nearly four million acres, 710 persons own one-quarter of England and Wales, and 10,000 persons own two thirds of the country. Those are places from which we should take an example. The land laws of England that have made it on the one hand the wealthiest and most ostentatious country in the world, have shown too that wealth, social position and luxury can accumulate, and side by side ever flits the grim spectre of poverty and want. In no country in the world can we find more riches and more abject poverty, and many writers agree that much of the poverty, if not the whole of it, is due to the very state of things I am quoting to-night. Many economists and statisticians have dealt with this question, and it is said that the annual rents received from the land in England, not including buildings, reach as much as £250,000,000 sterling. The whole income of Great Britain does not nearly approach to that amount. Surely there is something wrong in a condition of affairs where ten thousand people own two-thirds of England and Wales. With the other figures I have shown, if they derive from their land

rents alone a much greater revenue than is derived from the whole of Great Britain from its various sources of revenue, does it not seem that there has been a miscarriage of justice somewhere; does it not point out to the most casual observer how much the taxation of that country might be lightened if the land that should belong to the people who have received practically nothing in return for it still remained the property of the people? I remember reading a passage in Henry George about where a tramp came along and was enjoying himself on a noble lord's domains. His lordship came along and asked him what he was doing, and the tramp said, "I am just looking round; what has it got to do with you anyhow?" His lordship said, "This land belongs to me." The tramp said, "Does it, where did you get it from?" His lordship said, "Oh, I got it from my father." "And where did he get it from?" said the tramp. His lordship said "He got it from his father, my grandfather, and he got it from my great grandfather, and so on." The tramp then said, "Anyhow, where did your great-grandfather get it?" His lordship said, "He fought for it." "Well," said the tramp, "I will fight you for it."

Mr. Wisdom: He would have done the same thing for his watch and chain.

Mr. THOMAS: I fail to see the relevancy. The tramp was prepared to do the same as his great-grandfather had done.

Mr. Heitmann: I doubt if his great-grandfather even fought for it.

The Minister for Mines: He stole it very likely.

Mr. THOMAS: It is possible he got it by much easier means, which I do not need to mention now, but the land of the people was given away, the same as has been done too often in Australia, for next to no return to some favoured individuals. I am not referring to late periods, but I am referring to earlier times in Australia when land grants were give for very small return. The great point at issue in connection with the leasehold system is that, not only does it deal fairly and equitably with those who take up land

under these conditions, but, with some slight variation, it should secure for all time to the people the unearned increment. In my opinion that is the crux of the whole question—if the people own the land to-day they have the right to dispose of it upon conditions which are fair to all, realising the fact also that the unearned increment is not due to the man who owns the land, or to the man who improves the land or uses it, but is due to the increase of population and the expenditure of public money. Take the land upon which Perth stands to-day. If we exercise all the highest powers of cultivation that agricultural science knows of, probably we could not make the land worth more than £50 per acre, but with our countless thousands of people flocking here the value of that land has gone up from probably 10s. or 20s. an acre until possibly it has reached £1,000 an acre. But every penny of that increased value has been created by the people and by the expenditure of public revenue of the State supplied by the people. That being so can any just minded individual say that the unearned increment does not belong to the people? If they create it it is theirs. That which a man earns no man has a right to take from him. Dawson, in his book on *The Unearned Increment*, says—

The higher rent, the less the amount of income divisible between wages and interest. As the produce is distributable amongst the three factors, rent, wages, and interest, it is evident that wages and interest can only benefit by the low value of land, and that the higher land rises in value the smaller will be the proportions of produce which fall to these two factors respectively. As with the growth of population the value of land increases, it follows that the produce of labour falls more and more to the landlords, who nevertheless do nothing to deserve this increase of income. Society makes the land more valuable. . . . yet the increased value, instead of benefiting those who create it, injures them, proves an obstacle to their material prosperity, and is productive of innumerable

social evils whose gravity it is often impossible to exaggerate.

That is the opinion of one of our greatest thinkers on this question, and he goes on to show that, as material prosperity increases under existing conditions, poverty largely comes with it. That is why Henry George gave to his famous book the name of *Progress and Poverty*. Henry George himself very pertinently remarks—

Labour cannot reap the benefits which advancing civilisation brings, because they are intercepted. Land being necessary to labour, and being reduced to private ownership, every increase in the productive power of labour but increases rent—the price that labour must pay for the opportunity to realise its powers; and thus all the advantages gained by the march of progress go to the owners of the land, and wages do not increase. Wages cannot increase, for the greater the earnings of labour the greater the price that labour must pay out of its earnings for the opportunity to make any earnings at all.

Now we have taken a small survey of the conditions of things in the older world in order that we can realise that the policy we are at present pursuing, if it is continued long enough, must inevitably result in the same conditions here as operate in older lands to-day, that land monopoly must be rampant and that the people as a whole will be subservient; if we come back to Australia which we understand a little bit better, we find that in New South Wales 700 persons own 40 per cent. of the land, and in Victoria 415 persons own 20 per cent. of the land. I do not know whether the Minister for Lands quoted these figures. If he did they bear repetition.

The Minister for Lands: My figures were taken from the last Commonwealth Year Book.

Mr. BROWN: The figures are nine years old.

Mr. THOMAS: These figures are not nine years old. They are the latest figures available, and probably if we had the figures right up to date the case would be more glaring still. In South Australia 180 persons own 20 per cent. of the land,

and in Western Australia 299 persons own 33 per cent. of the land. In a young country like Western Australia this is a shocking state of affairs, and no hon. member who fairly and squarely considers the position can say for a moment that we are not on the high road towards the pernicious system of land monopoly. While we have millions of acres to alienate, some of the best land has already been alienated; we have not the same to offer in the future as we had in the past. Victoria, owing to emigration over immigration, lost population due to the fact that land monopoly had such a grip that the sons of farmers and others desiring to go on the land could not find land to go on; and much of the population in Western Australia is due to the fact that the sons of farmers left Victoria to come over here to get land. If that can operate in such a short period after the inception of a colony like Victoria, we need not look very far ahead to find the same condition of things operating in Western Australia. The figures I am now about to quote are something like five years old. At that time 123 million acres of land had been sold in the six States of Australia, realising almost exactly £1 per acre, roughly speaking, realising £123,000,000; and the unimproved value of the land in Victoria alone, the figures being taken from Mr. Watt's famous speech, is worth 4½ millions more than the total amount received for the total area sold in the six States of Australia. There we have one glaring example of the instances of the unearned increment. Australia has borrowed, speaking from memory, £250,000,000 upon which the people as a whole have to find interest and sinking fund, and the whole of that £250,000,000 has been spent largely on the improvement of the value of the land in Australia which we sold for £123,000,000. In addition to the £250,000,000 borrowed, the £123,000,000 realised from the sale of the land has also been expended in improving the value of this land, so that even to-day the unearned increment upon the land in Australia, if it could be actually estimated, would be something enormous, and all this

wealth has been expended in order that a limited number of persons may exclusively benefit by it.

Mr. Broun: You ought to be farming.

Mr. THOMAS: I think I will be farming before the hon. member. The luminosity of the hon. member's interjection almost surprises me. He is throwing so much light on this subject, I almost feel I should subside in my chair. I shall await with great pleasure in the anticipation of hearing the eloquent address the hon. member will deliver. Indeed the House will be carried away with the outburst of his tempestuous eloquence.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must discuss the Bill.

Mr. THOMAS: I desire to point out that in New Zealand—I am speaking from memory, but I think it was in 1889—the unimproved value of the land was 75 millions. Eighteen years later the unimproved value of the land of that Dominion amounted to 173 millions, showing a difference in the unimproved value of, approximately, 100 millions. I am not underrating what the man on the land may do; I have a great admiration for his hardihood, and I will extend to him every possible consideration; but I recognise that it is the duty of the Government to hold the scales of justice and, if possible, balance them for the benefit of all classes. While I am anxious to see the Government do all that is possible to foster the man on the land, and to see that man prosper, I consider that this Government, or any other Government, must deal justly by the people who owned the land in the first instance, namely, the people as a whole, at the same time as they are dealing justly with the man on the land. Now, before passing on from this question I desire to raise another little point. It is often said that this desire to become the owner of a piece of land is inherent in human nature, that it was born with us generations ago, that it is a most righteous desire, and that no man should attempt to do away with the principle that secures to a man a piece of land which he can call his own, and which remains to himself and his family for generations to come. That is a very admirable senti-

ment. It is nice to own things. There are lots of people going about the street who would like to own something of mine, although I have not much. There is a big desire in some people to get hold of what belongs to others, but the law in its wisdom says that individual liberty is an excellent thing so long as it does not infringe the liberty of others. I would have no objection to the leader of the Opposition holding the whole of Western Australia if it did not do any harm to anybody else. But immediately the liberty of one individual begins to infringe the liberty of others it becomes the duty of the State to step in and protect the interests of the many at, possibly, some slight expense to the few. I will quote John Stuart Mill. He says—

It often happens that the universal belief of one age of mankind—a belief from which no one was, nor without an extraordinary effort of genius and courage, could at that time be free—becomes to a subsequent age so palpable an absurdity, that the only difficulty then is to imagine how such a thing can ever have appeared credible.

Some of my friends who do not think very deeply upon the subject hold, because their grandfathers and, later on, their fathers, may have held the fee simple in land, that it is a decree of a higher power that people should own the land. But the same thoughts existed some time ago when slavery was in operation. People thought that without slavery the progress of the world could not go on, but we have subsequently found, since a humanitarian wave swept slavery out of existence, that the world has progressed a very great deal more without that institution.

Mr. Heitmann: I do not think you have wiped slavery out yet.

Mr. THOMAS: Perhaps not, but in the general acceptance of the term we have, and as time goes on and this great land question is thoroughly understood, as I trust it will be, there will be no question of private ownership of land. The knowledge of the people of their own rights will be the great bulwark against the possibility of such a system ever existing. Now I want to quote from John Stuart

Mill again. Speaking on the question of landlordism in Ireland, he says—

What has been epigrammatically said in the discussions on “peculiar burthens” is literally true when applied to them; that the greatest “burthen on land” is the landlords.

Mill, probably our greatest political economist, who is not a socialist, says that, continuing,

Returning nothing to the soil, they consume its whole produce.

John Stuart Mill, the basis of political economy, bears out the contention I am trying to expound. In another place he goes on to say—

When the “sacredness of property” is talked of, it should always be remembered that any such sacredness does not belong in the same degree to landed property. No man made the land. It is the original inheritance of the whole species. Its appropriation is wholly a question of general expediency. When private property in land is not expedient it is unjust. It is no hardship to any one to be excluded from what others have produced; they were not bound to produce it for his use, and he loses nothing by not sharing in what otherwise would not have existed at all. But it is some hardship to be born into the world and to find all Nature's gifts previously engrossed, and no place left for the new-comer. To reconcile people to this, after they have once admitted into their minds the idea that any moral rights belong to them as human beings, it will always be necessary to convince them that the exclusive appropriation is good for mankind on the whole, themselves included.

Mark this concluding sentence—

But this is what no sane human being could be persuaded of.

I venture to use the contention of Mill, the great political economist, even against the profound thinker who to-day represents Northam. I am inclined to think that Mill was really right.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Wait till the member for Sussex puts Russell Wallace up against you.

Mr. THOMAS: My hon. friend the leader of the Opposition knew on that occasion just enough to misquote. I wonder the shade of Wallace did not turn in his grave.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Probably because he is not in his grave yet.

Mr. THOMAS: Well, I do not profess to be an *Encyclopædia Britannica* or to know all the ages of all the political economists of the world. However, that by the way. We had some remarks from the member for Northam on the failure of the leasehold principle in New South Wales. I know the Minister for Lands dealt with this at some length, but I desire to quote two little points in connection with it as they show pretty clearly the success of the leasehold system. In New South Wales, prior to the introduction of the leasehold system, they had 168,000 valid conditional purchases, which resulted in placing 25,000 settlers. Under the leasehold system 8,700 leasehold transactions represented 7,285 settlers. The percentage shows an enormous improvement upon the conditions of freehold settlement. Now we might consider some of the conditions of the Bill itself. The member for Northam in one breath said that we were making the conditions such that the people would not be able to live on the land, and in the next breath he said that we were treating the people too liberally. Exactly how to reconcile these two statements I do not know. Let us assume for argument's sake that under the freehold system an individual took up a block of land the capital value of which was £1,000. Under the old system he would be called upon to find £50 per annum to pay to the State alone, in addition to the money he would have to expend upon improvements. Under the conditions we propose to introduce, on a block of land of a capital value of £1,000, for three years from the date of taking over that block the new settler would not have to pay the Government anything, so that at the outset, in the first three years, we are giving to that individual a loan free of interest for all time of £150. In addition to that, after the three years have expired, he then would

have to pay £20 per annum compared with the £50 he would have to pay under present conditions. At the end of 20 years he would have to pay £400 instead of £1,000, to say nothing of the interest on the £600 which he did not have to pay. It seems to me that by giving the settler three years free of any payment whatever, enabling the man, no matter how small his capital, to invest that capital in the development of his land, and remembering that for 20 years afterwards he only has to pay two-fifths of what he would have to pay to-day—

Mr. Broun: What does he pay after the 20 years? He does not know what he is going to pay.

Mr. THOMAS: He does know what he is going to pay. That shows again the profound study my friend has given to the Bill. We provide that to-day the settlers shall pay 2 per cent. of the unimproved value of the land for 20 years. At the end of 20 years he shall also pay 2 per cent. on its unimproved value.

Mr. Broun: What about the unimproved value then?

Mr. THOMAS: I have in the course of my brief Parliamentary career been attacked by some remarkable interjections, but the hon. member gives vent to the most asinine expressions I have ever had the misfortune to listen to. Pardon me if I speak somewhat warmly. I would be glad if he would say something to elucidate the question. I do protest against these irrelevant interjections. For 20 years the settler on the land will pay 2 per cent. on the unimproved value, at the end of 20 years he will also pay 2 per cent. upon its unimproved value. Certain individuals who are personally interested in misrepresenting this Bill will of course, as they did prior to the general elections, say that the settler will be charged upon his improvements as well as upon the unimproved value. Anyone who has given the slightest consideration to the measure must realise that this is all provided against. The Minister will be called upon to value the land at the end of 20 years, and if the settler is dissatisfied, he has the protection of the

courts or of a special arbitration court which should give him justice.

Mr. Male: Or he can throw it up and somebody else can get it.

Mr. THOMAS: If the land at the end of 20 years is not worth two per cent. of its value or if he is not able to get so much profit, perhaps it would be better for the community if he did throw it up. By this measure we seek to gain at the end of 20 years that unearned increment which has been created exclusively by the State and by money borrowed and expended by the State, the interest on which has been paid by the people.

The Premier: We will not get very much then.

Mr. THOMAS: No. But as 20, 40, and 100 years go on, and as cities spring up and population increases, an enormous revenue will be secured to the benefit of the people without any injustice to anybody. While some people are prepared to see a bogeey at the end of the first 20 years, I want to make this point perfectly clear that for 20 years the settler, after taking his land, knows exactly what his liability will be. He need not anticipate any land tax or any trouble of that description for 20 years, but will go on in undisturbed possession, and at the end of 20 years he knows he will still have to pay only two per cent. upon the unimproved value of the land. The point has always seemed to me to be this: that it is wiser that the pioneer of to-day should have the condition of settlement made as easy and simple for him as it is possible to make it. I fail to see why an individual when he can pay £20 per annum after having had a lapse of three years and paid nothing, should desire a condition under which he would have to pay £50. It has always seemed to me that if we can make the burden a little lighter for the present generation and do justice to those who will come after, we will be perpetrating the best class of legislation that this country can have. I consider we should be asked to carry our own burden only and this Bill would make the conditions of life for the man on the land in his generation very much easier, brighter, and better and happier than they

would be under the old conditions. What is the use of saying a man never owns his land? Under the conditions of this measure he owns it just as firmly and effectively as he possibly could under any system of freehold. If he does not pay his rent he will lose it. Under the freehold system, if he does not pay his land tax he will lose it. The time will never come when a man can stand still and do nothing and retain what he has. That must be obvious to all. The one great and crowning virtue of this Bill is, and it is a point I have advocated wherever I have been in Western Australia, that while the holder of a leasehold has a right to sell, devise, will, or transfer his land in any way he desires, he can only do so to a person who does not already hold the maximum quantity of land, because when one person holds twice as much land as he should have, it of necessity follows that someone else has to go without. When an individual has the maximum quantity of land this Bill provides for, all the gold of the Rothschilds cannot buy him an acre more. If the Bill laid down no other fundamental principle than that, it would justify its existence. Given that one safeguard in Western Australia, even if the land were sold we would make enormous strides upon what we are doing to-day. If we provided that a man shall have only sufficient land to make a living for himself, his wife, and family, we would give opportunities to an enormous number of other people to hold their little share of land as well, but with something like 300 people owning 33 per cent. of the alienated portion of the State as exists at present, if that is to go on, the opportunity for the great majority will be very small indeed. I do not think I will take up the time of the House much longer. There are many things I would like to discuss, but I do not feel justified in doing so. There is only one little matter I would like to refer to before I conclude. The member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) spoke of the condition of affairs in France, and pointed out that the peasantry included small landed proprietors all over France. The writer of *France of the French*, E. H.

Barker, says that the condition of affairs in France is not quite so rosy as pointed out and he attributes to the French Revolution and the law which compels the division of property at the death of the owner among his children in equal parts, the fact that there is a number of peasant proprietors in France. But instead of the condition improving it is drifting the other way. He says—

There are no indications that France is getting nearer the realisation of the Revolutionary ideal of a fair division of the land among those who cultivate it; the signs rather point the other way, notwithstanding the law relating to succession, which in theory secures the equal treatment of children after the death of parents, and the consequent division or *morcellement* of the land. Everybody knows that there are ways of getting round the law—an art that is nowhere understood better than in France.

I could quote at some length from this book, but no advantage would accrue from that. It goes to prove that land-lordism is reaching its end in France as in other parts of the world. Seeing the conditions which are operating here and seeing the results of these conditions in the old world should cause any fair-minded man, whether Liberal or Labour, to pause and think. The issues at stake are so great that party politics should sink into significance if the great good which can come or the great evil which will come under existing conditions could be averted. It makes one despair of party politics when one realises that a question of such vital importance not only to the people of Australia but everywhere is covered up purely and simply by the party issue. The member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) says it is not popular and that as far as he is concerned is sufficient reason why he should oppose it. Whether popular or unpopular should have no influence upon a man who feels that he comes here to represent the best interests of the people. Surely there are some questions and surely there are some moments in a man's life—there must be—when he rises above the feeling of per-

sonal selfish interest or party interest and views a great national question in the interests of the people as a whole. It has been said, and it was asked during the tea adjournment, what is the use of discussing this question when with all one might say and all the figures one might quote, and all the facts one might bring to bear, we might carry the Bill in this House but it will be lost elsewhere and will never find its way on to the statute-book. That might be so, but a great thinker said—

“Share of truth never yet was vainly set in the World's wide fallow”

and I am somewhat comforted by this reflection in this matter. Though our views might not reach very far, I am firmly convinced that with the spread of knowledge opinion will rapidly come round to our side in connection with this matter. It is said that constant dripping of water will wear away a stone, and I am fairly convinced that a constant effort to place a fair statement of the case before the people together with the attrition of years of thought will ultimately break away the barriers and dissolve the mists that surround this great question, and before many years pass people will realise the true worth of what we are proposing. However, I trust these prophecies will not be necessary. I trust the result of our efforts will come earlier, but whether it comes to-day or not, I am satisfied that the schoolmaster is abroad, that the people as a whole are thinking more to-day than they have ever thought in the world's history, and the powers of conservatism may hold back the advance of democracy and the power of thought for the time being entrenched behind certain privileges, but it reminds me very much of Dame Partington trying to sweep back the Atlantic with a broom, the tide will rise too high, and though by fighting the Bill to-day members may think it is going to be killed, such is not the case and I am satisfied that before many years all over Australia, and not in Western Australia alone, we will see the policy of the leasehold system for our land carried through-out its length and breadth, and, once hav-

ing been carried and thoroughly understood, I am satisfied Australia will never revert again to its present condition.

Mr. MALE: I move—

That the debate be adjourned.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	8
Noes	25
			—
Majority against	..		17
			—

AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Harper	Mr. Wisdom
Mr. Male	Mr. Layman
Mr. Mitchell	(Teller).
Mr. Monger	

NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bath	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. O'Loughlin
Mr. Collier	Mr. Price
Mr. Dooley	Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Dwyer	Mr. Swan
Mr. Foley	Mr. Taylor
Mr. Gardiner	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Green	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Walker
Mr. Johnston	Mr. A. A. Wilson
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Heitmann
Mr. McDonald	(Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. MALE (Kimberley): I would like to say a few words before the question is put. The Bill has presumably been submitted to us as a justification of the pledge made by the Labour party at the last general elections. We find it was laid down in the Labour platform as finally drawn up for them at the conference held at Bunbury, that No. 5 of the general platform was "non-alienation of Crown lands with the view to the ultimate nationalisation of all lands."

Mr. Heitmann: I have heard that before.

Mr. MALE: I think the hon. member has, and I think he has preached it before, and I think too it was universally preached by the Labour party at the last general elections, and we can take it that the Bill is the first step towards the carrying out of their great ideal, the ultimate nationalisation of all lands. In fact, we can well draw that conclusion

from the remarks that fell from the last speaker. It appears to me it is a straight out issue as between the nationalisation of all lands and the freehold system.

Mr. Heitmann: The Bill says nothing about that.

Mr. MALE: No, but it shows what is underneath. The hon. member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) gave us the idea. What does the Bill mean? In plain language it means that no more Government land is to be sold, and that the land which we now hold will be taken from us. The Bill is leading up to this, and will ultimately mean it. It will mean that we are to have no more freehold and we must all become leaseholders.

Mr. Dooley: Quote the Bill.

Mr. MALE: Presently. The Minister for Lands is absolutely pledged by the Labour platform not only to the alienation of all Crown lands, but also to take away the freeholds which already exist in this State, or convert them into leaseholds in order that all our lands may be nationalised, that is, that the whole of the lands of the State shall become the property of the Crown. I contend that this Bill has a very great bearing on that part of the Labour platform. Let us be quite clear as to the wording of it. I will read it once again. I daresay members on the other side know it off by heart.

The Premier: You will understand it when you have read it a few times.

Mr. MALE: I would like the people of the country to understand it which is of far greater importance. "The non-alienation of Crown lands"—I think this Bill refers to the non-alienation of Crown lands—"with a view to the ultimate nationalisation of all lands." Presumably, "with a view." I take it so, and we know further that the members of the Labour party have signed a pledge to carry out that platform. They assured us during the elections of their determination to put into operation the platform of which this is one of the main planks. We are now being asked under this Bill to abandon the policy of freeholds which has been in existence in English speaking countries for all time, and make the experiment along lines

which have been found impossible in other places.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : There is a good deal of it in your quarter.

The Premier : What would you do with the leases up your way ?

Mr. MALE : They are continuous leaseholds.

The Premier : You should be consistent.

Hon. Frank Wilson : What will you do with the freeholds ?

The Premier : Convert them eventually.

Hon. Frank Wilson : We will keep you to that.

Mr. MALE : Let us hope the Premier will be consistent. No doubt he will be as consistent on this question as he will be on many other things. Let us consider the present position of Western Australia under existing conditions. To what can we attribute the progress which has been so marked in Western Australia during past years ?

Mr. Green : To the discovery of gold.

Mr. MALE : During the past few years to the land settlement policy which was carried out so vigorously by Sir Newton Moore, by the present leader of the Opposition and by the party who have followed them. What has been the inducement offered to our own people, and to immigrants who have come from foreign lands ? The great inducement has been the easy terms for acquiring land, the ownership of land, not the mere leasehold.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Some were induced to come here to acquire husbands.

Mr. MALE : That is possible, and what was the inducement that brought them here to obtain husbands ? The fact that their husbands would have the right under the existing laws to acquire the freehold of their land. Many of us wished to take up virgin land, and I believe it is still in the minds of many people to do so, with the intention of making permanent homes for themselves and their families. The private ownership of the land gives them two rights, the right to derive revenue from the land, and the right to

determine to what use they shall put that land.

The Premier : None at all if they like.

Mr. MALE : In New Zealand—that land of progressive legislation—they had a royal commission sitting to examine and consider the land question. After giving it due consideration there was, as so often happens with royal commissions, a double report presented. Neither of the reports was in favour of the nationalisation of all lands. The majority report stated, "It is evident there is a deep-seated desire to have the freehold, something that they can call their own, free from restrictions, free from inspection, and free from the payment of rent." This majority report also goes on to say that the granting of the right to obtain freehold will be a source of great satisfaction to the settler who is struggling on from year to year through many obstacles and privations to found a home for himself and family.

Mr. Dooley : Where did the commission get their evidence ?

Mr. MALE : I take it they got it as most commissions get their evidence, from all sources. Their then Prime Minister, Sir Joseph Ward, expressed a definite opinion when he said, "I do not believe in land nationalisation. I believe it will be disastrous to a country if it were to go in for a policy of that kind."

Mr. B. J. Stubbs : He is out of power now.

Mr. MALE : He may be. There are many good men out of Parliament, and, I regret to say that many who are in Parliament would probably be better out of it. There we have the opinions which have been arrived at after mature consideration, and these opinions also, let me say, express mine, and I believe they will be found to be the opinions of most of the people of this State of ours. Is it not the ambition of every one of us to own his own home ?

Mr. Green : That does not prove that it is right.

Mr. MALE : Is not every man ambitious to have his own house ?

The Premier : Many have an ambition to own everybody else's.

Mr. MALE: We want to know that it is ours and our children's for all time. We could never be induced to put the same amount of labour and capital into land which was not absolutely our own. Where would the inducement be, where is the inducement to come in if we know that after 20 years of toil and hard work our land is to be revalued and, perhaps, sold to a stranger who will come into occupation of it, reaping the advantages of our toil and industry?

The Premier: We only revalue for the purposes of rent; we do not take the improvements.

Mr. MALE: But you will revalue to such an extent that it will come heavier than an ordinary tax. How many of us beautify our homes and holdings, not for any benefit we ourselves expect to derive, but in the knowledge and hope that our children, our own flesh and blood, will live to enjoy the benefits of our toil, benefits not necessarily of a monetary value which can be paid for by somebody else, but often something which will add to the comfort and beauty of our homes, something which cannot be transferred? The sentiment of home is one of the finest bred in a nation. Without it we cannot hope to obtain true patriotism. The homes of our fathers and forefathers, handed down in some instances through generations, kindle in each of us, or should do so, a spirit of patriotism that could not otherwise be engendered.

The Premier: Where is the home your father handed down to you?

Mr. MALE: And yet this fine sentiment is to be stifled and not allowed to grow. The very thing we mostly require in the foundation of our nation is to be taken away and crushed out. At the present time the area of Crown land which any single person can purchase from the Government is limited. That policy which we have been carrying out has been an attractive one, not only to the people of the State, but to the new settlers who have come to us from overseas and started to build up the homes of the Australian nation in our midst. During the elections many interpretations were put upon the question of the nationalisation of all

lands. The Premier at that time pointed out that "all land" did not mean all land, but referred only to any that might be resumed for public purposes, or for subdivision. But if they are going to fulfil their pledges—and the presenting of this Bill to the House would lead us to believe that they are—then they must not only stop the selling of land and the issuing of freeholds, but they must also nationalise, that is, take back from us, all the freeholds we now hold.

Mr. Green: You are dealing with the Bill?

Mr. MALE: Yes, and with the results to be anticipated. What will be the effect? If we start the non-alienation of land it will create a curious position, it will create an enormous monopoly for those who now hold freehold.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is the reason why Ministers are rushing it.

Mr. MALE: And by creating that monopoly, in my opinion it will increase the value of the freeholds and at the same time diminish the value of the leaseholds. If the principle of the non-alienation of Crown lands is adopted then there is not the slightest doubt that the nationalisation of all lands must follow, and that, I contend, can only be brought about by a process of confiscation. It would be impossible for any Government to find the money necessary to repurchase all the freehold land which now exists, together with the improvements thereon, and a system of taxation amounting to confiscation would be pursued, and owners forced to sell at a sacrifice. Does not the Minister for Lands provide in the Bill that lands taken up under leasehold shall not be taxed?

The Minister for Lands: They pay the taxes in rent.

Mr. MALE: You cannot consistently say they pay the tax in rent when you are only going to charge 2 per cent. on the unimproved value. You are going to make all the taxes come upon the people who now hold the freehold, and that being the case the taxation on the freehold will be increased to such an extent that it will amount practically to confiscation. It has been said, and I believe

the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) used the quotation the other night—"Give a man possession of a rock and in a few years it will be transformed into a garden; give him the lease of a garden and in a few years it will become a wilderness." There is a lot of truth in that. Give a man a lease only, which is to be revalued at regular intervals, and what will be the result? He will take all he can out of the land before the lease expires, leaving it poor and impoverished.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do they do that in England?

Mr. MALE: They would if they had the chance. To continue that great stream of immigration which was started by the late Government, to continue that prosperous policy of land settlement, involving the construction of agricultural railways, we must continue to issue freehold, or people will not only cease to come here, but they, as well as the people in our midst, will go to other countries where they can get the freehold.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Where is that?

Mr. MALE: All the world over. You can get freeholds anywhere. Land without population is valueless. We have room for hundreds of thousands of people, and have plenty of land for them. That is our one and great attraction for getting them here, and I say we are making a fair exchange when we allow them to acquire land at reasonable prices. The land can never be taken away, it is always here, it is always a taxable item.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: Do you believe in taxing it?

Mr. MALE: You must ask the Premier. And even though the freeholds were given away by the Crown, the Crown has always the power to levy taxes and rates on the land for the purposes of revenue or of local government. There has been no complaint against the present system. It works well in other countries and is working well here, and in my opinion the demand for the alteration comes from those workers who constitute the town unions, and not from the people

in the country, who, it will be found, represent a very big minority of the people of the State. I shall undoubtedly oppose the policy contained in the Bill at every possible opportunity, in fact I am so absolutely opposed to the principle of the Bill that it would only be a waste of time for me to attempt to discuss the demerits of the different clauses. I cannot conceive of the Minister honestly believing the arguments he used in moving the second reading. He would have us believe that the individual settler would be better off under the Bill than under present conditions, that he will save his capital and be able to use it in the development of the land. But to-day the settler is really only paying interest on the capital value of the land, and in 20 and then, instead of the land being his own, freehold, to use and hold as he likes. He will then still have his capital left to him free and unencumbered, whereas under the Bill he pays interest for 20 years, and then, instead of the land being his own, it is reappraised and he has, perhaps, to pay a much higher rate. To my mind the proposition is monstrous. The value of the land lies in the use we can make of it. Without population it is valueless, and to become a prosperous nation we require a population. To use our lands, to render them productive, to make them of any value we must have the people here to work them, and we can only induce people to come by making the conditions sufficiently attractive. In my opinion the chief inducement is the freehold and not the leasehold, the easy means of acquiring a home and independence. Take away the freehold and you have nothing to offer the immigrant, the new settler. Those men desirous of going abroad from the old country to acquire land will go to other places where that inducement exists, and we who are left here without population will be left to rot in the midst of our own stagnation. We are determined—and I think in saying this I am expressing the opinion of those who sit on this side of the House and those whom they represent—that when we come again into our own, when we once more fill the Ministerial

benches, as we shall do, we shall give every leaseholder who has become such under the regulations issued by the present Minister for Lands, and which are now in force, the right to acquire their freeholds the same as other people have acquired theirs. Make no mistake about this, and let me say here that it is the knowledge that we will do that right when we have the power, that is inducing a number of the people to take up town-site and other blocks under leasehold to-day. I trust that the Bill will meet with the fate it deserves, total rejection by this House.

Mr. HARPER (Pingelly): I intend to oppose this measure on the ground that it is making our land laws unpopular. We want this State of Western Australia to go ahead; we do not want to remain in a comatose state without this great area being developed. I cannot possibly see how we can improve on the present system. There are large areas of country yet to be taken up, and it is certainly an attraction for people of other parts of the world to come here and get freehold land, and to make any change would be disastrous. We have a big contract to carry out to get this State peopled, and there is no more advantageous way of doing that than to settle people on the land. The member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) has referred to land for a man and his family, but how is he going to get on when the family grows up? Are the farmer's sons to remain on that block all their lives?

Mr. Heitmann: Under your system there would be no land for them. That is the position in Victoria.

Mr. HARPER: There is always plenty of land for those who want to take it up.

Mr. Green: Why did you leave Ireland?

The Minister for Mines: For the sake of Ireland.

Mr. HARPER: I left Ireland because I thought I could better my position, and that is the reason why any other individual should leave those thickly populated places. Much has been said about the large areas that many people hold in England, but what have they to do with

the land laws in Western Australia? The maximum area which a person can hold in Western Australia is 2,000 acres, and then he is required to comply with certain conditions. I say that all land should be improved. I would be in favour of taxing land when it is held for dummying purposes or allowed to remain idle, but so long as the people are cultivating the land and turning it to good account I see no reason why they should not be allowed to hold it without residential conditions. Much has been said about the large areas of land accumulated in New Zealand, Victoria, New South Wales, in fact all the Australian States, but that land was taken up many years ago, and great changes have come about in the land settlement of Australia in the meantime. The member for Bunbury remarked on how the land had appreciated in New Zealand. I remember that 25 or 30 years ago land was of very little value in New Zealand because there was no market for the produce. Since then great facilities have been provided for transporting the products of Australia to the markets of Europe, thus enabling the Australian producer to export very largely. Some members on the Government side have averred that the improvement of land values in Western Australia was attributable to the goldfields. Land in other States has appreciated very materially during the last 20 years and that covers the period of the gold mining industry in Western Australia. Great improvements have been caused by the growth of scientific knowledge and research, and the increased use of fertilisers has done the farming industry more good than any discovery of goldfields, and has certainly made it a profitable proposition to grow wheat. I am entirely against leasehold.

Mr. Heitmann: Why are you against leasehold?

Mr. HARPER: I am against it for the reason that it unsettles people; they are never sure of their position. All the inducements we can hold out cannot be too many in order to get people to assist us in the development of Western Australia. It would be a dangerous procedure for us to make any change at the

present time. We have enough experiments.

Mr. FOLEY: You would not have been able to hold so much freehold if it was not for the goldfields.

Mr. HARPER: The hon. member thinks he knows a great deal. He has always the idea that because I lived on the goldfields I did well there, but there are other parts of the world besides Western Australia and the Golden Mile.

Mr. GREEN: Tell us about the Golden Pole.

Mr. HARPER: The Golden Pole was a very profitable proposition and I would like to have more like it.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must discuss the Bill.

Mr. HARPER: We have to thank the early settlers who took up land long before Kalgoorlie was discovered. To them we owe a great deal—

Mr. SPEAKER: What has that to do with this Bill? I will give the hon. member as much latitude as possible, but I hope that the principles of the Bill will be discussed.

Mr. HARPER: The early settlers of this State were granted freeholds and some of them have very large areas. They were justified in obtaining those areas owing to their pioneering and the great hardships they endured in the early stages of Western Australian history. That is the reason why I say they have opened up and led the way for us to follow in their footsteps. That being the case, I think they are quite entitled to what they have and I do not begrudge them it. I certainly think we cannot do better than encourage people to settle on our lands. We want settlers right along the new lines of railway we have built. We want every piece of land occupied and turned to good account, and we cannot do better than grant the people the freehold. I have nothing more to say on the matter, but I hope the House will not pass the Bill.

Mr. CARPENTER (Fremantle): I have no intention of keeping the House at very great length on this question, and I hope to see the second reading carried without much further delay. It is well known that whenever any great movement

is begun all the conservative forces in opposing any reform make good use of a political bogey. In other words, instead of confining themselves to the principal proposition which is then before the people they imagine into it a lot of evils which they say must follow if this principle is accepted by Parliament. It has been the old stock cry of the conservative party, as everybody knows right through the political history of the British Empire. There has not been a single reform of any magnitude that has not had to fight misrepresentation, not of the reform itself, but of some imaginary evil which must result if this reform is brought about. We have had an echo of that sort of thing to-night in the speeches of our opponents, who tell us that it is not this principle they are afraid of but something that will follow if the principle is accepted. I suppose that old bogey has been utilised with such success in some cases that it will always be a favourite device with those who oppose any reform. In the English Parliament there has not been a single reform proposed in connection with which this device has not been put to the fullest use, and in some cases it has delayed, if not altogether prevented, the acceptance of such reform. So we are told by the member for Kimberley that it is not so much this but it is the nationalisation of all land that he is so very much afraid of, and he is trying to make the people believe that we are going to take their freeholds from them. These were his own words. We have the spectacle prior to the last election of the member for Northam issuing a pamphlet which, I say advisedly, was a disgrace to anyone.

Mr. MONGER: What about the pamphlet issued by your own party?

Mr. CARPENTER: That was an honest declaration of what we intended to do. We did not attempt to mislead the people by trying to make them believe something that was not true. That was what the pamphlet I referred to tried to do. I am not at all surprised that the member who issued it has not had the courage to produce it in this House and quote from it. Why do members on the other side fight

this reform? We have heard the old, stale, so-called arguments repeated *ad nauseam* that the man who wants land wants it for his own, that he wants to feel secure that he and his family will not be disturbed. We admit the force of all that, and want to give him a secure tenure. That is all a man wants. If we call leasehold freehold and freehold leasehold it would not make a bit of difference. All he wants is to make sure that when he gets land and makes a home, that home will be secure, and there is nothing attaching to this Bill that will have any effect in disturbing that security of tenure we all want him to enjoy. All we ask is in giving him his rights in the land, we preserve the rights of every one else in the community. We had the spectacle also a year or two ago of having a Minister of the Crown, the late Minister for Lands, laying himself out to conduct something like a State land boom, and he was going around the country declaring and boasting how many thousand or million acres of the public estate he was alienating and getting rid of, and I believe the hon. member thought he was doing the State a service because he was getting rid of so much land.

Hon. Frank Wilson: So he was, an absolute service.

Mr. CARPENTER: There is a proof, I was going to say, of the ignorance which exists on the other side, in supposing that a country is prospering because we are giving away a huge slice of territory which we will have to buy back in a few years time. Land booming, whether conducted by a private firm, individual or a Minister of the Crown, is and always has been and always must be an evil, and it becomes a worse evil when a Minister backed up by a chance majority in Parliament, sets about this evil business of booming land and parting with the public estate for a mere song. When public opinion expresses itself in favour of the nationalising of all land, Parliament must carry it out, but I am prepared to admit that we have not educated public opinion to that point, but I assert that if there is one movement which has made headway during the last 20 years, not

only in Australia but throughout the British-speaking countries, it is this doctrine of the preservation of the rights of the whole of the people in the soil of the country.

Mr. Monger: Oh, bunkum!

Mr. CARPENTER: The sneers from that side of the House only convince me that what I am stating is a fact and every one knows it to be a fact. The opinion in regard to the public estate in English-speaking countries to-day is quite different from what it was a generation ago, and the change is taking place more rapidly than members of the Opposition care to admit. The fact that overwhelming numbers were returned a year or so ago to put into operation this policy is the strongest proof of what I am saying, and perhaps the greatest annoyance to members who are clinging to an exploded fallacy handed to them by their great-grandfathers. I have heard to-night a threat, and I am not at all surprised to hear it, and the threat is that when the Opposition get back to the Treasury benches they will convert the leaseholds which will be given into freeholds. They will turn back the hands of the clock and say to the people "You have only the leasehold; it will be worth so much more to you if we convert it into freehold; so put us in power and we will make you a present of something you have not got now." I admit that has been done in previous cases.

Mr. Monger: By your party.

Mr. CARPENTER: Some years ago I assisted in some land legislation in the adjoining State under which we agreed to a system of working men's blocks on the leasehold system, and the men who took up these blocks did splendid work upon them, made good homes and secured good incomes, and in spite of their being so well satisfied with this patriotic policy preserving the rights of everybody in the public estate, our opponents went to these men and bribed them—there is no other word for it—by saying "Look, you have land just on the outskirts of the city. The value has gone up since you took it; put us in office and we will give you the freehold instead of the

leasehold." It was simply an appeal to the individual selfishness of those leaseholders against the rights of everyone else in the State. They have got the land on specially easy terms and it is not to be wondered, when any political party went to them with a bribe of that sort, that they succumbed to it. Most people naturally like to get something for nothing.

Mr. Monger: Is that the system of Wonthaggi?

Mr. CARPENTER: I cannot follow the hon. member. Conservative parties in other States have done just what we are threatened will be done by the Conservative members in this State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They have done it in this State.

Mr. CARPENTER: I would not be at all surprised if that is so, and they have said they will do it again. I would like to see the possibility of that being done prevented. I do not want to see this or any other reform forced on the people if they are unwilling to accept it. I believe the people are ready at least for the first step of this great reform, and that is the step provided for by this Bill, to stop the further alienation of Crown lands and, believing that, I am quite prepared to consult the people, and by getting their opinion to prevent any possibility of this great question being made the plaything of political parties, and the only means of doing that is to have this brought in by a vote of the people. I suggest to the Government, speaking for myself only, that if the Government want to make this reform a stable reform they should add a proviso that it shall come into operation when it has been approved by a vote of the people. I am convinced that that vote would be in favour of the reform and it would prevent the carrying out of any such threat as we have heard to-night. If we can do this and bring it in with the ascertained consent of a majority of the people, then I believe we will be putting this reform on a broad and solid foundation, and members opposite, not even in vain expectation, will ever be able to revert to the present system. I support

the Bill because I believe it to be the first step in a great reform which will have untold benefits not only to-day but for many years to come.

Mr. BROUN (Beverley): I cannot allow the opportunity to pass without saying a few words in opposition to this measure, because I feel certain it is going to retard land settlement to a great extent in Western Australia, and because we will not get our land populated as speedily as desirable.

Mr. Heitmann: That has not been the result in other parts of the world.

Mr. BROUN: Then how is it that in other parts of the world they are reverting to freehold? In a State like Western Australia we should do all we possibly can to encourage settlement and not retard it; and by granting freehold it is only natural that people will take up the land more freely than under the leasehold system. I quite agree with the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) when he says this is an important measure. It is one that requires careful consideration. Any Government should be cautious before putting such a measure on the statute-book. It is the ambition of any man taking up land to make a good home on it, and it is only natural that a man who is going to improve his land and make a good home on it will want to take it up on the freehold system, so as to enjoy it with the hope of handing it down to future generations or dispose of it if he so chooses at a profit, and get a little on the improvements he has effected, and also get a little of the unearned increment to which he is entitled. He is certainly entitled to that after the years he has been putting labour into it. Is he not entitled to the value of his labour?

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: And he will get it under this Bill.

Mr. BROUN: It is only natural that he would sooner take up land under the freehold system than under the leasehold system. I am confident the Government will find, if the measure is passed, that it will not be a success. The failure will not be seen immediately, but after a number of years I am certain they will revert to the old system of freehold.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Well, give it a trial.

Mr. BROUN: I am absolutely certain the measure will pass this Chamber. It is useless any member of the Opposition opposing any measure, and we know from what we hear so frequently from members on the Government side that they are there for a considerable time to come. If they are so confident of that they will have an opportunity of seeing whether their measure is a workable one. If it is not workable I feel certain that they will be only too glad to bring in another Bill, and perhaps allow the dual system. As I have already said the prosperity of the State depends almost entirely on the land system. I do not say that the goldfields are not to be taken into consideration, but land settlement is to be our greatest asset, and it is from the profits of the land that we will derive the greatest amount of our income as well as taxation; because the products of the soil go over the railways and help to make the railways pay. It has been admitted more than once by the Premier that he is jubilant over having a good season so as to be able to wipe out some of the deficit he has in view. Even the Premier and his colleagues must admit that the agricultural industry in Western Australia is of vital importance. The reason for the introduction of this measure is to do away to a great extent with land speculating and dummyming. I admit there has been a little land speculating and dummyming, but it does not exist to the extent the Government or the people of Western Australia need be alarmed at. We should induce people to come here with capital. We have not sufficient capital here now, and we should induce people to come here with their own money and develop the country without their having to go to the Agricultural Bank to borrow it, and without having to take up the land on the leasehold system at an almost peppercorn rental as provided in the Bill. In regard to land dummyming and speculation, this difficulty can be very easily overcome if the Minister for Lands likes to take the trouble to see into it. If he does not want people to get too large an area of land,

he can easily bring in a measure stopping the transfers of land to any man holding over a certain number of acres.

The Minister for Lands: That would invoke a more restrictive provision than we propose in this measure.

Mr. BROUN: No, and we would not be doing away with the freehold system. The member for Swan (Mr. Turvey) the other evening interjected that it was proved that the people favoured the non-alienation of Crown lands and the ultimate nationalisation of all lands by their placing the Labour party in power with such an absolute majority, but that is no criterion whatever. Members on the Government side have so many planks in their platform that it is hard to say on which platform they were placed in the position they now hold.

Mr. Heitmann: Our opponents made non-alienation of land the principal fight.

Mr. BROUN: It is no criterion to say that because 60 per cent. of the people voted in favour of the party now in power those people approved of that plank in the platform. Over 60 per cent. of the people come from the city, and I am quite certain that not 15 per cent. of these people have taken into consideration for one moment the land laws of Western Australia.

Mr. Carpenter: They have studied it more than you think.

Mr. BROUN: I do not think so. In regard to the rent to be paid under the leasehold system it is only 2 per cent., which is a very small amount. That will be on the present value of conditional purchases taken up under freehold. For anyone to take up land under these conditions hon. members may think they can make a do, but there is a lot more behind this. I pointed out to the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) about the 20 years' system and about the valuation every 20 years. I think he made a vulgar reply that I was an "assarine" or something like that. I think I can be credited with a little more common sense than the member for Bunbury in this respect. I can understand the hon. member trying to put me off in that way because hon. members sitting on the Ministerial side of

the House are hiding behind a cloak the real meaning of this measure.

Mr. B. J. Stubbs: What is the real meaning of it?

Mr. BROWN: I will tell the hon. member if he will give me time to do so. With the power to revalue in 20 years the Government intend to fleece the people. In one of the clauses it is provided that a fresh valuation shall be made by the Minister from time to time during the currency of the lease and at intervals of not less than 20 years; that is what the Bill states definitely. A man taking up land on leasehold pays 2 per cent. on the unimproved value for 20 years and puts what he gets out of it back in improvements; he actually pays the rent in doing so, and he goes on improving his land for the 20 years and at the end of that time it is subject to reappraisal and then he has to pay 2 per cent. on the valuation. Is the Minister going to tell me as the member for Bunbury interjected, that he is going to put that on the unimproved value—

The Minister for Lands: It might be less.

Mr. BROWN: It never would be less. It will be a very poor look-out if the lands valuations are to be less in 20 years. Why bring in a measure of this kind to provide for the leasehold system when we have so much land in the State? There is no doubt about it the public will be fleeced. They will think they are getting it at a nominal rent and then the Minister for Lands will take the opportunity of putting on a big valuation and get as much as he can out of it. He will say, "You have had the land for 20 years and now I am going to do my best to get the money back that the State has practically lost on these holdings."

Mr. Turvey: There is a proviso which enables them to appeal.

Mr. BROWN: In regard to the improvements only.

The Minister for Lands: Appeal against the unimproved valuation.

Mr. BROWN: It can be two or three times more than it was on the day he took it up. Thousands of unforeseen difficulties may crop up and the man who takes up leasehold will be the worry of

the Minister's life, and the Minister will always be on the look-out for fresh tenants.

Hon. Frank Wilson: There will be no tenants at all.

Mr. BROWN: Even in New South Wales, I notice by the *Year Book*, there has been an enormous falling off in the applications for land since the leasehold system has been in force.

Mr. Heitmann: Yet there are more people getting on the land.

Mr. BROWN: That is not so. In the different countries which hon. members have quoted it has not been possible to show that the leasehold system has been a success.

The Minister for Lands: I quoted Sir Joseph Carruthers and showed that he regarded it as a success.

Mr. BROWN: He is only one authority, and even he may not be correct. The member for Bunbury quoted yards from books, but it was all theory and there was nothing in the shape of practical experience. We have heard it said frequently by members opposite, and it was mentioned by the Attorney General at one time, that a bleeding process was to be applied to those with capital in Western Australia. It is a most drastic step to take to attempt to kill the man with capital and there is not the slightest doubt about it that this measure is a step in that direction, and in the direction of bringing about the ultimate nationalisation of all lands.

Mr. Heitmann: We will steal your homes as you said at the last elections.

Mr. BROWN: I never said that and the hon. member cannot prove that I did. To bring about the ultimate nationalisation of all lands is only one means of effecting taxation. There is a big deficiency to be made up and there is only one way to do that, and it is mostly by taxation and by the leasehold system now proposed. It simply means that those few who now hold land in Western Australia will have to bear the burden of the increased taxation. The aim of the Government is to so increase taxation that the landholders will say to them, "Here is your land: take it," and then Western

Australia will be a good place to get out of. I have no more to say except that I hope the measure will meet with an early death. It is similar to several others which have already been submitted by the Government, all drastic in character, and calculated to interfere with the progress of Western Australia. It is needless for me to say that it ought to be immediately consigned to the waste paper basket.

On motion by Mr. Monger debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.58 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 6th November, 1912.

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

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: 1, Health Act, 1911—Burbanks Local Board of Health By-laws. 2, Bunbury Harbour Board—Amendments to Regulations Nos. 55, 96, and 97. 3, Shark Bay Pearl Shell Fishery Act, 1892—Additional Regulations.

HIGH SCHOOL ACT AMENDMENT BILL SELECT COMMITTEE.

Report presented.

Hon. A. SANDERSON (Metropolitan-Suburban) brought up the report of the select committee appointed to inquire into this Bill.

Report read and ordered to be printed.

ASSENT TO BILLS (5).

Message received notifying assent to the following Bills:—

- 1, Education Act Amendment.
- 2, Fremantle Reserves Surrender.
- 3, Public Service Act Amendment.
- 4, Agricultural Lands Purchase Act Amendment.
- 5, Bills of Sale Act Amendment.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION.

As to recommittal.

Hon. J. E. DODD (Honorary Minister) moved—

That the report of the Committee be adopted.

Hon. M. L. MOSS moved an amendment—

That the Bill be recommitted for the purpose of further considering Clauses 4, 7, and 18.

It had been expected that the Minister would be prepared to treat this as a formal matter, but apparently the Minister was not so disposed, and sought to take advantage of the three or four votes which had been carried in a sparsely attended Committee on the casting vote of the Chairman. It was desirable that we should get a fair indication of the true opinion of the House upon the three important questions involved in the clauses named. Clause 4 was the one in respect to which Mr. Wilding had, yesterday, moved to exclude workers in the agricultural and pastoral industries, and domestic servants, from the operations of the Bill. Seeing that the voting had been eight on each side, and that the Chairman, in accordance with constitutional practice, had given his vote with a view to providing for further consideration, it was desirable that we should have the opportunity of casting another vote upon this question. Under Clause 7 he (Mr. Moss) had sought to insert some new clauses dealing with the political objects of industrial organisations, and as he felt strongly that we should endeavour, if possible, to separate political action from industrial action, with a view to securing industrial peace, he conceived it to be his duty to try once more to have those pro-