

try, Western Australia will before long get out of her financial difficulties. We will, I hope, continue to produce more and more and be able to induce people to come here by the very attractions which we will be able to offer them, and will thus succeed in building up a State second to none in Australia.

On motion by Mr. Foley debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.8 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 31st August, 1920.

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

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

- 1, Prices Regulation Act Continuation.
Introduced by the Minister for Education.
- 2, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.
Introduced by Hon. J. Duffell.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth Day.

Debate resumed from 26th August.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (North-East) [4.36]: It is not my intention to deal with the question of finance. It is well known that we have a deficit of over four million pounds. That in itself should be sufficient to set hon. members thinking, and to force the Government to do something in the direction of making the revenue and expenditure come more closely into line. I was struck by the following paragraph in His Excellency's opening speech—

In common with every other country in the civilised world Western Australia is faced with grave problems of reconstruction following upon the disturbances of trade, commerce, and industry during the war. My advisers, however, because of the ability of the State to produce in abundance many of the things of which the world is most in need, feel that the prospects are encouraging and that vigour, enterprise, and good will amongst the peo-

ple are alone necessary to replace the material losses of war and to inaugurate a period of expansion.

I agree that it is essential to have good will amongst the people. During the last five years we have had a world war, from which we have been led to believe we issued successful. Still, it must be realised that there is not that measure of good will obtainable throughout the country which is necessary to bring about the best possible results for Australia. We have had a number of industrial disputes. In that we are not alone throughout the civilised world there have been industrial disputes of great magnitude. We in Australia are rather fortunate in having had so few of these disputes. We have had our strikes, even here in Western Australia; but after all, when we take into consideration the reasons that force the worker into revolt against the conditions under which they work, we see that they are not without justification. Among those reasons we have the heavy increases in the cost of living which are in themselves sufficient to force the workers to demand, not only more money but improved conditions. If the Government of Australia are prepared to allow prices to continue increasing, and thereby reducing the standard of living, it follows that the workers, in defence of the standard they have attained in 1914, must fight for the retention of that earlier achievement. We have our Arbitration Courts, but I think sufficient has been said during the last few months to show that, after all, those courts have not proved the success which, a few years ago, many of us hoped they would. Personally I believe in the principle of arbitration for the settlement of industrial disputes; but I am faced with the fact that the efforts of the workers to get to the court have been combated so forcibly by the employers that it has taken months, sometimes even years, for the workers to reach the court. The worker is out to retain the standard of living which he had attained in 1914. If he were not prepared to fight for that standard he would not be worthy of the name of man. Workers to-day realise that it is necessary that they should combine in an endeavour to bring about such a state of affairs as will enable the bread-winner and his wife and children to live in a reasonable standard of comfort. He must have food and clothing and housing, and sufficient to enable him to educate his children. That is what the workers are desirous of obtaining to-day. They also realise that they are hard put to it to combat the actions of the profiteer in forcing up the cost of living. That is one of the causes of industrial unrest, namely, the increased price of necessary commodities, which has reduced the purchasing power of money, and consequently the standard of living which the worker has enjoyed in the past. As a result the worker is forced to take whatever action he deems necessary to establish his claims. If it is desired to bring about a better state of affairs the employers must do something in the direction of meeting the wishes of the workers. It is much to be re-

gretted that in the past the employers have placed so many obstacles in the way of the workers getting their cases before the Arbitration Court. Every facility should be given for the bringing of a case before the court. Then, when the case has been heard and the award delivered, if the workers are still dissatisfied, a better feeling can easily be brought about by negotiations between both parties; but so long as the employers are prepared to fight the workers every inch of the way, we shall have a great deal of industrial unrest.

Hon. J. Duffell: Do you not think that better results could be attained if we had wages boards instead of Arbitration Courts?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: No, but I think the Arbitration Act could be amended to meet the wishes of the workers and render it easier for them to secure awards more promptly. That is one of the great grievances against the Arbitration Act. I am not prepared to say that we can abolish industrial unrest altogether, or reduce it to any extent. After all, the worker, on the one hand, is out to get as much as possible for his labour. On the other hand, we know from experience that the employer is out to secure his labour at the cheapest possible rate. Those are the two interests that are operating. The workers desire to get more money and better conditions of employment, and the employer is after increased profits and cheaper labour. No doubt that is quite a legitimate aspiration so far as the employer is concerned. We cannot do away with industrial unrest, but we can simplify the settlement of disputes by an amendment of our Arbitration Acts, both State and Federal. If the opponents of the Labour movement and of the unions in this State will only give the matter due consideration, I feel confident a better feeling will result and no doubt a greater measure of prosperity be brought to Western Australia.

Hon. J. Duffell: Would you make the awards final and binding for all parties?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: I am coming to that. I have been considering the question of arbitration for some considerable time, and have come to the conclusion that it would be beneficial both to the employer and employee if we struck out the penal clauses in connection with our Arbitration Court. If we had a system of arbitration that would enable both sides to go to the court, set forth their case and get an award, and then place the facts before the country, that would be sufficient to bring about enforcement of the award, the general public having a strong influence upon the settlement of industrial disputes. Once the facts were made known, and the evidence placed before the public, and the public became possessed of it, in the event of a dispute, the public could then see which side was, in its opinion, doing the right thing when an agreement was repudiated. The penal clauses of the Arbitration Act in the past have been most irritating to industrial unionism in Australia. I have come to the conclusion that

for the purpose of bringing about a greater measure of industrial peace, it would be as well to wipe out the penal clauses altogether. Both the employer and employee would then know that the award would have to be enforced by the opinion of the public, in accordance with the evidence submitted on which an award had been based. I desire to refer to a paragraph in the Speech dealing with the mining industry. This says—

The position of the mining industry which has played, and is playing, so big a part in the affairs of the State—is occasioning my Advisers serious consideration. Difficulties have arisen amongst the mines chiefly responsible for the State's large gold production. The exploitation of the lower levels of these mines has been attended by increased costs and lower values, whilst the scarcity of labour and the shortage of and high price of fuel are causing anxiety.

On the question of the scarcity of labour, it is perhaps well known in Western Australia that men engaged in the mining industry for a number of years past are doing their best to get out of the industry. The conditions under which they labour are such that men find after a few years, that their health is so impaired that, in their own interests and those of their families, they deem it necessary to get out of the industry as early as possible. That is one of the factors responsible for the scarcity of workers in the industry. I have previously pointed out that it is only necessary to go to the Wooroloo Sanatorium and have a chat with the miners there to realise to the full the dangers they have been subjected to, and the awful position of men who have followed mining as an occupation for only a few years. I notice that the Mine Workers' Relief Fund have recently got into touch with Dr. Haldane with a view to finding out if it is possible to extract dust from the lungs, after it has got there. I am not so concerned about getting the dust out of the men's lungs as I am of opinion that once the dust has penetrated the lungs of a miner, it is impossible to get it out. A few years ago I read a report of Dr. Summers in reference to an investigation made into conditions appertaining at Bendigo. He pointed out that the only known process of getting dust out of the lungs of a man was, after death, to cremate the lungs and wash the ash off into a dish, when small particles of quartz would remain in the dish whilst the burnt fibres of the lung would be washed away. I am, however, concerned about the lack of attention on the part of the Government, and the fact that they do not do something in the direction of preventing the inhalation of dust, as I believe can be done. During the war, when the enemy started using poison gas, every science was brought to bear upon this, with the result that gas masks were brought into use by the war authorities of Great Britain. In Western Australia for years past our miners have had to rely upon the old respirator. Most

hon. members know what that is. It is a contrivance commonly used in mines and in quarries, or wherever dust is created. The miners are not satisfied with this and do not seem to like using it. It is not suitable, and is very uncomfortable to wear. I am of opinion that something could be done by the Government in bringing into use an improved respirator in our mines. A respirator is an apparatus to prevent the inhalation of dust. Nothing has been done, however, although the matter has been brought up on several occasions. It was brought before a mining conference in Kalgoorlie three years ago, but up to date nothing has been done to offer any reward for designing and inventing an improved respirator. If we can only bring about some preventive measures that will eliminate the inhalation of dust, we shall be doing something that will be in the interests of the men who are working in our mining industry. It should not be surprising to hon. members and those connected with the industry to find a scarcity of labour. Men have awakened to the fact that mining is a dangerous occupation. Apart from the dangers of inhaling dust, there is also the big probability of inhaling tubercular germs. Under our present system we allow a healthy miner and a consumptive miner to work in a confined space underground, in crosscuts and drives and in stoping and many other directions in which the men are employed. There is no medical test. Men who have been working in an industry for years, and have contracted consumption, are allowed to work underground with healthy men. The result is that sooner or later the healthy man must necessarily contract tuberculosis. It is hard to say how this can be avoided when we allow such a state of affairs to exist. Some two or three years ago a request was sent to the then Minister for Mines that something should be done with a view to having tubercular medical examinations, for the purpose of taking from underground work altogether men suffering from tuberculosis. That was only the right thing to do. In connection with the Mine Workers' Relief Fund, in the event of an applicant being found to be suffering from tuberculosis, the officials of the fund get into touch with the health authorities. On the train which brings the applicant down to the Wooroloo Sanatorium a compartment is set aside for him, and the individual is kept entirely apart from the travelling public. The health authorities realise that it is a case dangerous to the public health, and the public are safeguarded by the man being placed in a separate compartment. Whilst all these precautions are taken in these cases, men are continually going down in our mines to mix and work with healthy miners, although they themselves are suffering from consumption. These are some of the things which are forcing men out of the mining industry. They are not prepared to con-

tinue to work in an industry which will jeopardise their health in this way. This is a matter which the Government should inquire into. It is no good blaming past Governments for not having dealt with the question. Years ago we did not know so much about consumption and the causes of fibrosis, silicosis or pneumonicosis. It is only during recent years that the matter has been brought home to us. To-day we know the dangers connected with underground work on mines. Without trying to blame anyone in the past, if there is any blame attachable, or throwing the blame upon any past Premier or Minister for Mines or mines representative, we should drop this altogether, and ask the present Government and the present Minister for Mines to take such action as will prevent such a state of affairs existing any longer. If we want extra labour for our mining industry we must do something to improve the conditions under which the men work. I remember that only three or four years ago there was a campaign on the goldfields for the purpose of combating the dust nuisance. It was pointed out then that by the application of water through a water jet or spray the dust nuisance could be minimised. So far as dry boring is concerned, dust could also be minimised by the use of the spray, and killed at the seat of origin by that means. That agitation has been kept going, but I think very little has been done and the system is not yet perfect. There is great room for improvement in the direction of killing the dust in our mines, and safeguarding the health of the miners. I was disappointed with the list of Bills outlined in the Speech. Knowing that for the last five years Parliament has done nothing to amend our industrial legislation, I thought that on this occasion the Government would bring forward proposals with this object in view. Take the Workers' Compensation Act. Mr. Dodd made reference to the amount payable weekly under that statute. The amount is £2 per week in the event of an accident. That sum was fixed when living was 40 per cent. cheaper than it is to-day. Only recently a case came under my notice where a man lost the sight of both eyes as the result of a mining accident. Of course he was entitled to the maximum of £400. That is, he was prepared to go on drawing £2 per week until the £400 was exhausted. He had a wife and three children and £2 was not of much use to him. The result was that he had to make overtures to the insurance company with a view of getting a lump sum. That was effected but only after the insurance company had prevailed upon the worker to such an extent that he was prepared to forego £25 of the maximum amount. The unfortunate man would have been prepared to accept the whole amount in weekly payments if those weekly instalments had been sufficient to enable him to live on them. But he had to consider his wife and family.

The amount not being enough he was obliged to accept the maximum less £25 which was deducted by the insurance company. The same thing applies in connection with other accidents enumerated in the second schedule of the Act. I know also of a case where a man lost the sight of his only eye, and also received bodily injury. Eleven years ago, as the result of an accident, he was unfortunate enough to lose the sight of one eye and the more recent accident resulted in the loss of the sight of the second eye. This man is receiving £2 per week and he has a wife and a house full of children. That sum of money is nothing like sufficient to enable all those people to live, and they are having a bad time. The insurance companies have been approached, but they are not satisfied as to whether they should pay for the loss of the sight of one or of both eyes, and for the bodily injuries as well. The outcome of this will be that this man will have to receive help under the Commonwealth Pensions Act. I would also like to mention the case of a man who met with an accident in 1914. He had his shoulder broken, his right hand broken, and the fingers of his left hand blown off. That man was paid £2 per week until the maximum amount of £400 was exhausted. He went to the Edinburgh infirmary and what little money he had soon disappeared in medical payments. He returned to Western Australia where he met with the injury, and up to the present time has been seeking employment without success. That man to-day is striving to work his passage back to Scotland on a steamer. I am just quoting these cases to show how those workers in the great gold mining industry who are unfortunate enough to meet with accidents are treated by the community. This kind of thing is going on day after day and, as Mr. Dodd has pointed out, the sum of £2 is totally inadequate when we remember that the cost of living is 40 per cent. dearer to-day than it was when the Act was passed. We have done nothing whatever in the direction of amending the Workers Compensation Act. Then there is the question of the definition of "worker." Men who are working on contract on the goldfields and who earn anything over £300 are not "workers" within the meaning of the Act. The employers naturally are desirous of continuing the contract system, and the men who accept that class of work are contracting themselves out of the provisions of the Workers Compensation Act. There is no effort at all being made to bring those men within the meaning of the Act. A man who is earning anything under £300 is a "worker" within the meaning of the Act, but let him earn anything over that amount and he is out of it altogether. The leader of the House should realise that it is essential that the Act should be amended, and I am rather surprised, knowing as I do the active interest taken in mining matters by the Minister for Mines, that there should be no refer-

ence whatever in the Governor's Speech to any proposal to amend the Workers' Compensation Act. Neither is it intended apparently to do anything in the direction of amending the Mines Regulation Act. A few years ago an honest effort was made to amend that statute in the interests of the health of the miners engaged in the industry, but nothing is now proposed, at any rate this does not appear in the programme of the Government. There is in the Governor's Speech a reference to a proposed amendment to the Mining Act, but no mention whatever is made about the Mines Regulation Act.

The Minister for Education: I think it is mentioned.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: No. It is a matter that should be dealt with as early as possible. Nothing can be done in the direction of improving the health of the miners until an amendment of the Mines Regulation Act is brought into force. Any amendment which will have the effect of improving the conditions under which the miners are working will tend to greater efficiency. I am pleased that it is proposed to introduce an amendment to the Factories Act this session. I desire to endorse the remarks made by Mr. Stewart when he dealt with the flotation of mining properties. It seems to me that Parliament should do something to safeguard mining interests in this State. We know what has taken place during the last six months on the goldfields, and I am prepared to say that after the boom fizzles out, it will take some years for Western Australia to retrieve her position. Company promoters were allowed to come along and take up salt bush or mulga flats without the semblance of a lode or reef on them and foist them on to an unsuspecting public. How is that going to do the mining industry any good? As a matter of fact it will do the mining industry in Western Australia a considerable amount of harm, and it will take the State years to live down what has taken place during the past five or six months, so far as the Eastern goldfields are concerned. I endorse the remarks made by Mr. Stewart. I certainly think the wild cat flotations should be dealt with by the Government and mining given a fair trial. I know it is a hard matter to control because nothing whatever should be done to retard the development of mining leases. I think, however, an effort should be made to safeguard the interests of the people who are prepared to put their money into mining investments in the State.

Hon. J. EWING (South-West) [5.10]: I desire to extend to those new members who have been elected to this House a cordial welcome, and at the same time to express regret at the loss of old friends who have been defeated by those members. The defeated gentlemen were very useful members in this House and we all regret that they are not here now, much as we appreciate the advent of their successors. I am pleased, however, that three old members have been

returned, Mr. Duffell, Mr. Kirwan, and Mr. Clarke.

Hon. J. Nicholson: What about me? Where do I come in?

Hon. J. EWING: I beg the hon. member's pardon for excluding him. I am delighted that my old friend and colleague Mr. Clarke succeeded in weathering the storm. It is gratifying indeed to think that after 18 years of faithful and efficient service the people of the South-West showed their appreciation by re-electing him. I am glad to know he has the confidence and the affection of the people of the South-West. It has been said at various times that the debate on the Address-in-reply is so much waste time and that we should abandon it and go straight to business. I do not hold that opinion. I feel that we would be the poorer if we had not heard the views of Mr. Dodd, for instance, on social questions, Sir Edward Wittenoom on education, and the views of other hon. members. The Minister for Education, I am sure, will be pleased indeed to answer the criticism of the hon. members who have contributed so much to the debate. With reference to the Governor's Speech, Mr. Cunningham has drawn attention to what appears to me also to be a most important paragraph in that Speech, the paragraph which appeals to the people to assist by their vigour, enterprise and goodwill to inaugurate a period of expansion. All would be well in Western Australia, and in fact throughout the world, if we had vigour, enterprise and goodwill. So far as Western Australia is concerned let us look at our mining, our pastoral, our agricultural, our timber and other industries, and ask whether or not vigour and enterprise are being shown in their development. I should say yes, and I think also that commercial men in Western Australia were never more keen than they are at the present time. Only one thing, however, is lacking—goodwill. We all remember the memorable occasion when the Armistice was declared and when rejoicing was taking place throughout the length and breadth of the world at the war having come to an end. There was goodwill apparent everywhere, a goodwill which was the outcome of the termination of the war, a terrible struggle which had been going on for some years. Everything then augured well for the future. We were all rejoicing because we were satisfied that peace and goodwill would exist amongst the people. That goodwill existed at that time. Why should it not exist now when we need it to overcome the difficulties which are facing us as the result of the war. We need goodwill to rehabilitate this great country of ours. Unfortunately, however, it does not exist.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: What is the reason?

Hon. J. EWING: I might quote "Peace hath her victories no less renowned than war." The victories of the war were most apparent, but the victories of peace appear to me to be somewhat nebulous at the present time. We hope, however, that the clouds

will pass by and that goodwill will exist amongst the people.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: Why does it not exist?

Hon. J. EWING: The period of reconstruction is almost as difficult as the period of war. During the war production was hampered and industries were brought to a standstill, and the whole of the ingenuity and energy of mankind was directed towards destruction. At the present time we have to re-construct our many industries, and place our people in the positions they occupied prior to the war. The process of reconstruction has brought about two evil elements—the profiteer and the extremist. The profiteer is a man who takes advantage of the position created by the war by selling to the people manufactured goods at prices which are abnormal. These goods, before reaching the hands of the people, pass through the intermediate man who must have his profit before the goods finally go to the worker, and it is almost impossible for the worker to live. We all realise that this is the outcome of the actions of those who have industries in the old country within their grasp. I do not think this applies so much to the retailer or to the small merchants in Western Australia, or, for that matter, in any other part of Australia. Now what have we done to meet the position? Legislation has been passed. In this House last session we passed a Prices Regulation Bill, but that has not overcome the difficulty and, in other parts of the Commonwealth and indeed throughout the world, the difficulty has not been overcome. It seems impossible by legislation to reduce the cost of living. Legislation may help in that direction, but it will not carry us to the stage where the poorer classes of the people will be able to procure the necessities of life which ought to be within their means. We therefore must look to other methods to overcome this difficulty. The high cost of living leads to increased wages being demanded and paid; industries become more difficult to control and carry on, and we cannot produce commodities at a price which will enable us to compete in the markets of the world. The only way to meet the position is to encourage all those people who have capital to expend to come to this State and invest it in our primary and secondary industries, and thereby produce sufficient of these necessary commodities to introduce the element of competition and thus lead to a reduction in prices.

Hon. J. Duffell: Greater confidence must exist than actually does exist to-day.

Hon. J. EWING: The old law of supply and demand will be the greatest factor in reducing the cost of living, just as it has been the greatest factor in years gone by. Unless we have production going on, and people competing one against another and thus reducing the prices of commodities, we can hope for no success. We must encourage people with money to come to Western Australia and invest it, giving them absolute security for their investments, and ensuring

that such conditions obtain industrially as will enable them to invest their money and get a fair reward for it. If we do this we shall soon have extra production, which in time will lead to a reduction in the cost of living, and will place the workers and the other people of this State in a relatively better position than they are in to-day. The extremist element is one that all people dread to see in existence. I think Russia is the great exemplification of the extremist element. After the Russian people had overcome what they considered to be an autocratic government, and when the Czar was dethroned and finally killed, a group of men, men who were working not in the interests of the world or in the interests of peace or on constitutional lines, took the government of the country into their own hands, and what did they do? They preached lawlessness and committed murders and atrocities, and overawed the people, and that is the position which has obtained in Russia ever since Czarism was overthrown.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: The people of Russia approved of that.

Hon. J. EWING: To my mind that is the position in Russia to-day. Those people have set an evil example to the world, and it will take years and years to overcome the difficulties and the troubles they have created. In Russia things are now changing somewhat. There is not so much confidence in those who have preached the gospel of discontent and the gospel of destruction, and the gospel of overawing the workers, and who have become the greatest autocratic power the world has ever known. There is more misery in Russia amongst those unfortunate people to-day than ever in the history of that great country.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: What is your authority for that statement?

Hon. J. EWING: We read much of the preaching of this extremist doctrine in England, in America, and in Australia, but I say thank God the Australian Labour party, of whom I have always thought very highly, are not associated with those extremists. I wish to read to the House the report of a speech made by the Labour Premier of New South Wales. It is a splendid thing to find in Australia a man who is willing and anxious to uphold constitutional government in the way Mr. Storey, by his utterances, assures us he intends to do.

Hon. E. H. Harris: He ought to be about due for expulsion by this time.

Hon. J. EWING: I am sure that this report will be highly edifying to members, because it shows what a splendid party the Australian Labour party is, provided it is guided by men of the calibre of the present Labour Premier of New South Wales. The report appeared in the "West Australian" of the 24th August, and reads—

In the course of a considered statement made to-night the Premier (Mr. Storey) emphatically rebuked the extremists of both the Trades and Labour Council and the I.W.W. section of Labour supporters

in this State. He said: "I have been reviewing various sensational reports relating to the go-slow policy outlined by Mr. Garden, the utterances of one Donald Grant in the Domain, and the endorsement by the A.L.P. of the British Labour Party's attitude respecting the war between Russia and Poland. Regarding the go-slow episode directed against deportations by the Commonwealth Government, these bear the impress of Mr. Garden, and they are the impress of foolishness, the mere braying of an ass. Mr. Garden knows quite well that the deportations right or wrong, are at an end, and that like Don Quixote, he is tilting at windmills. Shadow sparring is not in it with this valiant string of threats against something that does not exist. As to go slow decisions they are equally to be disregarded. Does Mr. Garden think for a moment that industrial men on piece-work, such as shearers, boilermakers, miners, and others, are going to reduce their incomes, just to accommodate the fancies of his disordered brain? I have great faith in the working man of Australia, and I don't think he will allow himself to be led astray by wilful and lawless schemes which, if carried to their logical conclusion, would bring the State down in ruin, with himself buried underneath. As to the wild and fantastic vapourings of Donald Grant, I repudiate them utterly, and I think it can be safely said also that they are the negation of the feeling of the Australian Labour party. Grant must have found prison a very snug and habitable place and it is quite evident that he wants to get back, and that in order to make quite sure that his friends shall not have the shadow of an excuse for getting him out a second time, he wants to qualify for permanent residence. I shall not put any difficulties in Mr. Grant's way if he desires to return. I have said again and again that I am an uncompromising constitutionalist. I believe in upholding constitutional government and I am convinced that in any British self-governing community the majority of the people can get all the reforms they want in a perfectly ordered way."

Hon. A. H. Pantton: I suppose you are aware that Garden is an ex-parson.

Hon. J. EWING: I do not know what he is.

Hon. A. H. Pantton: That accounts for it.

Hon. J. EWING: I am sure the leader of the House, the people of Australia, and I might add, the people of the world, will find these words most encouraging. If the Australian Labour party are going to follow those lines, I say long may they live. Opposed though I am to the Labour party in politics, I am not opposed to the Labour Premier's utterances which I have just read to the House. Those utterances are really fine, and bring nearer to realisation that goodwill which we are so often told is es-

essential for the establishment of the happiness and prosperity of our people. Touching the question of finance, it must be recognised that in the United Kingdom, notwithstanding the huge war expenditure incurred, a most wonderful recovery is being made. There is no doubt about the position so far as the British Government are concerned. They are making people pay from the profits made out of the war, and it is a fine thing that they are able to get at those profits. The result will be that the United Kingdom will soon be in the best position financially of any of the nations of the world. England has always been the hub of the universe, it has always been the country in which money was available to establish industries, not only in States like this but throughout the world. And to-day we see her making a marvellously rapid recovery, and members must know that when England is well, all is well with Western Australia. If we look to the Commonwealth of Australia, we find that the Federal Government, too, have been put to very considerable expenditure as an outcome of the war. Again and again I have stated on the public platform and I repeat it here, that it matters not what the cost of the war was, the people of Australia cheerfully found all the money necessary. And they would do so again should such another contingency arise. They are also quite willing to find all the money necessary for the repatriation and settlement of our soldiers on the land or in their ordinary avocations of life. It matters not whether 20 millions, 30 millions, 50 millions, or 100 millions of money is necessary, the people of Australia will make sacrifices to raise this money so that the soldiers who fought for us shall receive the best consideration and the best help we can give them. But while the people of Australia are willing to find all this money for these laudable purposes, they are not so willing to find money to meet the extravagances of the Commonwealth Government. The leader of the House knows well that the Commonwealth have established in the various States departments that are quite unnecessary. If the leader of the House uttered what is in his mind, he would tell us that the State could well carry out many of the activities which are now being undertaken by the Federal Government. There is no necessity whatever for all the duplication which has been introduced in regard to the Savings Bank, the sub-Treasury, and other things of that kind. Most of this expenditure could have been avoided and should have been avoided, and, if it had been avoided, Western Australia would have been in a far better position to-day. Positions that are quite unnecessary are being created by the Commonwealth and, so far as I can judge, the Federal Government are working as hard as they possibly can to usurp the functions of the State and do us injury. Not only is money being expended in this way and absolutely wasted, money which might be usefully employed by the Commonwealth or the

States, but the Federal Government are usurping our powers of taxation. The Treasurer knows that he has few avenues of taxation, and that everything the Federal Government can grasp, right down to the last pound and shilling, is being taken by them in order to find the necessary funds to carry on in the very extravagant manner to which I have referred. It seems to me that the Federal Government have made up their minds to force unification upon the people of Australia. I am totally opposed to unification. I wish to see State rights maintained. We want to govern ourselves as we are governing ourselves at present. In my opinion the Federal Government are putting all these difficulties in the way and taking from us all the money they can and usurping all our positions so that the States will, in a few years, become mendicant and will have to go cap in hand to the Federal Government and say, "Take us over." Thus by applying to the several States the methods they are adopting at the present time, they will compel the recognition of unification and may even bring it into operation quicker than we suspect. We should be alive to the situation. Not very long ago, the leader of this House made a very eloquent speech in which he pointed out the iniquities which Western Australia was suffering as a result of Federation. I thought the Minister would have proved one of our strong men in getting these wrongs righted, but he appears to have thought better of the matter, no doubt believing that compromise was the better part to play. But we look to men like him and to our Premier and to other leaders of public opinion here to see that our State rights are maintained and that it is made possible for Western Australia to develop her wonderful resources. If we are going to have unification, that means centralisation—and we know what centralisation means—and the development of this State will be very much slower than if we had the management of our own affairs. With regard to the public debt and the financial position of Western Australia, the figures are not very encouraging. At any rate, it is well that we should analyse them and that those who are conversant with finance—I do not pretend to be myself—should express their views when time and opportunity serve, so that we may see whether there is a solution of the difficulty. We hold varying opinions with regard to the development of the State, the means by which that should be done, the question of retrenchment, the question of borrowing; and it is well that hon. members should express their views in order that from the multitude of counsellors we may extract wisdom. The public debt in 1919 was 44 millions and there was a sinking fund of six millions, leaving a net debt of 37 millions. That represents an indebtedness per head of the population of Western Australia of £116. Every man, woman and child in Western Australia on the 30th June, 1919, owed £116. Comparing

that figure with the corresponding figures in other States, we find a great difference; and we wonder how that difference has occurred. The reply no doubt is quite apparent—want of population. If a State has a large population the debt per head will be less. But there is this point, that in other States loan moneys must have been spent in a much better way than here because that expenditure has attracted population to those States and has opened up industries and stimulated production.

Hon. J. Duffell: Immigration usually follows the money.

Hon. J. EWING: Quite so. Let us take New South Wales for instance. That State has borrowed enormously, and in the opinion of many people has not always expended the borrowed money judiciously. Far from it. I remember certain periods in the history of New South Wales—of which State I am a native—when the position was almost disastrous and when loan moneys were being thrown about in a most reckless manner. Yet the expenditure there must have been better than it has been here, because the debt per head shows that New South Wales is in an infinitely better position than Western Australia.

Hon. A. H. Panton: But New South Wales has no sinking fund.

Hon. J. EWING: I think New South Wales has a sinking fund of $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. At any rate, there is a sinking fund in Queensland. In any case, however, the existence of a sinking fund does not account for the difference. The figures of debt per head of population are as follows: Western Australia £116, Commonwealth £75, New South Wales £74, Victoria £54, South Australia £90, Queensland £91, Tasmania £69.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Would not increase of population bring our figure down?

Hon. J. EWING: Certainly; and that is the point on which I base my argument. If our loan moneys had been properly expended we would have had the population and the production necessary to reduce the debt per head. I am now going to refer to something which will be very interesting to the hon. member, and I am very glad that he is here to listen to it, because my views are totally opposed to his and I may be able to persuade him to change his opinions.

Hon. A. H. Panton: You never know your luck.

Hon. J. EWING: It will be wondered why with the buoyant revenue of this State, and with the prosperity of this State, which is apparent to everybody, the Government could not make both ends meet. I am not critical at all, and I think that before I have finished hon. members will say that I am stating the position with absolute fairness. We hope that the time will come when the revenue and expenditure will balance, or when there will even be an amount of revenue left over to reduce the deficit. Until that time comes, it will not

be well for Western Australia. Notwithstanding the buoyant revenue, the Government laboured under great difficulties last year. They lost £400,000 on the railways, and they had the influenza epidemic and also the disastrous shipping strike to contend against. In analysing the position, it should be said in fairness to the Government that their situation has been a very difficult one, and that after all there was not much possibility of improvement. While offering suggestions to the Administration, and expressing the desire that the future will be better than the past and that the Treasurer will be able to make revenue and expenditure balance, we must absolutely give Ministers credit for any difficulties that they were up against. The deficit is four millions, and something must be done to overcome it. Of course, we want economy. Everybody talks about economy. But if there is one thing that is wanted now, it is a considerable reduction in the number of public servants in this State. I am not going to touch upon the public service strike at all, because that is over and past. But I have said for many years that the public service is over-manned, and that with proper concentration we shall be able to do the work with one-third fewer men and be able to pay the remainder much better salaries. I know that some in the public service are of that opinion, and consider that positions are being created to bring people into the service—practically, it seems, to get rid of them. One finds men in the offices over-stepping one another and not doing efficient work. Taxation also will be necessary. We cannot do without further taxation. What that taxation is to be is for the Government to decide; no member of this House can bring forward a policy of taxation. At the same time, everyone must realise that in the position of this State additional taxation is necessary. The best form of taxation to my mind is income tax and I think that if the Government doubled the income tax to-day, it would not be a bad thing. We have to meet the situation. There is also a land tax, which the leader of the Opposition in another place says is the only way in which to raise revenue; but we must consider the farming community and the people who are developing our outlying lands.

Hon. T. Moore: What about those who hold land and are not developing it?

Hon. J. EWING: The fact is that we have to face taxation, and I hope the Government will be firm in this matter and follow the example of the old country. In the old country they know that they are in difficulties, and they recognise that the greatest good they can do the people is to get out of those difficulties as fast as possible; and that is the course that is being adopted at home. Let us do something in that direction, something to reduce the deficit which is growing yearly. One way of doing it, and I suppose it is really the only way, is to open up our

lands and to bring the best people we can get from the old country. Let them be brought here for nothing, if necessary. I would not charge them a penny. Let us repurchase estates for them, or let us clear land for them, and let us have secondary industries for them. The other evening Mr. Moore spoke at considerable length regarding secondary industries, and there was a great deal of truth in what he said. I hope the Government will act in the direction of establishing secondary industries, so that when we do bring people from the old country they can either be settled comfortably and well on the land or else find work in the secondary industries. Some say that we should have drastic retrenchment and drastic taxation and no borrowing. That is clearly the policy of some of the leading people of this State, of people who are looked up to by the community as men of high education and men who should know what is best in the interests of the country. For my part, I do not want any mark time policy in Western Australia. Unless the Government are able to borrow more money—and I believe they will realise that this is the right course to pursue—and to expend that money judiciously and well, there is not going to be any chance of progress for Western Australia. Some people say, "We cannot borrow more; it would be madness to borrow more; a borrowing policy would lead us headlong to bankruptcy." But I have known many occasions when a man was right up against it in some big manufacturing business or a pastoral proposition, and when, thanks to his being able to borrow money though practically at the time bankrupt, his opportunity came along and he was able to save the situation. That is why I am against a mark time policy, or a policy of drastic taxation, drastic retrenchment, and no borrowing. True, there is some justification for those who urge such a policy, when the position is analysed. The reckless and wasteful expenditure of loan money during the last 10 years in Western Australia has brought us pretty well to the position of marking time. According to the "Statistical Abstract" the position is that from 1910 to 1920 there were 21 millions borrowed—14 millions during the first period of five years, and seven millions during the second period of five years. That is a huge amount of money for a small population like ours; and we must bear in mind that men of high education, men who should be leaders of thought in this State, contend that we ought not to borrow any more, but should adopt drastic taxation and drastic retrenchment. I admit they have some justification for such a position, seeing that the expenditure of all that loan money has not brought the population to this State that it should have brought, and has not resulted in the progress that it should have effected. That, however, is the only justification, I think. In analysing the expenditure of that enormous amount of money, I never can find out the real position

with regard to State enterprises, how much of that money has been absorbed by the State enterprises.

The Minister for Education: About two millions.

Hon. J. EWING: The other day the amount was stated in this House at £1,800,000. Though I will not for a moment contradict the Minister, I am perfectly satisfied that if the accounts were closely examined the amount would be found to be nearer three or four millions. These things grow and grow, and the expenditure grows, and money is spent and is not charged up to capital account. A full investigation would disclose, I think, that instead of about two millions having been spent on State enterprises, the true amount is about four millions. Now, have the State enterprises paid?

Hon. A. H. Panton: Reasonably.

Hon. J. EWING: There is an absolute loss resulting from them to the State to-day. If that money, or say two or three millions, had been expended in opening up our North-West or our South-West, we would have had some return from it. That money might as well have been thrown on the floor of this Chamber and left there for ten years.

Hon. A. H. Panton: It would have been safe there.

Hon. T. Moore: Which of the State enterprises do not pay?

Hon. J. EWING: Taking them altogether, there is an absolute loss. There is an absolute loss to this State from the operation of those enterprises. I am not prepared to say how much it is, but it is a huge loss. It has been stated here by the leader of the House, and it has been admitted by the Premier and by the Minister for Works, the latter being the Minister in charge of State enterprises, that although a huge amount of loan money has been expended on those undertakings, there is no apparent advantage from them to the State of Western Australia and that the conditions of the workers in these industries and the payment they receive is no better than they would be receiving in private employment. We have the laws of the land to control the private employer of labour and direct what payment he shall make, and what conditions he shall provide. If he does not comply with the laws, his industry may be closed down. Therefore, to bring in this unfair competition with the people's money against the man who desires to develop the State with his own money, is to my mind appalling.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: Were it not for the State steamships and the tramways we would be very much worse off than we are.

Hon. J. EWING: I am talking, not about the tramways and the railways, but about the new State enterprises provided by the expenditure of loan moneys during recent years. These new enterprises are quite unnecessary. We have become accustomed to the State ownership of tramways and railways, and I am not going to advocate any change in that respect; but it is wrong,

economically and in principle, to interfere with private enterprise. Parliament and the people have unlimited power to see that proper conditions are maintained in private industry, and proper wages paid. Therefore, there is no justification for bringing the people's money into competition with private enterprise. I am urging this in an endeavour to persuade Mr. Panton to agree with my ideas. He is fast coming to my way of thinking, because he is in a responsible position and he knows that Western Australia has a right to conserve her own interests. The representatives of Labour amongst us in the House are very excellent gentlemen in their private views and conduct, but are not quite so excellent in their political views. I think that if a plebiscite were taken the people of Western Australia would agree to do away with State enterprise and to expend the money on the true development of the State.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Would you apply that to the railways?

Hon. J. EWING: No, for the reason that State railways have been established ever since Responsible Government, and we have become accustomed to their State ownership; but to seek further avenues by which to injure the people and expend their money foolishly is wrong.

Hon. A. H. Panton: But the railways are losing money.

Hon. J. EWING: Yes, £400,000 a year. But it is not very long since the railways were paying splendidly.

Hon. T. Moore: And they will again.

Hon. J. EWING: The hon. member knows that they will pay again when the timber industry comes into its own, when shipping difficulties are overcome and our harbours are open to the world. Then the railways will again pay handsomely.

Hon. T. Moore: And when they get some good coal.

Hon. J. EWING: I will touch upon coal presently. The question continually before my mind is as to what the policy of the present Government may be.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: The development of State enterprises.

Hon. J. EWING: I am one of the greatest friends the Government have. I admire the optimism of the Premier and the excellent manner in which he is conducting the affairs of the State. He is doing more good for Western Australia than has any other Premier for many years past. In my opinion Mr. Mitchell is following on the lines of the late Lord Forrest.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: He is doing nothing whatever.

Hon. J. EWING: The hon. member need only go down the South-West to see what the Premier is doing there. I desire to express appreciation of the Premier's work before I go on to say what I have to say. On principle the present Government are opposed to State enterprises.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: Why do they not sell them?

Hon. J. EWING: They told the electors they would close them down or, alternatively, sell them. They have neither sold them nor closed them down—indeed they have extended them. The Minister for Works, a most efficient Minister, has purchased the Holyoake sawmills for £80,000 and that, too, without parliamentary authority. I do not say that the purchase was a bad one, but in principle at least it is bad, because it means extending the State enterprises, to which the Minister is, by pledge, opposed.

Hon. A. H. Panton: Is he a good judge of a bargain?

Hon. J. EWING: He is a good judge, and he has secured a good bargain. If he intends to make permanent the State enterprises, then he is right; but if he upholds the policy on which he was elected he should not add to the State enterprises. In His Excellency's opening speech the Government forecasted the appointment of a Commissioner to take over the trading concerns, the excuse given being that, although the Government are not in favour of State enterprises, yet they desire to see them well run, and managed on profitable business lines. That is all very well, but I do not think there is in the State a man who could take charge of those various trading concerns and look after them. Thank the Lord, we have not a State coal mine among them!

Hon. A. H. Panton: But we soon will have.

Hon. J. EWING: Not while I can do anything to stop it. I sincerely hope that Parliament is not going to endorse the policy of appointing a Commissioner to run the State trading concerns and make them pay. The direction in which the Government should proceed is to get rid of the State trading concerns as fast as they can.

Hon. A. H. Panton: But they dare not.

Hon. J. EWING: They should test the feeling of the House. The Government are opposed to State enterprise. A French syndicate offered to buy the sawmills, one of which was afterwards burnt down. It looked like a judgment upon the Government for their neglect to sell the mills.

The Minister for Education: They had not the opportunity.

Hon. J. EWING: At all events, Parliament was not consulted. Of course, one cannot say that Parliament would have agreed to the sale of those mills. Personally I think they should be sold. If Parliament endorses the appointment of the Commissioner, the State enterprises will thereby be made permanent. I do not know whether that is the wish of the Government, but it is not my wish, and when the Bill comes before us I will vote against it on principle, because I think it is wrong that Government money should be used in competition with money furnished by private enterprise. That is all I have to say in regard to State enterprises. I hope it clearly places before members the views I hold. Those views may be unpopular in the province which I represent, but I believe I could take any platform in that pro-

vince and persuade the people of the justice of my views.

Hon. T. Moore: A lot of the people down there have not votes.

Hon. J. EWING: Well, let us give them votes. In that, of course, I am speaking personally, and not on a question of policy. I am not going to touch on the wheat question, except to say that I appreciate very highly the work of the Honorary Minister. He is a true friend of the farmers, and all that he has done and is doing, or is likely to do, is and will be in the interests of the farmers.

Hon. T. Moore: What about the consumers?

Hon. J. EWING: I do not think any one could have worked harder for the farmers than has Mr. Baxter. However, I read in the newspaper the other day a certain statement by the Prime Minister. We have been told that Western Australia had not entered into a contract to sell wheat at 7s. 8d. to New South Wales. I believe that is so, because the leader of the House has said it and so, too, has Mr. Baxter. Yet it seems that it matters not what the Government of the State, or the Minister handling the wheat, may say, the position is totally different from what we have been led to believe. On the 25th August, in the House of Representatives, Mr. Gibson asked about the position of Western Australia in regard to wheat for New South Wales, and the Prime Minister in reply said that neither Western Australia nor any other State had agreed to supply any specific quantity or proportion of the requirements of New South Wales, that the supplies for that State would probably not be drawn from Western Australia but that, under the pooling system, it was immaterial which State supplied wheat or flour on account of a specific contract made by the Australian Wheat Board, that the sales to New South Wales and other States were being regarded as over-seas sales and therefore the proceeds would be pooled so that the sales would be on account of all the pooling States. Apparently that settles the question, leaving nothing further to be said. The wheat pool, sitting in Melbourne, have decided what the policy is and what the sales shall be, and that is the end of it. Seemingly it does not matter whether we have, or have not, signed; the whole of the wheat is pooled, and so we are selling wheat at 7s. 8d. to New South Wales. I bring this forward so that the Minister may, if he can, correct the impression I have. In my opinion there is nothing to be said, and the only alternative our farmers have is to leave the pool, like so many dissatisfied directors of a business concern.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: That would be direct action.

Hon. J. EWING: No, it would be merely a fair business proposition. That appears to me to be the position in regard to the pool. Western Australia has nothing whatever to say, and her only remedy is to leave the pool. I should like to say a few words with re-

gard to the North-West. I do not know anything of that part of the State; it is the only portion that I have not yet visited. I have been throughout the length and breadth of Western Australia in other directions and I claim to know a great deal of the potentialities of the State, but I have never had the pleasure of going to the North-West or taking part in a trip there. I read with pleasure the statement of the Leader of the House on his return to Perth on the occasion of his visit to the North-West, and it struck me from what he said that if there is a Heaven upon earth it lies in the North-West. I have had conversations with Mr. Miles, Sir Edward Wittenoom, Mr. Holmes, Mr. Rose, and many other of my friends who are conversant with the conditions of the North-West, and they all endorse what the Leader of the House has said. Therefore, there must be some truth in it. I only hope that the good work Mr. Miles is carrying out will be continued. It is not often that an hon. member gets any credit for anything he does. In fact, we usually get more kicks than halfpence for what we do. I do think, however, that members of this House, and the people of this State, and especially those in the North-West must admire the splendid work of the hon. member who has spared neither time, money nor energy, supported by Mr. Holmes and Sir Edward Wittenoom, in putting forward the claims of that portion of Western Australia. In the Eastern States Mr. Miles also did a great deal in putting forward the claims for the great projected railway. I hope that all that has been said about the North-West is true. If in my place here I can do anything to assist these gentlemen to develop that great territory I shall be only too pleased to do it. I will indeed support anything that I think is for the good of Western Australia. I feel it would be wrong of me to ignore the South-West portion of Western Australia. I may say that I appreciate the work that has been done by the Government in the South-West. We have an optimistic Premier. We all know the name that is applied to him and it is a good name. I will not mention it here. The Premier is an enthusiast, and he believes in the settlement of people on the land. He believes also in Western Australia and in her resources, and is giving evidence of that belief by the work he is doing in the South-West. A large number of properties have been repurchased there and cut up, and soldiers have been successfully settled there. When a former Government was in power—the Government prior to the present one—it was often stated by some Ministers that they could not see that any returned soldiers were going to settle on the land. Every time I heard that it grated on me. By that expression Ministers were damping the ardour of returned soldiers. The Premier has shown his belief in the lands of the South-West, and has gone a long way towards opening them up. The result is that he now cannot find enough land for the men

who want it. If we can get our lands there partly cleared and improved, and bring about a good system of immigration, there should be no greater State in the Commonwealth than Western Australia. The lands in that portion of the State are splendid. When the Prince was here I happened to come up in the train with some of the Press representatives, who were travelling with His Royal Highness. One of them said to me when we were close to Pinjarra, "For what reason is this land not cleared and improved? I have seen land in Victoria and New South Wales not any better than this bringing £100 an acre."

Hon. A. J. H. Saw: You did not say it was want of drainage did you?

Hon. J. EWING: He also said, "I think I will leave my position and settle on this beautiful land, which is so cheap."

Hon. J. W. Hickey: But he did not.

Hon. J. EWING: He may still be considering it. He could not believe it. He said, "You have the greatest undeveloped territory I have seen since I have been travelling with the Prince." Although we have been developing the South-West for some years and encouraging the dairying industry and others in that part of the State, yet we are sending out of the State £1,500,000 to buy food-stuffs that could be produced within the State. The South-West is particularly suited for such products as butter, ham, bacon, eggs, potatoes, and other produce of the kind. In 1910, however, we imported £600,000 worth of these products, and in 1919 we imported as much as £686,000 worth. Although, therefore, we had opened up the South-West and things appeared to be progressing we were importing £80,000 worth of products in 1919, that could have been grown in this State, more than we imported in 1910. I do not know why that is.

Hon. J. E. Dodd: The costs are very much greater to-day.

Hon. J. EWING: The fact remains that this very great increase in imports in these directions has taken place.

Hon. A. H. Panton: It is cheaper to import eggs than to feed hens in Western Australia.

Hon. J. EWING: Butter has gone up in price, and prices generally are very much better for those things which our farmers should be able to produce. The dairying industry is going ahead. The South-West is a magnificent district for potatoes. If hon. members went to Burrakup they would see what could be done there. When I surveyed that area some eight or nine years ago it was merely a wilderness, but to-day it has been subdivided and contains one of the most flourishing communities in Western Australia. All this has been done out of potato growing. The people there have almost everything that life can give them in the way of luxuries, and they paid a high price for their land when they took it up. In my opinion we have plenty of Burrakups

in Western Australia. Let us go ahead and see that the other portions of the State are developed along the same lines.

Hon. F. A. Baglin: What is wrong with Busselton?

Hon. J. EWING: The most beautiful district in Western Australia is going shortly to be opened up by the Margaret River railway, according to the statement made by the Premier. There is one very important question I should like to bring before hon. members, and particularly the leader of the House, and that is in connection with the fruit industry. At a later date I intend to make this the subject of a motion. The position of our fruit growers is a very serious one. I am not thoroughly conversant with the subject at present, but it has been brought under my notice by men who have been connected with the industry for 15 or 20 years, and whose whole families are working in it, that they have been able to get nothing out of it for many years past. It is absolutely unfair that any community should work under such conditions as these. The war was responsible for many embargoes being placed upon the products of Western Australia, but I do not think at present there is any embargo placed upon any of these products except fruit. The fruitgrowers of Bridgetown and the South-West are labouring under great disabilities. They have to clear their land at great expense. They have to put in their trees, cultivate the lands and garner the fruit, pack it and send it away. But for all this they get a very poor return. The fruit-grower, who sends his fruit to England, receives in the gross £1 0s. 10d. per case, according to the price fixed by the British Government. Evidently the desire of the British Government is to give the people of England cheap fruit and cheap food. One cannot imagine that this restriction is imposed for any other purpose than that. The cost of sending fruit to England from Western Australia, including shipping charges, freights, insurance, etc., is something like 63 and two-thirds per cent. of the total returns of £1 0s. 10d. The growers have to do all the work that I have indicated, and they get a return of 33 and one-third per cent. of the selling price of their fruit. I am sure that the people in Western Australia, now engaged in fruit growing, are getting under 5s. a case for the products of their labour. I am not going exhaustively into the question now because I have not a full grasp of all the details of it, yet I feel it my duty to place the matter before the House, and especially before the Leader of the House, in the hope that it will be brought directly before the Government so that something may be done to assist these people. The growers are not getting a fair deal. Although the fruit gets to the Old Country and is sold there at the price I have stated, it is subsequently sold not as a case of fruit, apples for instance, but as a case of mixed fruit. A case is broken and some of the

fruit is put in with other fruit, and it is all sold as mixed fruit and in that form brings enormous prices. I understand from reliable sources that some of this fruit is sold in Norway, Sweden, and other parts of Europe at as high a price as £3 a case. When other people are able to get the full value of the article that is grown in Western Australia why should not the grower also get full value for it? Why should he have to do all his work and spend years of his life in developing the industry and get a return of only 5s. a case, when other people are able to make enormous profits out of the industry in other parts of the world to the disadvantage of the grower here?

Hon. F. A. Baglin: What is wrong with the State handling the fruit and distributing it?

Hon. J. EWING: I do not believe in that. All these things can be judiciously handled by private people. I am sure the leader of the House will give some satisfactory answer to the position I have outlined. If the statements that have been made to me are true—and I have had them verified in writing by men who have been in the industry for years—then it is time the Government stepped in and relieved the position. If it is correct that people here, who have borne the heat and burden of the day at Mt. Barker, Busselton, and other fruit-growing centres, are not getting proper returns for their labour then it is a most unfair position.

Mr. Hickey interjected.

Hon. J. EWING: I did not hear the hon. member.

The PRESIDENT: The hon. member need not reply to interjections.

Hon. J. EWING: I wish to deal with a matter of very great interest to this State, and that is coal. I suppose I have been credited in years gone by with being overzealous in respect to this great industry.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. EWING: When we adjourned for tea I was touching upon the important industry, that of coal mining. I have been connected with it for many years, 22 years in fact, ever since its infancy, and I claim therefore to have some knowledge of it. In the early days it was difficult, well-nigh impossible, to advance the interests of the industry and thereby the interests of the State. For many years the coal was condemned by the Railway Department and those in authority went so far as to attempt to close down the industry. In fact, it was suggested by a responsible person that each miner should be given the sum of £500 and be sent on the land. These are things that we think of now because in years to come there may be other industries in a similar position, and which may be inadvertently treated in a similar manner. What is the result to-day? After 15 or 20 years of hard work the people of the

State have become convinced of the value of the Collie coal industry. We have arrived at that stage when we find it in an unassailable position. It is interesting to wonder what is the cause of this. The great war which has been so disastrous and which has done so much evil, has been a blessing to this industry, because those who were against the industry and said that certain work could not be done with it, for instance, that the trains could not be run to Kalgoorlie on Collie coal, that time-tables could not be maintained if this coal were used, are now convinced that they were wrong. During the progress of the war those people were obliged to depend on the product from Collie, and the more they had to depend upon it the more established the industry became. While we all regret the war, as has already been said, some good has come out of it in many directions. This is one of the directions in which Western Australia has vastly benefited. The industry is to-day in a flourishing condition, there are several mines operating, and the State is using practically all Collie coal for its various requirements, and those who use the coal are more than satisfied with it. Let us pause and think what might have happened to the State during the disastrous period we have passed through, but for this industry. The industry has progressed very rapidly during the last five or ten years. The value of the product has gone up, and Newcastle coal is not brought to the State in the same large quantities as was the case before. The people are satisfied that Collie coal is a good fuel. It is a fuel similar to the coals which are found in other parts of the world, and which are thought very highly of. The development of the industry is an evidence of the faith that the people of Collie, the pioneers of Collie, had in the industry. If they had lost heart and had allowed themselves to be rebuffed, Western Australia generally would have been in a parlous state to-day. They can thank God that the industry lived and that it has advanced to the stage in which we find it to-day. The advance has not been very rapid, but it is going on steadily, and it augurs well for the expansion of trade. In 1915 the quantity of coal raised was 292,000 tons, of a value of £137,000, and in 1920, estimating it on the quantity which has so far been raised this year, the total will be 400,000 tons, of a value of £295,000, or an increase of £140,000. If anyone had suggested in 1915 that the progress would have been so marked he would certainly not have been believed. The coal is now used almost exclusively by the Railway Department, and that seems to be evidence that the management of the railways in the future will be very different from what it has been in the past. I do not desire to take advantage of my position in this House to criticise unduly those who were formerly associated with the railways, but I did find it necessary years ago to offer some adverse criticism, and I did so fearlessly. Those people whom I criticised, however, have now left the service, and I do not

desire to say anything further in connection with the railways and the use of Collie coal, except that the department are fully seized of value of the industry and will give it a fair deal. In fact, I am satisfied that they cannot carry on the affairs of the State without this coal. I shudder to think what the Railway Department would be paying for Newcastle coal to-day if we had not this industry at Collie. If we study statistics and look at the price that coal is fetching in other parts of the world, £5, £6, or even £8 a ton, we cannot but come to the conclusion that we are very fortunate indeed in having the industry so close to our doors, and being able to provide a fuel which I unhesitatingly say is the cheapest in the world. The bunkering industry was considerably curtailed during the war, but I am pleased to say that that is going ahead rapidly again. I feel sure, from the experience I had in England and the knowledge I have been able to gain, that the time is not far distant when we shall create from this fuel an article which will be perfectly satisfactory from an export point of view. When that time arrives we shall have a Newcastle-on-Tyne at Collie, and instead of 4,000 or 5,000 people there, we shall see a community of between 400,000 and 500,000 people. We shall be able to export a coal which will be equal to that now being imported from the Eastern States, and we shall establish a position from which we shall never look back. While on the subject of the coal industry I desire also to refer to a matter which caused me some anxiety during the recess—I refer to the leasing of a portion of the Yampi Sound iron deposits by the Queensland Government. That Government have secured an option over a portion of the Yampi Sound from Mr. Thomson. I suppose Mr. Thomson is perfectly right in doing the best he can for himself, but Western Australia has been somewhat lax in not securing these deposits for its own State. Mr. Thomson went to Queensland and gave an option over some of the area he holds at Yampi Sound to the Queensland Government, and Mr. Jones, the Minister for Mines in Queensland, came to Western Australia to consult with the Minister for Mines here in connection with the establishment of trade between the Bowen coalfields of Queensland and Yampi Sound. No statement has been made by the Minister for Mines in Western Australia in regard to what took place between himself and the Queensland representative, but Mr. Jones went so far as to say, if my memory serves me correctly, that he expected to establish an enormous trade in Bowen coal by having a depot at Yampi Sound and supplying the Queensland article to surrounding countries and other parts of the world. Mr. Jones led us to infer that the coal from Bowen would take the place of Newcastle coal, and that it would also become a keen competitor of Collie coal. It may be said that I am parochial in this matter, but I am going to guard the in-

terests of the people of Collie. I hope the leader of the House will tell us when he speaks on the Address-in-reply what the transactions were between the two Ministers for Mines, and how far the Government of this State have gone, and also how far the great industry that I have the honour to represent is likely to be affected. This is a matter of great importance to me. I did feel constrained to write to the newspapers on the subject, but I came to the conclusion that it was no use writing because if it had been regarded by the Press of sufficient importance they would have interviewed me on the matter. I have waited patiently day after day, week after week, month after month, to see whether the Minister for Mines here would make any statement in regard to what took place between himself and Mr. Jones. The matter may be confidential, but I hope that there will be some reply forthcoming to the questions I have asked. Mr. Moore, in speaking the other evening, pleased me, and I am sure he pleased the House, with his remarks in connection with the timber industry. This, too, is a matter of great interest to me. Mr. Moore spoke fluently and well in connection with the industry, and I was pleased to note that he was so mindful of the interests of the State that the timber should be conserved and that regeneration should take place. The hon. member was not here when the Forest Bill was before the House. If he had been he probably would have objected to some of its provisions, but we who were here did what we thought was best, especially in the direction of keeping the forest open for sleeper hewers. I hope now the hon. member will extend all the sympathy and help that he can to Mr. Lane-Poole, the Conservator, to enable him to regenerate the forests, and thereby keep them going for posterity. The timber in that portion of the district that I represent is limited in extent, and it requires a very strong hand to see that no injustice is done and to see that the forest is consistently cut, and that regeneration is taking place. I next desire to refer to the question of prospecting for oil. It has been said publicly, and in bulletins issued by the Geological Department, that oil is not likely to be found in Western Australia. There are many people here who desire to prospect for oil, but the difficulties are great, and especially in the direction of getting permits by which they can carry out their desires. I myself can tell the House that a permit has for some time past been sought by certain prospecting parties at Collie. They have considerable money available, and they are willing to take all risk. In fact, they say they only want the right to investigate this question, and they guarantee to produce oil in great quantities. Unfortunately circumlocution is in the way. There is a certain amount of delay which in my opinion should not take place. Those people at Collie should be given the opportunity to carry out the work they desire to perform. I do not want to refer to the question of gold mining, except to express my gratification at

the remarks made by Mr. Stewart when he handled the question of the flotation of companies. Mr. Stewart pointed out more clearly than I can the evils which exist to-day. It is absolutely necessary to safeguard the interests of investors. The kite-flying and booming which has been taking place cannot be permitted to go on. Nothing but disaster can follow, and it will take the State many years to recover its position. The suggestion made by Mr. Stewart that mining engineers should report and take the responsibility of stating whether a proposition should be placed before the public or not, is an excellent one. Most of the big industrial flotations always have expert opinion and, if expert opinion is unfavourable, the concern is not floated. Not so with gold mining. All sorts of wild booms take place. Men rush to and fro to grasp the shadow and, if the money subscribed is not earmarked for developmental purposes, it goes into the hands of the promoters.

The Minister for Education: What about the South-West gold mining?

Hon. J. EWING: I am interested in that.

The Minister for Education: You are one of the promoters.

Hon. J. EWING: I am not a promoter because it has not yet been promoted. If there is anything good in the South-West, the public will soon know of it. They will not know before it is there, and it will not be placed before them in any tangible form unless it is worthy of their consideration. I only hope that the Government will recognise the advantages of a properly sustained immigration policy and the opening up of our primary and secondary industries. I believe they will recognise the value of the assets of this State which, if properly developed on business lines, will bring prosperity to Western Australia. I do not believe that any one of the States of the Commonwealth, not even Queensland with all its great potentialities—

Hon. J. W. Hickey: And fine Government.

Hon. J. EWING: I do not believe that even Queensland is to be compared with Western Australia and its possibilities. I emphasise that the Government must get away from this policy of State enterprise and must give the utmost consideration and the utmost encouragement to those who desire to invest money for the development of this State. There are not thousands, but hundreds of thousands of pounds available for investment in Australia, and particularly Western Australia, if investors are absolutely assured that there will be no Government interference, and that industrial conditions will be satisfactory. I know that woollen mills are to be started and I know that hundreds of other avenues of production will be the lot of Western Australia if this policy is carried out in the future.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON (Metropolitan) [7.47]: After the very exhaustive and thorough speech so ably delivered by Mr. Ewing, I feel that in conjunction with the speeches of other members, practically every topic in His

Excellency's Speech has been thoroughly debated. Other subjects of interest have also been examined and recommendations have been made which, owing to the earnestness and fervour with which they have been delivered, will appeal to members of the Government. I am sure that where the Government think wrongs exist, they will be rectified so far as lies in their power. In reading the Speech before us, I am reminded, because of the optimistic words contained in it, of certain words which were uttered by the Premier when introducing his budget in October last. The Premier said—

I do not propose to devote much time to the past. The past cannot be retrieved, but the future is ours.

Every member will recognise that, in the Governor's Speech, very little indeed has been said with regard to the past. At the time those words were pronounced by the Premier, he was looking far into the future and, when I recall his words, they bring to mind recollections of an article I read some time ago, an article written by a man who had been asked to write an essay on any subject or theme he cared to select. The man pondered over the matter for some days and at last emerged from his quandary by writing on a theme which he entitled "The Citizen of Three Worlds." The three worlds to which he referred were the past, the present and the future; in other words, yesterday, to-day and to-morrow. With regard to the world of yesterday, he likened that unto the kingdom of memory. The world of to-day he found to be synonymous with the kingdom of reality, and the world of to-morrow he likened to the world of imagination—three very fine worlds indeed for a citizen to live in. These are the worlds which we all occupy. We have all lived through them and it was interesting to follow the description of those three kingdoms given by this essayist. With regard to the world of the past, the kingdom of memory, this essayist, contrary to the position taken up by the Premier, found a certain amount of pleasure in the past. He was reminiscent. He depicted the enchantment of the past; he showed it to be a perfect realm of wonder. I fancy that essayist had not encountered the troubles of our present Government. He had obviously never known a Government with a deficit such as ours; otherwise I feel sure he would have found his task a much more difficult one and would have endeavoured to give some other explanation than that which he did give regarding the past. I think the Premier and every member of Parliament can at least glean a great deal of knowledge from the happenings of the past, and seek to lay out their actions in such a way as to benefit by past experiences, and that in the present and so far as the future is concerned they will endeavour to rectify any errors committed in the past. In the Governor's Speech something at least might have been said with regard to the civil service. I do not wish to dwell on this subject. Hon. members have

not done so but as a metropolitan member, it was my privilege and the privilege of other hon. members who were likewise interested to take some hand with regard to the dispute between the Government and the civil service. There is no one but regrets the fact that such action as took place did happen. I recognise from my own knowledge of the circumstances that the civil service as a body showed most commendable patience up to the point of that most unfortunate occurrence. They were more than patient and I feel that they were driven as a last resort to take the unfortunate step they did take. When they were promised the board which was promised by the Government, the very least they could have done was to return to work then. Fortunately, this is now a thing of the past and whatever stain has been left on the service, I hope can be eradicated, because the Western Australian civil service stands high amongst the civil services of this great Commonwealth. I hope such a happening will never again occur in the history of our civil service. The essayist I mentioned went on to deal with the present, the kingdom of reality. He dealt with things as they are and did not seek to peer into the future too closely at that stage, but he found that sometimes the things of to-day were disagreeable and, on this point, probably the essayist and the Premier might be to a certain extent in agreement. It is undoubtedly a very disagreeable and a very worrying thing to have the consciousness of a very big deficit which the Government are trying to wipe from the side of the ledger on which it appears. In dealing with the future or the kingdom of imagination, the writer pointed out that the beauty of the future was the glory of its vagueness. It gives room for conjectures, visions, and fancies. I feel convinced that the Premier, when he uttered those words in October, 1919, had visions that the deficit was going to be wiped out, or that it was going to be more effectually reduced.

The Minister for Education: No, he told you what the deficit would be.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: He portrayed certain visions. He peered into the future and he had greater and brighter hopes than have actually been realised. He had no doubt that within the next few years there would be an overflowing Treasury, but we shall leave the future to take care of itself. The future will show exactly what will happen. But what do we find to-day? Notwithstanding the bright hopes held out for us, the deficit is still going up.

The Minister for Education: No, it is lower.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It has gone up.

The Minister for Education: It is lower than the estimate.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: But it is still going up. It is not going down. One would like to see it going down. It is going up just like the cost of living which, we are told, is also going up.

Hon. A. H. Panton: That is not going up!

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: That is news to me. I was under the impression that the cost of living was going up. I would like to have the assurance of Mr. Panton that such is the case. I shall be able to convey the information to a source where it will be appreciated. But at any rate it looks as if everything is going up. The only direction in which there is any prospect of going down is the hours of labour. This position would be distinctly humorous were it not so serious. Although I take the opportunity of pointing this out, I desire to make it clear that I am in no way an advocate of unfair working hours or conditions. I never have been. But I recognise there is a very great responsibility on every citizen of the State, whether he or she be an employer or an employee, to do all he or she can to help forward the State. When contentions are raised, as I see them raised even in to-day's newspaper, that one man can produce as much in eight hours as another in nine, I consider it is highly illogical. Although it might be done for a little time, it cannot be done for long.

Hon. A. H. Panton: It depends upon the men.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Government themselves a little time ago, in a certain branch of the Railway Department, set a very bad example indeed.

Hon. T. Moore: It is a matter of opinion.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Quite so. We are all here to help forward the State, whether we are employers or employees. As citizens we all have an interest in the welfare of the State. We are all partners in the State, and we have a duty to perform to the State. As true citizens we ought to do the best we possibly can, doing it of course under fair conditions. I am not in favour of unfair conditions such as subsisted many years ago. Those conditions we wish to see obliterated. But when we find the number of days on which a man is employed to be only five per week instead of six, we must recognise that that cannot be for the benefit of either the employee or the employer. I do not think idleness on one working day of the week is wise. It is not good in the interests of the worker, and it is not good in the interests of the employer. We must recognise the force of the old maxim with regard to idle hands. I recognise that many men, having the Saturday off, will utilise it to the full, and do good with it; but there are others to whom, unfortunately, an idle Saturday is a temptation to find convivial company.

Hon. A. H. Panton: To go to the races.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, to go to places where money is wasted; so that, instead of the wife and family receiving the benefit of the earnings for the welfare of the household, the money is squandered and wasted. I pay my tribute to the working men generally of Western Australia; but there are exceptions, and for the benefit of those exceptions I think it is only right that we should strive to prevent the risk of idleness

of creating backsliders. Just in the same way as the temperance party seek to reform the drunkard, and the man who is inclined to stray from the path of temperance, so I consider the men to whom I refer have a just claim on their fellow workers, to see that they do not lapse; and they are likely to lapse on an idle day during the working week. I do not advocate unfair working hours, but I advocate that every man should look at the matter from a wise standpoint. As citizens we have to consider the financial position of our State. We cannot say that a reduced number of working hours, working hours reduced below what is a fair level, is not going to result in a reduction of our productive power. Looking at the matter from a debtor and creditor standpoint, it must be recognised that with reduced working hours we shall go back and our deficit, instead of being exchanged for an overflowing treasury, as the Premier hopes in his optimism, will continue to grow. In the interests, therefore, of the State as a whole, we should all use our best endeavours towards increasing the production of the State, so as to bring Western Australia out of its present unfortunate financial position. Otherwise there can be only one result, an inevitable result which will be disastrous to every man in the country. We all want to see Australia as a whole become not only a prosperous country but a populous country. Turning to the Governor's speech, I see no suggestion for a remedy for the present state of affairs. Previously we had been encouraged with a suggestion that something would be done to increase production and to increase population. Mr. Panton, Mr. Ewing, and other members have drawn attention to the fact that there is a hope of our getting our deficit reduced by increased population. Many speeches have been made in this direction, and at first sight they are most encouraging. I myself fell into the way of thinking on the same lines. It was only on reflection I found that probably I was wrong. The Speech states that a vigorous policy of immigration has been initiated. That is obviously for the purpose of increasing the population, with the ultimate object of reducing our indebtedness. But we must see that it is going to take a very long time indeed if anything appreciable is to result from all the population we can bring in by immigration, even with the aid of the natural increase. Take our population at 330,000, as it is at present, and estimate how long it will take to bring 330,000 immigrants here. If we can get even 1,000 per month, that will mean only 12,000 per annum; and members can calculate how long it will take at that rate before we get 330,000. In the meantime our obligations would still be increasing—not lessening by any means. So that the prospect of reducing our State debt by means of increased population is not so bright as at first it seems. True, increased population will be a help; but it will take too long

to accomplish that which we wish. If we get in another 330,000 people we shall be helping to reduce the debt by one-half. That is not sufficient, and therefore we must find some means whereby more can be done. I will leave that to the Government, because I do not propose to go into the subject tonight. However, I do agree with the policy of the Government—I will say this much tonight—in prosecuting a vigorous policy of immigration. I recognise that population is needed for many things—amongst them defence, the development of our vacant lands, the increase of our productive power and the consequent gradual reduction of our debt. As regards the question of population, I should like to draw attention to a speech delivered by Mr. Knibbs, the Commonwealth Statistician, during June last year in Sydney. The speech is decidedly illuminating, and I propose to read a short summary of it, telegraphed here, which appeared in the "West Australian" of the 6th June 1919—

In the course of an interesting address at a luncheon held by the Million Club to celebrate the attainment by the Commonwealth of a population of five millions, Mr. G. H. Knibbs, the Commonwealth Statistician, said, "If the population of Australia continues to increase at the present rate, there will be in the year 2,000 only 18,824,000 persons in the Commonwealth. This statement should arrest the attention of anyone who cares at all for Australia's destiny. Momentous changes are coming in the economic outlook of the western races. It is self-evident that a handful of five million, or one part in 340 parts of the world's population, cannot determine the economic policy of the other 339 parts. However much we may desire in Australia to raise our social conditions to a higher plane than has characterised them in the past it would be national suicide to forget that the only safe course is the path of competency. The world's population of, say, 1,700,000,000 in 1919, at a rate of increase of only 1 per cent. per annum, will have increased two and a quarter times when the year 2000 is reached. Thus it will be 3,844,000,000. Our little population of 18,000,000 will still be a negligible quantity. Such a fact is a very significant one, and shows the necessity for re-examining our position among the nations. No one who has seen much of the world's activities can fail to realise that for an insulated country like Australia there is great danger, a danger of failing to attend to advance elsewhere, a danger of too readily resting upon past achievements."

That address is certainly a very clear warning for us, because it serves to emphasise the position which we too often forget. We think sometimes, interested as we are in our own immediate affairs, that we are practically the hub of the universe, that we wield a greater influence among the nations of

the world than we actually do, that in fact, from the achievements of our brave men we are likely to do more than is really possible. But it has been recognised all through that population is the bulwark of a nation, and that in this vast territory of ours, so empty as it is in many parts at present, we have a great responsibility indeed, which this warning by Mr. Knibbs may serve to emphasise. It also helps to bring forward something that was stated to-night, both by Mr. Cunningham and Mr. Ewing, as to the goodwill which obviously is absent as between employer and employee. There is unfortunately a lack of fellowship, of that good spirit and understanding which every right thinking citizen wishes to see. Unless we are a united community, bound by greater ties than seemingly bind us now, and unless we remove the feelings of estrangement and bitterness, we cannot achieve that greatness which as a nation we should achieve, nor can we ever gain that national spirit and pride of country which are among the finest possessions of men of older lands.

Hon. T. Moore: Do we possess them here?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: We cannot unless we have a greater feeling of fellowship and goodwill. I venture to think that this can be encouraged by sweeping away all the feelings of suspicion which sometimes exist between the different sections of the community. Selfishness may be a quality which has engendered it in the past, but there is no reason why it should continue in the future. A fraternity ought to exist between mankind. The more that is encouraged the more surely will our success be confirmed. I often hope to see the words of that great bard of my native land come true, "For man to man, the world o'er, shall brothers be and a' that." They are prophetic words. If those who are assisting in the great Labour movement of this country will but co-operate to that end, I venture to say that the grand spirit, the true national note which we wish to see struck in Australia will be achieved in the near future. In regard to the immigration policy, assuming that we have a large inflow of population, it must be recognised that not all men who come here are farmers, not all of them wish to settle on the land. Some men want to take up other callings. There is nothing of a material nature being done to provide for those persons who are not suited for settling on the land. In the past our scheme of immigration has always aimed at getting the immigrants to take up land, whether they were suited for it or not. Of late years there has been a closer examination into the farming qualifications of intending immigrants. That is only right, because every failure re-acts upon our State; but nothing of a materially definite character has been established by the Government to provide employment for those men who do not wish to go on the land. Population is essential to us, whether the men are to go on the land or to stay in the towns. At present it is necessary that we should put every man

on the land and make of him a primary producer.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Quite right.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Yes, quite right so long as the man is suited to the task.

Hon. T. Moore: Where are you going to get those men?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I admit the difficulty. When we consider the enormous demand being made in the Old Country for men of agricultural training, where they are extending farming in a way undreamt of prior to the war, and where the agents of every other overseas dominion are seeking to lure those men to their respective countries, it might well be asked where are we to get those men.

Hon. J. W. Hickey: And where are you to get the land?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Land should be made available within easy reach of existing railways. The Government should see that suitable land is secured. I suggest existing railways, because we have seen from the reports of the Commissioner of Railways that there is a deficit of about £400,000 on the working of the railways, in addition to which the department has to face a claim before the Arbitration Court involving close upon another half-million in increased wages. We also know that because of the sparse population many of the existing railways do not pay. Our position here is opposite to that which obtains in England, Scotland, and many parts of the Continent, where the population is very dense. If our position were reversed, if we, too, had a dense population we should not be grumbling to-day, even at having to pay another half-million in increased wages to our railway service. But, under existing circumstances, the Commissioner of Railways has a very difficult task indeed. It is our duty to find land within easy reach of existing railways, and the policy of the Government should be to refuse to extend the railways until they can see that the proposed new railways are likely to pay. In the present circumstances, and having regard to the condition of our finances, we are not justified in extending the railways. In normal circumstances I would be one of the strongest advocates of the extension of the railway system and the opening up of our lands, but not having the means at our command we are not justified in doing this at the cost of making the burden greater and greater for those who are to come afterwards. Let us rather make use of the lands within easy reach of our existing railways. I remember some years ago discussing the unoccupied lands around Perth. I still have the impression which I then gained as the result of visiting the hills. I suggest that hon. members should take the first opportunity of visiting the hills and viewing from a suitable elevation the vast territory lying north and south of Perth and stretching from the hills to the sea-coast. On a clear day, looking from the zig-zag railway or any other point of vantage on the hills, one cannot fail to be impressed with the

enormous area of land surrounding our capital city which is unemployed, unutilised, and lying almost in its virgin condition. There is a cultivated spot here and there, which one sees, like an oasis in a vast desert, but there must be hundreds and thousands of acres lying both north and south which could be utilised, and which would all help to bring in revenue.

Hon. V. Hamersley: Have you tried them yourself?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I must confess that I have not done so, but I have tried the hills. I suggest that it is not for me to say what I should try or what the hon. member should try, but it is one of the things which probably the Government should try. These areas should be experimented with by the Government to show what they are capable of doing. I believe in the development of our lands and of our country districts, as well as in the development of the lands around our cities. Although I happen to be a metropolitan member my interests are not confined to the metropolis. I have long recognised that no country and no city can be of any value unless its country lands are developed. The city is dependent mightily on the country, and the success of the one reacts on the other. I therefore believe in stimulating in every way the industries of our country as well as the industries of our metropolitan areas. In the metropolis we should see secondary industries established.

Hon. T. Moore: Not only there, but in our country towns too.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I am talking of towns generally. We want to see the centres all busy in their various occupations. That can only be brought about by the Government carrying out some proper scheme and a proper system which may achieve something in that direction. I have alluded to these lands in and around the city, as an instance. I have not tried them myself, as an hon. member has suggested, but I have tried some land in the hills. But this land in the area to which I have referred is land that is well worthy of an experiment. There are many people who are prepared, I am sure, if properly encouraged, and if they have brought before them the result of tests or experiments made by the Government in connection with these lands, to see what they can do with them. We have experimental farms in certain areas. What is to hinder the Government from establishing small experimental plots in each centre on the lands I have mentioned, showing that this district is good for this, and that district is good for that? These plots could be experimented with in different kinds of things. The other day my attention was drawn to the possibility of cotton growing in Western Australia. Some interviews, I believe, took place between the Premier of Queensland and some of the cotton merchants in England, and questions were asked as to what prices could be obtained so as to make cotton growing a profitable industry in Queensland. The industry has been going to

a small extent in Queensland for about sixty years. I will read to hon. members one or two paragraphs from a pamphlet—The Trade Promoter of Australia and New Zealand—I have here dealing with the growing of cotton—

Cotton growing has for so long a period mainly been restricted to countries in which the only labour available has been the coloured element that it has become a fixed impression that this class of worker is indispensable to success in profitably raising cotton. Queensland farmers have for the past sixty years raised the article and are by this quite satisfied as to the ability of the white man to produce high grade fibre in competition with other countries. It is now a recognised fact that in the newer developed cotton centres in the United States such as Arizona and to some extent Lower California, Oklahoma, and Texas, the larger part of the cotton produced is entirely grown by white labour. Factors, such as obtain in Australia, cheap land and transport, favourable seasonal and climatic conditions more than compensate for the absence of cheap labour. The first matter of importance is to realise the vast extent of territory in which the cotton plant flourishes. It may be taken as an ascertained fact that the whole region north of the latitude of Brisbane about 27 degrees will produce several qualities of Upland, Sea Island, Egyptian, and Kidney varieties of cotton. I have and am continually receiving examples of fibre from such places as Victoria, Western Australia, New South Wales, Northern Territory, and all parts of Queensland (coastal and inland) conclusively showing that the plant has a favourable habitat in all these regions.

Hon. J. Duffell: Who says that?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: This is an interesting article by Daniel Jones, an expert on cotton. 'This is the interesting point—

The labour aspect, contrary to popular opinion, is a lesser problem to the cotton planter than it is usually surmised to be. At ruling values every grower can make a good living out of from ten to fifteen acres of cotton and, if able to hustle, should plant, till, and harvest this area without outside assistance if producing the Upland variety. The ability to develop a huge industry in Australia centres on the immigration problem chiefly. The industry is such as will make it easy and practicable to settle inexperienced immigrants on the land.

A further article also mentions that Great Britain utilises 85 per cent. of the cotton brought from the United States—here we are producing none—and Great Britain annually uses about four million bales of cotton, valued at present at about 150 million pounds. This information is culled from an article written in the "Daily Mail" of London, of the 22nd January last. Here is a magnificent opportunity for the Government to establish experimental plots throughout every

district. All these areas ought to be tested by the Government so as to show the people that this land will grow a certain thing successfully.

The Minister for Education: You would not try down here, would you?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: No. I should say that experiments in cotton growing could be made from a little south of Geraldton northwards. If we could assure people that certain things would grow in these districts, and if we could assure settlers that they could get a living on 25 or 50 acres instead of 1,000 acres or more, they might be attracted to such lands. In that way they would be able to establish small communities, and many persons prefer small communities to the wide-spread areas which exist to-day. It would also help the scheme of immigration. Take, for example, some of these estates, which it might be necessary to resume, say, in or around Geraldton, these could be cut up into 50-acre lots instead of being cut up as at present into blocks of thousands of acres in extent.

Hon. E. Rose: What about the water difficulty?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The Uplands cotton, to which I have referred, is one of the finest drought-resisting cottons known. With the prices prevailing for cotton now, this article shows that more than a handsome living could be made out of it, even from small areas. It is sufficient to arouse one's interest in the possibility having regard to the scarcity of cotton and to the demand which exists for it, and to the fact that England is starving for it but cannot produce it. There is a possibility in front of us that we may find, with the competition of other countries when war ceases, we shall not be able to export our wheat at a living price. It is necessary for us to look into the future. Let us see what can be done to settle our people on the land. Do not let us be carried away by present high prices prevailing for wheat, because they will not last for ever. It is the incumbent duty of the Government to see that something is done to provide against that rainy day in store for us. The leader of the House states that nothing can be done down here—in the South-West—in the way of cotton growing. I quite agree that we want the warmer latitude that is suggested in the extract I have read. I have the greatest hope for the whole of our lands south as well as north. It is only encouragement that is needed to bring people here, but I do not think that encouragement will continue so long as State enterprises are allowed to continue. With regard to land south of the 27th latitude, there is a magnificent opportunity there, from what I have been informed by men who are able to inform me, for growing flax, for dairying and various other things. We can utilise vast areas of that country at a profitable rate and be able to export largely and also establish factories in connection with the growing of flax. I think

I have said sufficient with regard to the utilisation of the land, but I would like to add a word on the subject of the absence of factories and other such establishments of industry. We are strangely unfortunate in Western Australia in that respect. We do not want to make any comments on the result of Federation but we have to admit that we are dependent too largely on the Eastern States and outside sources for much of what we need, and which we should grow and manufacture ourselves.

Hon. T. Moore: That is the fault of our own men in this country. Federation has nothing to do with that.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It has a great deal to do with it, but if we are going to carry on our immigration policy, that is, to pursue a vigorous policy of immigration, we must have hand in hand with that vigorous policy some arrangement by which we can employ the people when they arrive. If we cannot give them employment in factories, that is, those who do not wish to go on the land, the result will be that these people will leave our shores and go to the Eastern States. We will have gone to the expense of bringing them here and our population will not have increased except perhaps temporarily during the short residence of those people here. In that way they are of no lasting benefit to us. To retain those people the Government must do that which is necessary to help establish secondary industries. I read in the Speech that secondary industries are steadily expanding. It would be interesting to have a record to show what those industries are that are expanding. The comment in the Speech goes on to say that the Government will continue to give to these industries every possible encouragement and assistance in order that wider avenues of employment may be afforded to the people and additional sources of wealth may be exploited. These are very nice words indeed. What provision is there beyond this pious hope which we often see in Governor's Speeches but in a somewhat different form? What provision beyond this has been made for providing employment for those people when they come here? I venture to say the Government have done everything that is likely to retard and not expand the development of secondary industries due to the establishment and expansion of State enterprises.

Hon. T. Moore: It is a good job someone started something.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: It was one of the most unfortunate days for Western Australia when we started those State enterprises. There are certain utilities and certain schemes and services which properly should be subject to Government control and ownership.

Hon. T. Moore: Which are they?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The hon. member was given an instance this evening. Take the railways which have been recognised as a Government concern all through.

Hon. T. Moore: The steamships also?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: The steamships under certain circumstances. I am inclined to admit that there is great argument so far as our circumstances are concerned in favour of the Government owning a certain number of steamships to provide a service for our far distant ports. I recognise that the development of our far northern ports, and the land in the north, is not going to take place without some facilities. If we had railways I would say do away with steamers, but until the railways are established—and it will be a long time before they are established—I say provide these facilities. Do not let the people in those parts be isolated any more than is possible. State enterprise I regard as a direct menace to private enterprise. We have it mentioned to-night that the amount invested in these State enterprises is something just under two millions sterling, and as Mr. Ewing stated it is possible, if we examined closely into the accounts, we would find that figure exceeded considerably.

The Minister for Education: No.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I will take the assurance of the leader of the House, but the sum is a very large one and if in place of having to borrow this money and having to pay interest at $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.—

The Minister for Education: Most of it was borrowed at much less than that. None so high as six per cent.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Let us take the average then at five per cent. That would be equal to £100,000 per annum. The profit that is made as we have seen from the balance sheets is neither here nor there. In many cases it is a loss in connection with the enterprises. Even in these concerns where a profit is shown, we take into account, as a proper actuary would do, the full percentage which is usually allowed for depreciation and all the other deductions.

The Minister for Education. They are included.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: Depreciation I understand has not been written down to the full extent.

Hon. J. Duffell: You would suggest 10 per cent.?

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: In some cases more, but 10 per cent. would be required on plant and machinery. If we took that into account, we would find that some of these concerns would not show the profit they are credited with in the books. Would not the country be better off by passing out entirely these State enterprises? Why should the State compete with its own taxpayers? It is not right as Mr. Ewing pointed out to-night. The principle is wrong and every right thinking man will admit it is wrong, and a thing that is wrong in principle is never beneficial either for the country or for its people. Whilst we may gloat over a small profit for the time being, that profit is nothing as compared with the harm and injury done to the country.

State enterprises prevent that which we are starving for, the introduction of capital for the development of our great resources and the opening up of our land. We must have the benefit of capital to open up our lands and the country, but we can never get secondary industries established so long as we have a Government here carrying on State enterprises. If an industry be established here, the man who embarks and puts his money in it does not know at what moment he will have the Government in as his competitor. The Government occupy a very envious position, in that they can make a loss and the taxpayer has to pay humbly and blindly, whereas if a business is left for development by private enterprise, the loss is not that of the taxpayer, it is the loss of the man who embarks in it with his eyes open. Under these circumstances we are doing wrong to continue State enterprises for one moment beyond the time that is necessary. The Government should have taken an early opportunity to try to realise these investments, and by getting the capital back they would have been able to reduce the State's indebtedness. What I would commend to them is that if they want to pursue a wise policy, one which would bring far more to the State than the few pounds of profit that may be shown in the books, they should subsidise the establishment of industries here.

The Minister for Education: We are doing that.

Hon. J. NICHOLSON: I admit it is being done to a certain extent, but it is no use in making an offer to subsidise, and then on the other hand establish or continue a State enterprise. The only enterprises we can get the people to take up will be of a small character which will never rise to anything or be sufficient to absorb only a small number of the population we may want to bring here. We want to see established here all those industries which will give employment to a big number of people. If we are going to pursue a vigorous policy of immigration, we must pursue also the vigorous policy of establishing industries which will absorb the immigrants who may come here. There is only one other comment which I propose to make to-night, and it is to express my appreciation of the Government in connection with a Bill which they propose to introduce to assist the municipality of Perth to deal with its endowment lands. This Bill which is sought by the city of Perth is a good example of wise enterprise, and of an attempt to develop those lands of which there is such a wide area lying undeveloped and unutilised at the present time. I am glad to see that some effort to utilise them is about to be made by the city of Perth by means of this Bill. At the present time the city is quite unable, under the Municipalities Act, to carry out the works which are essential in connection with this land. I am sure that wherever any person or corporate body shows that admirable spirit of seeking to develop and open up its lands, the greatest encouragement should be given to that person or body. I hope that the ex-

ample set by the opening up of these particular lands near to the coast will react in some measure on other lands both north and south, and render it possible for people to judge of the utility and possibilities of those areas which, at the present time, are unoccupied. I think there is a future for much of that land which at present is lying unused. I can only reiterate what I have said in regard to my desire generally to see the State prosper. I can only hope that the coming year will show that the policy which has been suggested in various departments by the Government will be crowned with every success. After the criticisms I have offered in a perfectly friendly spirit and for the general good, it is my intention to support the motion.

Hon. E. ROSE (South-West) [9.3]: It is not my intention to dwell at any length on what other members have touched upon. My memory is not good enough to carry me back the distance which some members have traversed during the course of this debate. Some members have sought to carry our minds back almost to the time of Moses in the bullrushes. That is too far back for me to ponder over or to revert to for criticism which would be of benefit to the House. It is our duty to do all we can to assist the Government with regard to the finances which have been drifting so much to the bad in the last few years. I regret very much that the deficit continues to amount up and hope that presently the upward tendency will be arrested. There are many causes for the deficit, one of which has not been touched upon by members so far, namely, that so many loans have been floated by the Commonwealth, thus taking capital away from Western Australia. At the present time Western Australia is being called upon to raise a loan of one million pounds, which money will go out of the State and will not benefit us in any way whatever. We shall not get any taxation from that money and therefore the Government will not receive any of the revenue to which they should be entitled. Regarding the Governor's Speech, we read that the development of the north-western and far northern parts of the State is receiving attention. I congratulate Mr. Miles on the way he has tackled this question, and on having spent so much time and money to urge the claims of this portion of the State. I congratulate the Government on at last recognising that the North is worthy of that attention which they are paying to it. The leader of the House, after visiting the Far North, must have come to the conclusion that what we have been trying to drill into the minds of people down here for so many years is true. We have tried for years past to explain to them that in the Far North we have one of the richest countries in the world, if it were only properly developed. But until recently little notice has been taken of our assertions. If the Minister had happened to be in Kimberley country when it was first opened up, he

would have had some cause for stating that there were not the facilities that should be provided to assist in the development of that country. I am one of the pioneers of the North-West who had to slave on the marsh at Derby before there was any jetty, carrying bags of flour on my back and rolling bales of wool on planks for 24 hours at a stretch—there was no eight hours of work in those days. These are a few of the difficulties we had to contend with in the early days. The Kimberley country was opened up in 1882 and not until nearly 40 years afterwards have the Government recognised that we have there one of the finest districts which should receive attention. I am pleased that Mr. Miles has succeeded in drawing the attention, not only of the Western Australian Government but of the Commonwealth, to the fact that that country is worth developing. I hope it will not rest there, but that the Government will show in a practical way that they are prepared to assist in its development. Mr. Nicholson quoted a paragraph relating to cotton growing. We know that cotton can be grown in the North-West, but it cannot possibly be grown profitably unless cheaper labour is available. Cheaper labour, as Mr. Miles has pointed out times out of number, is necessary to make the North the paradise which it should be. The finances of the State are going back every day. Why? One reason is because in this vast territory—our State is the largest of any in the Commonwealth—it costs double or treble for governmental purposes what it costs other States. But if we had an adequate population in the North, we would be deriving more revenue than we are and would be able successfully to finance the State. In the North we have good pastoral land, and we have land which will grow tropical fruits to perfection if only we can get the requisite cheaper labour. The mineral wealth of the North is unknown. Only one or two centres have been developed at all. If cheaper labour were available, we would have thousands and thousands of men in that country producing minerals of all descriptions. With reference to the iron deposit, I agree with my colleague that we should deal with that ourselves and should not allow it to go out of the State. If the Queensland Government can send their coal to the North and take our iron, why could not we do likewise? We have coal at Collie, and surely if it will pay the Queensland Government to export their coal, it would pay us just as well to bring the iron down to Collie or Bunbury, whichever is the better centre, to treat it. Why should we send our mineral wealth to another state to be treated? We have here men capable of carrying out the necessary work and all they need is an opportunity to do so. I do not wish to dwell on the North to any great extent because I know Mr. Miles has drilled well into the minds of members, both inside of this House and outside, what that part of the State is capable of achieving. I assure the leader

of the House that I appreciated the remarks he made after returning from his visit to the North-West, and I am sure that members representing that part of the State also appreciated them. I thank the Minister for the interest he has taken in the North-West and in the pioneers up there. Coming further south, members could not fail to be struck with the remarks of Mr. Nicholson regarding the South-West and its land. No doubt we have sufficient land adjacent to our railways to carry thousands of people, land which is not being utilised at the present time. In yesterday morning's paper there was an article setting forth that the Government have found a new territory in the Peel estate. Ever since I have been in the House, I have tried to impress upon the present leader of the House, and also his predecessor, the necessity for opening up the land from Fremantle to Bunbury and even down to Busselton. In that part of the State we have thousands of acres of land capable of closer settlement, land which will produce everything we in Western Australia require. When we consider that we are importing every year thousands and thousands of pounds' worth of produce, which we should be producing here, and which we can and will produce here in the course of time, I would remind members that here is another opportunity to arrest the growing deficit and assist the finances of the State. In opening up this country for closer settlement, I consider that the betterment system should be introduced. Where railways have been constructed by the Government, the owners of the land benefited should pay something in respect of the increased value given to their land, because in dozens of cases such land has advanced in value by 100, 200, and even 300 per cent. Yet in the past the Government have derived no benefit from this added value. I have said before in this House that we should amend our Land Act somewhat on the lines of the New Zealand Act. In New Zealand I believe it is the law that if the Government require land for closer settlement purposes they have power to resume it at the valuation returned for taxation purposes, plus 10 per cent. It should be possible to resume for closer settlement any land which is not being utilised. This is more than ever necessary at the present time when we have so many men settling on the land and talking of pushing out into some almost unknown regions. This land between Perth and Busselton should be settled first of all. The Government will have to go in for a systematic drainage scheme. It will be of no use half doing the job. The drainage must be done thoroughly. The betterment system should be applied to the drainage scheme as well as to the railways. In the past drains have been put down but they have proved to be most unsatisfactory. What we require is an engineer, who thoroughly understands drainage work, to go right through that country and recommend

what had best be done there. Between Perth and Busselton there are thousands of acres of wet, swampy land which, if drained, would be capable of carrying thousands of farmers. We have only to look at the little settlements like Harvey, Roeland, Burrakup, and Waterloo, which until recently were occupied by three or four people. Fifteen or 20 years ago Harvey was owned by one man; to-day between 150 and 200 families are settled on the same land. Burrakup was owned by the late Mr. Venn and there are now 100 families living on that estate. One block was sold the other day for £50 an acre, and it was bought by a man who was born in the district and who knows the value of the land. If the land is drained, or served by railways, the betterment tax should be imposed, so that the land owners who benefit from these works shall pay something to the State for the expenditure involved. We have the same class of land right through to Busselton and on to the Margaret River—some of the finest land to be found, on 10 or 20 acres of which a living can be made. It is well worth the Government's while to see if they cannot construct a light line of railway through that land, as the late Lord Forrest advocated many times. The land is capable of producing all the butter and dairy produce we require in Western Australia, and a surplus for export in addition. Mr. Nicholson says that we cannot get quickly enough the people necessary to reduce the deficit. But I say that if this land is opened up and secondary industries are developed, we shall in five or six years find our population increasing by leaps and bounds. The secondary industries should be going at the same time as the primary industries, because the former ought to work hand in hand with the latter. We have, coming now, thousands of men who are not suitable to go on the land, who are not cut out for farmers, but who would be first class hands in the secondary industries. I do not agree with hon. members who say that we should have secondary industries in the city. We have had too much centralisation already. Secondary industries should be started in the country—at Collie, for instance, where coal is available for the industries, and also water. These industries should be conducted on the co-operative principle, and that would be one means of bringing population to Western Australia and so reducing the indebtedness. Collie coal, as Mr. Ewing pointed out, has been for the last five years the mainstay of Western Australia. Had we not had Collie coal, where would our railways and factories have been while coal was bringing enormous prices all over the world? It is a regrettable fact that Collie coal has been run down by the Government, who have condemned it for the railways. However, when it was not possible to get coal from overseas, the Government used Collie coal for the railways. With our coal and mineral wealth and timber and wool we should certainly increase our population by immigration more than 1,000 per month. I

am glad to see from the Governor's Speech that so much has been done for soldier settlement—

Good progress is being made in the work of settling returned soldiers upon the land. The quota originally allotted to Western Australia was 1,650, but already upwards of 5,500 applications have been received. Of these over 3,000 men have been settled, whilst the balance—as they are approved by the Board—are being accommodated with land at the rate of about fifty per week. The advances made under the provisions of the Act passed by Parliament are proving adequate, and the returned soldiers are applying themselves to this new enterprise with the vigour and determination that distinguished them in warfare. Arrangements have been completed with the Commonwealth Government whereby provision can be made for an unlimited number of returned soldiers who may be desirous of settling on the land.

I think the Government deserve great credit for settling so many soldiers in the short space of time the present Administration has been at the head of affairs. It is only 12 or 18 months since the Mitchell Government took office. At that time the settlement of 1,000 soldiers on the land in 12 months was thought to be very good work indeed. But the figures I have quoted show what can be done by a man of experience. The Premier deserves great credit for his efforts. No one knows the country better than Mr. Mitchell does, or is more anxious for its development. He knows the State north and south and east and west, is a practical farmer, and knows what men can do and what land can produce. I hope and trust that the present Premier will long remain at the head of affairs, with his colleagues, to continue their present work. We all regret that the deficit has not stopped, but taking into consideration the industrial unrest there has been I think the Government have done very well to keep the deficit down as much as they did. With regard to the South-West, we have great cause for complaints in some respects, not against the present Government but against past Governments. Money expended on drainage and irrigation schemes has certainly not been spent to advantage. Who is to blame I do not know, but the officers responsible should have been hauled over the coals. The Harvey irrigation scheme is not a success by any means. The settlers there have been given merely an open drain, which is far from being efficient, by reason of seepage and waste of water. The Harvey weir should be taken over as a national concern, and the Harvey settlers should not be asked to pay sinking fund on it at all. This was the first scheme of its kind in Western Australia. While the weir itself is a success, the channels are not. Moreover, noxious weeds are carried through the orchards by the channels and these weeds will prove very difficult to eradicate. The Brunswick State farm is an example of the danger of open channels in this respect. At the Capel a

drainage scheme was put in, and land was sold with the promise of a really good drainage system. But the system has been found useless: at times the whole of that country becomes flooded, and there is not sufficient outlet to carry the water off. The engineers responsible for the system, whoever they were, should be taken to task for recommending the work that has been carried out. The Collie water supply scheme was installed a couple of years ago, with what result? Last summer there was not a drop of water to supply the town. There were millions upon millions of gallons of water in the pools of the river, enough to supply all Western Australia, but the town of Collie was waterless. That water will have to be tapped in time. There are pools in the Collie river deep enough to float the "Great Eastern." If it had not been for the agitation of the South-Western residents there would have been wharves alongside the Bunbury breakwater. The residents could see what was coming. They almost rammed it down the throat of the Engineer-in-Chief when he visited Bunbury that the silting was so great that some measures must be taken to counteract it. They urged on him that it was almost impossible to put the wharves on the breakwater, and that it would be necessary to extend the jetty. Bunbury has no coal storage facilities, as it should have them, close to the shipping. Neither has it any means of shipping wheat except in the old-fashioned way, and the present jetty will never be suitable for the installation of big silos. Bunbury should in time become a very large port for the shipping of wheat and also fruit. At present the fruitgrowers in the district surrounding Bunbury have to rail their fruit to Fremantle, an extra distance of 120 miles. The conference which is held annually in Bunbury has for the last four or five years made it a practice to dwell at length on the necessity for providing suitable shipping accommodation at that port. There is plenty of water, and I think undoubtedly it is the Government's duty to do everything possible to encourage the producers. It is a shame that the people who are pioneering should be compelled to pay extra railage on their produce. As regards railway rates, we should go in for what is known as the zone system. After 100 miles the railage should be much less than it is now. By that means it would be found possible to induce more people to settle on the land. The South-West is trying to produce quite a number of things, and I believe it will not be long before Western Australia will have the population that we hope to see. The South-Western road boards have for some time been agitating that the Railway Commissioner should carry over his lines the necessary material for making roads. There is no road-making material available in the district; it has to be brought over a distance of miles, and the cost of carting it by teams is enormous. The Commissioner has promised to transport that material, and the advantage of the lower cost of conveyance will prove beneficial not only to the settlers but also to the Railway Department,

as it should be part of railway policy to see that produce is brought to the railway line at the cheapest possible cost. I hope the Government will continue in office so that they may carry out the policy enunciated in the Governor's Speech. In my opinion that policy is entirely for the good of the country, and if in three or four years the deficit is not reduced considerably I shall be surprised.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE (South-West) [9.29]: In speaking on the Address-in-reply, the first thing I have to say is that I am an ardent supporter of the Mitchell Government. It may be contended that, Mr. Mitchell being a Bunbury boy, the Bunburyites on that account regard him as a wonderful Premier. But let it be borne in mind that Bunbury has produced two Premiers.

Hon. J. Nicholson: Three Premiers.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: That is so.

Hon. J. Duffell: Remember, it is the birthplace.

Hon. E. M. CLARKE: A gentleman once said to me that I considered Bunbury to be the hub of the universe. I told him that I did not think Bunbury was the hub of the universe, but the universe itself. The Mitchell Government have promised to build two railways which were promised many years ago—the Esperance railway, and the railway from Busselton to Margaret River. They are going on with those works as soon as they can. Mr. Mitchell, although not a brilliant speaker, is a thinker and a worker, and should receive wide-spread support. I have heard Labour members slating Mr. Mitchell, but only in good humour, and I am convinced that they admire Mr. Mitchell for the way in which he is carrying on the affairs of the State. Mr. Mitchell is keenly alive to all the possibilities of the State. I will admit that, years ago, when he was putting men far out on the wheat belt, I did not quite approve of his policy. However, those men have made good out there, and the quantity of wheat that has been and will be shipped from the wheat belt is very considerable. The credit for all this lies with Mr. Mitchell. Mr. Cunningham said he was not quite satisfied with the Arbitration Act. I never had much faith in that Act, partly for the reason that it was unthinkable that the employer should be punished while the worker went scot-free. The Act should be amended by the elimination of the penal section. We have to bear in mind that men are but human, and naturally want the best they can get. We hear a great deal about the cost of living, and no doubt the way that many people are living is costly. It does not matter what wages are being paid, the wage-earners will spend them, and to a large extent needlessly. Consider all the picture shows we have. Are they essential to life? Look at the thousands of pounds spent on that class of useless entertainment. Not only do the Labour men demand these things, but the major portion of the community spend money needlessly. I have con-

fidence in Western Australia. Consider the commodities we produce, not only for our own wants but in most instances for export also: wheat, fruit, meat, butter, wool, coal, timber, and leather. There are a few things which we should be manufacturing. It may be asked what is the reason why they are not manufactured in Western Australia. When in the Old Country I suggested to some of the factory people that they should come out here and start factories. The wages question and the question of strikes were put forward at once. The great stumbling block is this incessant industrial unrest. With arbitration an admitted failure, we should have a round table talk between the employers and the employees to see whether they could not arrive at some conclusion satisfactory to both. At one time the Labour organisations would not allow contract work. I remember getting up very early one morning and going out Roelands way. There were some fellows before me on the road, with something on their shoulders. It was not yet six o'clock in the morning. These fellows, I learned, were potato diggers on contract work. They would be at their work before six o'clock, and would keep on until late in the evening. They were earning up to 30s. a day. More power to them! We want more of that sort of thing. A man should be paid for the work that he does. Then let him do as much as he likes. The fact of the matter is that the dealer does not consider so much what he gets on one article as what he gets on his turnover. The Labour organisations, too, should understand that it is not so much what they get per hour as what they get on their turnover. I fail to see why, if a man can earn 30s. a day potato digging, he is not doing a fair thing to himself and to the employer also. What I object to is the slowing down. The employer cannot do without the employee, any more than can the employee do without the employer. We must go in for increased production. I am convinced that if we could get the employer and employee together both would be satisfied. Among the Labour organisations are some shrewd men. I should like to have a talk with some of the leaders. We must have unity. The two classes must work together. Take a sheep owner who shears his sheep. The fleece is sold possibly to a firm in Australia who re-sell it to an English firm, who sell it to a French firm who manufacture it into the best of cashmeres and re-sell it to the British firm who in turn sell it to an Australian firm who then sells it possibly to the original grower. Why cannot we set to work and manufacture all the raw materials which we produce, manufacture them for our own use, instead of sending them to the Old Country to be manufactured? I should be only too happy to do anything I could to bring about a better feeling between employer and employee. The one cannot get on without the other. What to my mind is absolutely essential is the unity of brains, capital, and muscle. Without such unity we can do nothing. I hope in the near future

the Labour organisations and the employers will meet together and bring about such a state of affairs that Western Australia will become one of the most wealthy countries on the face of the earth.

On motion by Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 31st August, 1920.

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

QUESTION—SOLDIER SETTLERS, CLEARING OPERATIONS.

Mr. STUBBS asked the Premier: 1, Is he aware that many returned soldiers settled east of the Great Southern Railway, in the Lake Grace-Kulin area, are experiencing great difficulty in their clearing operations owing to the absence of suitable machinery? 2, If so, would it not be possible for the Government to procure traction engines and rolling plant, to be hired to these settlers at a reasonable rental, in order to assist them in their operations?

The PREMIER replied: 1, No, except for difficulty in securing labour. 2, No. The Department's policy is to encourage the clearing of forest land in preference to scrub country.

QUESTION—MINISTERS' TRAVELLING EXPENSES.

Mr. GREEN asked the Premier: What have been the travelling expenses for each Minister and each Honorary Minister for the

year ended the 30th of June, 1920—(a) Amount of expenditure incurred by each Minister named? (b) Details of expenditure incurred?

The PREMIER replied: This information will take some time to compile, but a return will be prepared and laid upon the Table of the House.

QUESTION—CHILD IMMIGRATION.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (for Mr. Munsie) asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, How many children is Mr. Fairbridge preparing to bring from England? 2, What is their average age? 3, What assistance, if any, are the Government granting in fares and maintenance?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, 260. 2, From eight to nine years. 3, Fare, £6 per child for 150 children and maintenance at the rate of 4s. per day.

QUESTION—LOYAL CITIZENS' MEETING.

Mr. VERYARD asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Is it the intention of the Police Department to proceed with the prosecution of those persons whose names were taken by the police for their disgraceful conduct at a meeting of loyal citizens, held in the Queen's Hall on the afternoon of Sunday, 22nd August? 2, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, The matter has been referred to the Crown Law Department. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—WHEAT, AUSTRALIAN CONSUMPTION.

Mr. FOLEY asked the Premier: 1, Has his attention been drawn to the following extract from the Commonwealth Debates of the 4th August, 1920?—

Wheat Pool.—Allotment for Australian Consumption. Senator Wilson asked the Vice-President of the Executive Council, upon notice: 1, Was a contract entered into with the wheat pools for wheat for home consumption? 2, How was the purchased wheat allotted to the States? 3, What date was the contract entered into? 4, Who signed the agreement, and on whose behalf? Senator Russell: The answers are: 1, 2, and 3, On and prior to 21st November, 1919, certain mills in Queensland, and also the Governments of the States of Tasmania and New South Wales, made application to the Australian Wheat Board for supplies of wheat for flour for local consumption; and, in the case of New South Wales, for certain limited export. The Board decided that the application should, on certain conditions, be acceded to, and that the Government constituents of the Board should be invited to reserve the necessary supplies at the price for the time being determined as the price for