

have no doubt that they will do this, that they will go on with their railway policy; and that they will do all they can to advance the interests of Western Australia. Should they do these things there is no doubt that they will have their reward by remaining for a considerable time in their present position.

On motion by the *Hon. V. Hamersley*, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9.25 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 10th July, 1907.

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The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the *Premier*: Papers laid before the Colonial Conference, 1907.

By the *Treasurer*: Education Department, Report for 1906.

QUESTION — RAILWAY FARES, COTTESLOE BEACH AND FREMANTLE.

Mr. **BOLTON** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware of the numerous complaints from the travelling public as to the high railway fares between Cottesloe Beach and Fremantle, introduced by

the Department since the opening of the new railway station at Fremantle? 2, Does he approve of the increase of about 40 per cent. on previously existing fares to East Fremantle station for an added distance of a few hundred yards? 3, If not, will he cause inquiries to be made with a view to an early remedy?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: The rates for season tickets are now under revision, and the new scale will be brought into force on the 1st August next. With the new scale, the present anomalies consequent upon the opening of the new station at Fremantle will disappear.

QUESTION — RAILWAY THROUGH BILLS, FREMANTLE TO MURCHISON.

Mr. **TROY** asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Has the through bill of lading to the Murchison, which last session was under consideration, yet been arranged? 2, If not, why not?

The **MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS** replied: It has not yet been arranged to grant a through bill of lading from Fremantle to the Murchison.

DEBATE—ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. **P. STONE** (Greenough): Following the usual custom I shall say a few words on this motion to indicate what I think of some subjects before the public and Parliament. First I may mention the large sum expended by the Government on the maintenance of our charities. Very properly the aged poor are looked after by the State, but I complain of the heavy expense involved in administering the vote. In many cases the poor old people might be given, instead of orders on stores for meagre rations, a little cash to be spent by themselves. [*Member*: Some are given cash.] That may be, but I think they are few. The usual practice is to give each of them orders on two or three stores; on one store for sugar, on another for flour, another for bread, according to the contracts made; and many of the recipients are hardly

able to collect the doles granted them. These charities might be administered with greater advantage to those benefited and with less expense to the State. The coastal steamer service of Western Australia has, I think, a tendency to become a combine to the disadvantage of our people. North of Geraldton there is, I admit, a splendid fleet of steamers trading with Singapore and other eastern parts of Asia; but the fares and freights charged north of Geraldton are unfair and exorbitant, the associated steamers being in combination to run at fixed rates. Along a coast extending for 1,400 or 1,500 miles they charge up to 7s. a ton. In other parts of the world sea-going steamers are not allowed to engage in the coastal trade, but must trade direct with a foreign port. Here steamers abuse their privilege by exorbitant charges to the detriment of the people in the North and the discouragement of fresh settlers. Last year the steamer agents met the Colonial Secretary (Hon. J. D. Connolly), and made some arrangement to give a large concession to the North; but the concession was found to be trifling, was granted only in parts where the shippers were afraid of competition with other lines, and did not extend past Carnarvon. The system of bonuses granted by lines of steamers trading between Geraldton and the Eastern States constitutes a combine which prevents fair competition. These are called the associated rates; and every merchant, dealer, or importer is asked to accept the rates, with a view to gaining a bonus of ten per cent. on all his freights. This agreement binds the acceptor not to ship by any other vessels, and prevents competition with the ships of the combine. This is a matter the Government should take in hand, so as to prevent monopoly. I was pleased to notice in the Speech and in the Premier's remarks last night the intention to subsidise freezing works in the far Kimberley, which is known as a tick-infested district. Great trouble and annoyance is caused in preventing the shipment of tick-infested stock from that district to the South; and if freezing works are started at Wyndham, the fear lest tick should be brought to the southern districts will be allayed, and people in the South will obtain much cheaper meat.

The present cost of bringing cattle from Wyndham is about £4 a head; and if the meat were killed there, frozen, and brought down, I do not think the cost, landed in the Fremantle market, would be more than about 10s., and a good trade could be opened up with the other parts of the world. The rabbit-proof fence has been a great undertaking, but I do not think it will be a success, and never thought it would. And if it is a success, it will benefit few in the community. The fence has already cost about £300,000, and we do not yet see the end of the expenditure. When it is completed at one end we shall have to start rebuilding it at the other. When the project was first mooted people thought it would not cost more than about £80,000; but we have not seen the last of the expenditure, though we have the rabbits on both sides of the fence wherever we choose to go. The fence can hardly be successful in such country as it traverses—hundreds of miles in a tropical climate subject to tropical rains. At the watersheds of the various rivers the country is broken and rough, and thunderstorms will month after month carry away the fence in the gullies. That is my experience of the tropical parts of the State, and it will be an easy matter for the rabbits to go along the brooks down to the coastal districts. This has been the case, and will be more so in the future. We have the rabbits right down at the coast a few miles the other side of Geraldton. Four or five years ago there was a lot of trouble over some camels that were to be landed in this State. It led to a great deal of contentious and disagreeable matter in the Press, and among members; but, however, last year a permit was given to import 500 camels to the North-West. [Mr. Taylor: Tick-infested at that.] I saw the camels landed in the early days at Geraldton and they were covered with tick. A man was sent down to burn the camp where the camels were landed overnight to kill the ticks. This is a white man's country; and as the camel is purely adapted for the use of the black man, I think we should stop the importation of any more camels. I do not think it was a right step to give authority for the introduction of these camels.

Roads boards in closely settled places have valuable assets which can be taxed to raise revenue, but in the agricultural districts and in back districts where roads are a greater necessity the Government should give greater assistance to the boards. They give the boards around Perth and around Fremantle more than their fair share, and also pay for the main roads that go through their districts, but that is not done in parts of the State where more development work is needed. These small roads boards controlling a few thousand acres around Perth and around Fremantle should be self-supporting and should be able to tax themselves for the maintenance of their roads, while the Government should give more liberal assistance to the construction of roads in the back country. There are main roads running through every outlying road district. These are now maintained by the roads boards, but the Government has as much a duty to maintain them as to maintain the roads about Perth and Fremantle. I think that the royalty on sandalwood which was introduced a few months ago by the Lands Department bears unfairly on those engaged in sandalwood getting. In many cases if a man is outclassed and cannot get other work he can get a couple of horses and a team and secure a living by getting sandalwood and bringing it to the nearest railway. The sandalwood grows thickest near the coast, but there the land is all held under fee simple, and the owners charge a royalty up to about 30s. per ton to anyone getting sandalwood on their land. This sandalwood pays no royalty to the Crown, but the man who gets sandalwood outback has to pay a royalty in addition to having to send his sandalwood 200 miles over the railway. I think the royalty should apply to the wood shipped, and I suggest that the way to do it, without charging an export duty so as not to interfere with Federal rights, is to charge an outward wharfage of 5s. per ton. That would accomplish the purpose and would lead to the collection of a great deal more revenue than is collected from the poor old man in the outblocks. The Northampton Railway and its casualties and accidents have been before the public for many years. Last year the Commissioner of Railways

asked the Government to place on the Estimates £20,000 for relaying and re-grading that railway, and £7,000 for altering the rails on the Mullewa-Cue line. This the Government did not see fit to do, but since then we have had several accidents which might have resulted seriously, trains running off the rails two or three times. The Government should take into consideration the step of relaying that railway from end to end, or of altering the grades. The Minister for Railways has informed me that he has ordered five and a half miles of steel rails to go up to stiffen the curves. It is a step in the right direction, but I do not think it is enough. A deviation might take place on the present Geraldton-Cue line to the advantage of the State and travelling public. The line should go straight from near Eradu to Geraldton, and this would save several miles, because one train would draw as much as two do now on what is known as the big cutting. [*Hon. F. H. Piessé*: That applies to all other railways.] I was glad to see the decision of the Government to bring in the Land Tax Bill again this session. I think it is a necessity to bring it forward to readjust the finances of the State, and also to enable the public to get possession of several of the large landed estates with which I am acquainted. In my own district there are many estates from 30,000 to 100,000 acres paying little or nothing to the State, and public railways and other accommodation have been run through these estates for the benefit of people living on more inferior land. I feel that the land tax will have the effect of having these large estates cut up or divided into farms, so that the public will be able to get ground to cultivate and live on. There will be more families living in the State if these big estates are cut up. It is a matter that must come as sure as day follows night, and the sooner it comes the better for all concerned. I would also favour an income tax. A tax should be imposed to make everybody pay a fair tribute to the revenue. A land tax will only get at half of the community, but if we have an income tax it will collect money from institutions and individuals who do not pay otherwise. I would ask the Government to consider the advisability of placing a

dredge at Geraldton for a few months to dredge a channel near the wharf. Last year we were not able to get a ship to take away our wheat on account of the lack of water at the wharf. Negotiations were opened up with different ship-owners, but after ascertaining the amount of water at the wharf these shipowners decided that they could not send their ships there. It is a difficult matter to send a sailing ship to a wharf where she will touch bottom, but it does not matter much for a steamer. The sailing vessel will not go to the wharf unless there is plenty of water underneath. The consequence was we had to train the wheat or ship it from Geraldton to Fremantle at 7s. 3d. a ton, taking away the profit the farmer would have got if there had been sufficient water for a ship to come alongside the Geraldton wharf. The Government might send one of the dredges now partly idle. I have known dredges to be at Albany and different ports of the State doing work which in the opinion of most people was not very useful. They have been dredging the inner harbour at Albany for many years, but I think Albany is almost an abandoned port, and we might take one of the dredges from that portion of the State to Geraldton. I would like to point out the expense the State is under in conveying prisoners—short sentence prisoners in many cases—from Murchison and Geraldton to Perth. It costs something like £10 to send a prisoner down the Midland line to Fremantle gaol, though there is an ample staff in Geraldton where they might remain. The policeman has to be sent down as escort, and his passage and that of the prisoner, and the policeman's time and expenses while away from home will bring up the expenses to £10, which might be saved. Mining on private property is a bone of contention in my district, and the Government would be wise to bring under the Mining on Private Property Act the whole of the lands in that district, so that anybody who chose to mine on private land should, on paying a royalty, have the right to do so. As the matter stands, the land is nearly all owned by private people either as mineral lands taken up many years ago, or taken under agricultural conditions

and now maturing to fee simple. A prospector goes out, and on finding a suitable lode to take up he goes to the Lands Office, but is disappointed on finding that the particular land is held by somebody as conditional purchase, and that he has no right to work it unless he goes to the expense of bringing it under the Mining on Private Property Act, which is a slow and expensive process. I think the Government might consider the advisability of bringing the whole of that district under that Act, so that a miner might select what suited him on paying the royalty required under the Act. In connection with the Coolgardie Water Scheme, there is an annual expenditure of £70,000 above the revenue from sale of water. This deficiency is at present made up out of the State's general revenue, which I think unfair to districts not supplied with that water. The money should be collected from people who actually have the benefit of the water scheme. Those goldfields will not last for ever, and the water scheme is calculated to last only about fifty years, after which it will have to be re-built; so I think it unfair to the rest of the State that those people who are consuming the water are not made to pay the whole expense of the scheme. [*Mr. Bolton*: What about the rabbit-proof fence?] I will come to that directly. In connection with the railway rates on timber, I cannot see why the Government should treat the timber companies so generously as to reduce the rates to the extent they have done. If it does not pay the timber companies to work their timber, and at the same time pay the same rates as other people and pay reasonable wages, it will be a fair thing to let the timber companies shut up. We have it on the best authority that the hardwoods of the world will be practically worked out within 20 to 25 years; and that being so we shall have a good asset in the hardwoods of Western Australia if we are not too anxious to get rid of them by making sacrifices to timber companies. I also think that those timber companies which hold large areas should be made to comply with the labour conditions in the same way as the mining companies have to do. One timber company holds some 500,000 acres.

Mr. Angwin: They treat timber lands in the same way as some people treat lands of the Upper Chapman Area.

Mr. STONE: Another thing which is unfair to the general public is the long distance rates on the railways. A ton of flour can be hauled from Katanning to Geraldton for 11s. more than is charged for taking a truck of flour from Geraldton to Cue. This is not fair and I do not think the long-distance rates should operate past ports such as Fremantle and Geraldton. It may be an advantage to goldfields people to have long-distance rates; but though it has been said that these rates are advantageous to the farmer, I say they are in no sense beneficial to the farmers. Goldfields people must get supplies; and whether they get them from other States or from agricultural districts in this State, they still have to pay railage. Hence I maintain the long-distance rates should apply only to goldfields, and should not operate along the coast past ports. The Government might, with advantage to the State, assist such industries as flour-milling in districts like Geraldton. There we have a large wheat-growing district which has to use the railways for sending produce to market. If we had proper milling accommodation in that district, we would be able to supply the northern portion of the State and a good portion of the goldfields with a good article. Wheat acknowledged to be among the best in the world is grown in that district. Only last week I saw the return from a shipment sent from that district, which sold for 35s. 9d. per quarter in London. It speaks well for the wheat grown in that district that it should have brought the highest price realised in London up to that date. In this matter the Government might assist either by the establishment of a State mill, or by subsidising private enterprise as is proposed to be done for meat-freezing works at Wyndham. I shall be pleased if the Government will give this matter earnest consideration.

Mr. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet): At this stage, anything I may say regarding the work of the session will only be by way of review of work done since we last assembled in this House. Ministers then made an earnest appeal to this

House and the country to be allowed to go into recess early, in order that they might be able to attend to the administrative affairs of the State; hence I think it my duty to review the work that has been done since, and to find out whether any good has accrued to the State since the House went into recess. Many promises were made regarding the necessity for sound administration; in fact we were informed that the main plank in the policy of the Government was, and for that matter still is, economy and sound administration. That being so, surely there should be something to show as the result of work done by the present Government during the past seven months. When the position is reviewed, however, it must be admitted that the result to the country has been disappointing; for not even the most sanguine of us can claim that the position of the State to-day is any better than it was seven months ago. Indeed, there can have been but little attention given to matters of administration, while no economies worth mention have been effected. The only economies effected have been in the direction of cutting down expenditure which meant the development of the State. A vigorous and progressive public works policy has never yet been initiated, because to-day and during the last six months there are and have been less public works carried out than during any previous similar period within the last six years. The only directions in which the Government have economised have been by refusing to carry out a works policy, and by failing to supply the people with the facilities for developing the portions of the State in which they reside. Whilst also there has been less expenditure on public works to the tune of many thousands of pounds, there is nothing to show for it except that we have to-day a larger deficit than any during the last six years. The Premier has been good enough to inform us that although things are pretty bad, there was at one time a larger deficit than we have at the present time. But that is very little satisfaction to those people who returned the present Government with a large majority in order that they might wipe out the comparatively small deficit then existing, to learn now that they are faced with a deficit

of over £200,000, the largest we have had for six years. Then besides the dissatisfaction in the country generally, there is intense dissatisfaction in the civil service; and this not merely because the classification has not been all that the civil servants desired, but the civil servants are dissatisfied because the Government have not dealt fairly with them. The Attorney General in a recent speech at Kalgoorlie made an attack upon Mr. Jull, the Public Service Commissioner, and described the disaffection in the civil service as being due to Mr. Jull's classification of the service. I hold no brief for Mr. Jull nor for any other civil servant in this State, but I think every member of this Chamber will agree that it is unfair and cowardly to attack a person who cannot reply on the public platform or in this House. Were the Public Service Commissioner in a position to reply, he could place the blame for the disaffection on the proper shoulders. The Attorney General is himself more competent than any member of this House to tell the House why this disaffection has occurred; but since he is not likely to do so, I will tell the reason why the service is disaffected. The present Government—rumour says on the advice of the Attorney General—repealed the public service regulation No. 141, of which regulation they had previously approved. The approval of that regulation gave the civil servants to understand that their rights would be protected; but the repeal of the regulation took away any rights they may have had, particularly under that section. The position was that under regulation 141, any civil servant in receipt of a salary of £250 per annum, and who might be reduced on classification to £200, instead of being called upon to accept the position at £200 should be absorbed into some other position carrying a salary of £250; and similarly, a civil servant in receipt of £300, if reduced to £250, should be absorbed into another position carrying a salary of £300. But the repeal of the regulation has altered that. The civil servant who received £300 a year, but is classified at £200 a year, by the repealing of this section is faced with a reduction extending over five years; for each year he is to expect a reduction of £20 until his salary is

brought down to the £200; and then we are asked why the dissatisfaction in the civil service?

The Minister for Mines: How are you going to economise?

Mr. TROY: Why did not the Attorney General make that excuse at Kalgoorlie?

The Treasurer: What would you do?

Mr. TROY: I did not expect the Attorney General to make excuses, but I expected excuses from his colleagues to be made for him. But I object to the cowardly attack on a civil servant because of something for which he was not responsible, and when that civil servant is unable to reply. There are a number of civil servants, good officers, who are faced with this reduction and for the next five years every one of these civil servants cannot expect an increase or promotion, but for five years they have to look forward to a reduction. In the face of that can anyone be satisfied? Would anyone in this Chamber feel satisfied if placed in the same position? If the Government had an honest desire to effect economy they should have been honest to the civil servants and not approved of the regulation. The Government approved of this regulation, and by doing so the officers were led to believe that the Government would act fairly by them and not have taken a dishonest action, as has been done in this instance.

The Minister for Mines: When did the Government approve of it? It was the DalGLISH Government who approved of it.

Mr. TROY: We are told that the depression that now exists is the result of one thing. We are told it is the result of unfederal treatment, and the unfederal treatment Western Australia has received to-day—the bad federal treatment to combat which the Premier and the Attorney General went to Queensland—is none other than the work of that grand patriot of this country, Sir John Forrest. We have heard nothing of that because members on the Government side are friends of that gentleman, and they will not say anything about his unpatriotic treatment of this State. We are told also that the depression is partly the result of the regrettable timber trouble which, until

recently, existed in the State. I want to ask members, and the Government particularly, what did they do to put an end to that trouble? If Ministers did their duty to the State would the timber trouble have existed for any length of time? It would not. The only action the Government took in that dispute was to endeavour to get the men in that dispute to accept 7s. 6d. a day, and later on when the Queensland Government desired workers in the sugar fields and other industries in Queensland, by some means or other, we can pretty well guess the means because the Premier and the Attorney General were in Queensland at the time, the Government of Queensland decided to take labour from every other State except Western Australia. There is no reason why the Queensland Government would not take workers from Western Australia, unless I suppose it was because the Premier and the Attorney General of Western Australia, when in Queensland, created so unfavourable an impression there. Still the Government undoubtedly prevailed on the Queensland Government to accept no workers from Western Australia, and, therefore, the workers had to remain here. Happily the timber trouble is settled, not by the efforts of the gentlemen sitting on the Government side of this Chamber, although they made a frantic endeavour to get some credit for participating in the settlement. There is still another reason given for the depression existing, and in the words of the Attorney General, which I will quote, he gave a good reason for the depression existing in Kalgoorlie. The Attorney General said

"I notice with a great deal of regret that a somewhat wide depression exists in the town. It has caused stagnation in trade and consequently a shrinkage of employment. The general impression seems to hold sway that this is due to a large extent to the Gold Stealing Commission, which was appointed on the motion of Mr. Thomas Bath, M.L.A., the Leader of the Opposition."

The Attorney General told the residents of Kalgoorlie that it was understood that the depression existing in that dis-

trict was due to the inquiry by the Gold Stealing Commission.

The Attorney General: I did not say "understood" but I said "informed."

Mr. TROY: No member in the Chamber is so dense as not to understand what implication the member desired to convey to the people of Kalgoorlie. Plainly the implication was that whilst the general impression existed that the depression was due to the Gold Stealing Commission, that if anyone was responsible for it it was Mr. Thomas Bath, M.L.A., the Leader of the Opposition, therefore the blame was to be placed on the shoulders of Mr. Thomas Bath, M.L.A. I ask is that the sort of expression of opinion we should hear from a gentleman who is known in this Chamber as the Attorney General? What is the position he should have taken up at Kalgoorlie, not as Attorney General but as a representative of the people? Had he not been Attorney General, but merely member for Kalgoorlie, he should have said that the depression might have been caused as the result of the inquiry, but if it were so, if an evil was existing it was the duty of the Government to put down the evil, and no person should have sympathy with the evildoers. It was his duty to say, "I am the Attorney General, whose duty it is to administer the affairs of the State in that particular matter, and no matter what harm may have been caused it was my duty to put down the evil." That is the position he should have taken up. Is it not time this humbug was dropped, and is it not time that some members in this Chamber took up an honourable stand in such matters? There can be no doubt but that the depression which now exists is due—as it was put very tersely though unjustifiably at the time of the Dalglish Government by a newspaper—to the action of the Government and their incapacity. Nobody has discerned in this country any great administrative ability in the gentlemen who sit opposite (the Government), and although they are accused of possessing many vices, no one will accuse them of the one solitary virtue of having any administrative ability. The position of the State to-day shows that if there had been any attempt at administering, the State would not be in the position it

is at present. We can only ascribe the position of affairs to the incapacity of the Government in office. No determined effort has been made to put the finances on a proper footing. It will be remembered that the House adjourned in December last on the distinct understanding that the House would re-assemble in February to introduce the land tax measure. When February came round a caucus of Ministerialists was held, and one Minister told us that he desired the session of Parliament to take place, but that caucus bludgeoned them into abandoning the session because they feared an appeal to the country. Had an appeal to the country been made in February not one half of the members on the Government side would have come back to this Chamber; there is no doubt about that. If to-day an appeal was made to the country not one half of the members sitting on the Government side would find places in the Chamber again. When those gentlemen were elected they came in on a wave of enthusiasm, brought about by promises made by members. [Interjection.] Some of my colleagues have gone up to-night to form a branch of the Labour League at Smith's Mill. We all have moments of madness; and there is no doubt that the electors of the Swan have found out the mistake they made. The special session could have been held in February had it not been for the attitude of members opposite. The excuse given in the Governor's Speech, and that is the excuse given by the present Government—his Excellency is asked to say that the special session could not be held because members were away from the State and could not be got together. I ask the House who were the members who were not here when the State was making a demand on their services, because if at any time the State demanded the services of its representatives, it was in February when the State finances were going into disorder? The members not in the State were those who were specially pledged to put the finances in order. Those were the gentlemen who were absent from the State. One gentleman was journeying in Japan, and there were many others who could not be found when their attendance was desired. So far as the

members on this (Opposition) side are concerned there was not a member but who was ready and prepared for the special session. Every member on this side was prepared to come here at the call of the country to do his duty. The land tax would never have reached the stage it did last session had it not been for members on this side; and had the February session been called every member on this side would have been ready to come here and give his services to the country. If there were any excuses at all those excuses were made by members opposite, and they cannot be excused. They and they alone were responsible for the February session not being held. I want to know what has been done in this State to make our revenue an increasing one; what has been done in connection with our mining industry? We are told there is no cause for alarm because our gold production is decreasing. I do not know whether there is any cause for alarm, but certainly there is no cause for congratulation because taking all the industries of the State into consideration, the industry which is of most importance and which is doing most for the State is the gold mining industry. We cannot congratulate ourselves to-day upon the position of the mining industry. I ask the Minister for Mines what has been done during the time this House has been in recess in order to make that industry a more prosperous one. What has he or his administration done to increase the gold production? Nothing has been done. There have been but few if any batteries or cyanide plants erected this year, very little money has been expended in water supply, and but little assistance or encouragement given to the prospector. Let me ask the Minister for Mines where is that promise on which he secured a majority of the votes of the electors at Menzies last election, namely, his promise to the prospectors that battery charges would be reduced? That promise has never been fulfilled, and there is no intention of its being carried out. Promises were given to the Leaseholders and Prospectors' Association at their conference at Kalgoorlie, but not one of them has been given effect to. It is but in very few districts of the State that the gold production is increasing. The only way

in which we can increase the production is to assist the prospector and the leaseholder. We must open up new mineral areas. There are any number of them in the well-known portions of the country; but they are not prospected owing to the fact that water is so scarce there. I have always impressed on Ministers and Governments whoever were in power, the absolute necessity for the departmental officials to go ahead of prospectors for the purpose of finding water so that prospectors can get into the mineral areas. There are many localities in my electorate which are now being gradually opened up, but which never would have been prospected but for the fact that water has been found for the prospectors. In the Lake Barlee country particularly good crushings have been taken out. There is a large area of auriferous country in the whole of my electorate; but it is impossible for the prospectors to exist in those regions owing to the fact that no supply of water is available. If only the Mines Department would find water in those areas many more of them would be opened up, and the gold production would be greatly increased. A gold rush recently took place between Fields Find and Yalgoo. I have passed over that country dozens of times, and during my journeys have met solitary prospectors engaged at dry-blowing. Not long ago a reef was found there, and I was asked to apply to the Mines Department to have a well put down. The application, however, was refused, with the result that a large auriferous belt of country has not been prospected. In the Murchison this year we have been fortunate enough to get a good deal of rain water, with the result that water is obtainable on many of these auriferous areas which previously have not been able to be worked owing to the want of water. One result of this has been the rush to which I have referred, and I learn from letters which I have just received that there are very good prospects indeed for that district. Until such a policy as I have suggested is carried out we can never expect an increase in our gold production. It is only due to the Government to give them credit for their intention—for at present it is only intention—to build

railways in the mining areas. The Black Range railway and the Pilbarra railway will, if constructed, give material assistance to the mining industry, and will open up large areas of auriferous country. When we ask for these railways we do not, like the agriculturists, express the hope that if a railway is constructed it will open up new country for settlement; but we set out that the railways should be built because they are warranted. It is not for the purpose of getting people to go to those districts that the railways in question are needed; but it is to serve large numbers of people who are already there. The Black Range district has had something like £250,000 worth of mining development carried out there, and almost that value of gold has been returned. When work is in full progress at the Oroya Junior and Black Range mines the gold production in that district will be trebled and the whole of the gold production throughout the Murchison district will have a decided fillip. Besides this the Black Range railway will serve the East Murchison, the whole of the country north and south of Black Range, and a deal of pastoral country, thus giving facilities to people in the Lawlers district, and enabling them to work the large number of low-grade shows which exist there at the present time, but are not worked properly. I compliment the Premier on the fact that he made a tour of the district, and I know lost little time in going through it. His time at Black Range was fully occupied to very good purpose, and I am glad to find as a result, that the Government intend to introduce a Bill for the construction of the railway to that centre. It has been pointed out that members who profit by the construction of the Government railways programme are situated on this side of the House. The Minister for Mines, speaking in the Pilbarra district some time ago referred to this, and I am very tired of hearing it mentioned. No member of this House wants a railway and no Government would build one unless it is justified. I do not take kudos to myself for the fact that there is to be a railway to Black Range, and I will not give it to any other person, for the real position is that the people deserve the railway and therefore

they should get it. That is the position I will take up in connection with all railway proposals brought before this House. If a railway is given to a constituency it is not because the member for that district sits either behind the Government or in opposition to it; but for the sole reason that the railway is justified and warranted. We see also in the Governor's Speech, the agricultural industry is expanding. The Honorary Minister has been complimented and a great deal of credit has been given to him by the members for Kimberley and Perth owing to the manner in which he has administered the Agricultural Department. He has been applauded, and still is being applauded, for his administrative excellence. I would point out, however, that giving a man a reputation by mouth is one thing, and that man earning a reputation for himself is quite another thing. [Mr. Taylor: What about the Attorney General?] The Attorney General's reputation no longer exists. When he first entered this Chamber he was looked upon, even in my electorate, as a sort of demigod, and it was thought that if he got the reins of power he would put a different complexion upon the affairs of the State. He, it was imagined, had come to this House determined to carry out the views he had expounded from the public platform, and this idea was held owing to the fact that he had said he would not depart from these views. In his own constituency at the present time, as also throughout the State, he is an image with feet of clay. The Honorary Minister has been given a good deal of kudos, but I am going to give the facts regarding his administration to this Assembly, and members will then be able to see whether that credit is deserved. In this State a number of Ministers of the Crown have gained their reputation by the fact that they have travelled through the country, made speeches to the people, and had their remarks reported by a sympathetic pressman. The Honorary Minister is one of those who has not been badly treated in this respect. I remember well that when Mr. Hopkins was Minister for Lands, no man in this State received such kudos, no man was so boomed by the Press as he, and the result was that he was looked

upon for the time being as a gentleman who had no peers as far as the administration of the Lands Department was concerned. What is the result to-day? We are told that all the schemes he initiated in this State have been absolute failures; that all the great schemes by which he built up his reputation have, upon the light of day being brought to bear upon them, fallen to the ground. That will be the result of the reputation at present being gained by the Honorary Minister. Who will know anything about the Attorney General, the Minister for Works, or the Minister for Mines six years hence? And such will be the fate of all Ministers who go through the country expounding views which have no particular soundness. The Honorary Minister was first heard of in connection with the establishment of a co-operative settlement at Wongan Hills north of Northam. In this he was associated with the then Mayor of Northam, and I remember that Mr. Mitchell appeared in a very bright light in connection with that scheme. It was started to initiate a new era of land settlement in this State. What has become of that scheme? To-day we hear nothing about it. The whole thing is defunct, and the only remembrance of it which is left is when we look at the back files of the papers and see that the Honorary Minister and the Mayor of Northam gained a great advertisement for what they were intending. Thus we first heard of the Department of Agriculture, which we are still told has been raised to a height of great importance by the Minister. Following upon that we next find the Honorary Minister traversing the State in company with a pressman who up to that time had not been too fortunate in any of his enterprises. They visited several of the model farms. At one particular farm—the Chapman—the Minister collected the manager, the staff, and the students, and after vigorously cursing all and sundry he expressed his determination to close down the farm. Reading in the Press a few days afterwards it was seen that the Honorary Minister was complimented on that fact, and it was stated that if every Minister possessed the courage, determination and vigour of the hon. gentleman, this State would have more to show as the result of their administration. [Mr

Gordon: Hear, hear.] We must not object to this applause, for we all recognise that the hon. gentleman is now being paid to interject in such a manner. One result of the Minister's visit to these farms is that he received a very great advertisement, and another result is, I am assured, that he gave a very abject and humble apology to one of the managers. Still he expressed his determination to close down, and did close down the Chapman model farm. This is where the Minister's great ability comes in. When that farm was closed down the department decided to sell the stock on the farm, and something was done which to my mind and the minds of many in this country requires some explanation from the Minister, which explanation I hope will be given in this Chamber and to the country. When that farm was being stocked Mr. Crawford, I believe, was sent to the Eastern States, where he purchased a number of horses. I believe he paid for them about £40 per head, and although that was a pretty high price, it was generally conceded he got fair value for his money. When the Agricultural Department decided to close down this farm, the stock were sold. But the department did not follow ordinary common sense business methods by advertising the sale in the local newspapers. None of the farmers in the Chapman, Geraldton or Irwin districts knew anything about the sale. The only gentleman who appears to have known of it is a Mr. Black from Kalgoorlie, and how he got his information nobody knows, unless he obtained it through one channel. An advertisement was inserted in the *Journal of the Bureau of Agriculture*. Nobody, of course, reads that journal, and therefore nobody in the district knew anything of the sale. An advertisement costing a few shillings would, if inserted in the Geraldton papers, have given people who wished to buy that stock all the information wanted. No such information was forthcoming, and as a result the sale passed off quietly, and the horses for which the Government paid £40 per head were sold at the upset prices, ranging from £3 to £17. This shows the administrative ability of the gentleman who controls the Department of Agriculture. If that

is a specimen of his administrative excellence he should be rewarded with the sack. I do not wish to be too hard on the Minister, and I hope he will be able to give some satisfactory explanation to this Chamber. I have spoken to numbers of farmers in the district, and the member for Greenough (Mr. Stone) can bear me out. Only a few days ago I was speaking to some men in my own electorate (Mt. Magnet), who told me that had they known of that sale they would have been prepared to pay handsome prices for the horses. Besides these a number of cattle was sold, some prize cows from the Eastern States; and because no notice of the sale was given, they were sold at a price which did not pay for the cost of their importation. This is the sort of thing which is called administrative ability.

Mr. Gull: The member for Greenough said nothing about it.

MR. TROY: No. The hon. member asked some questions in this House and I presume he asked them in response to the feeling of his constituents. I know well that the people in his district are highly disgusted with the whole transaction, which is of a very suspicious and shady character indeed. By following ordinary common-sense and business-like methods the Minister could have sold that stock at a fair price, and the State, instead of suffering a decided loss, would have been able to show some gain as a result. I ask the House to judge of the administrative ability of the Honorary Minister. Leaving that, let us go to his next exploit. In this connection also he appears to have received a well-deserved Press advertisement. In company with another gentleman, he set out on a tour of the rabbit-proof fence. After discovering a few stumps and finding out the important fact that the fence would not resist the impact of a motor car at ten miles an hour, we find him retracing his footsteps, and the State as usual has to pay the damage. All we have to show for that expenditure is to be found in the *Western Mail*, where we may see a photograph of the Minister, leaning gracefully over his motor, surrounded by the discomforts usually associated with the arduous exploration of the Australian backblocks. I do not wish to be too hard on the hon. member, and to his

credit I must say that he has at least the reputation of being good to his friends. The pressman who so ably assisted him in the matter of the experimental farms received his reward, being appointed to represent this State at some conference in the East. Nobody knows particularly what conference it was, or what benefit accrued from it. Nothing has since been heard of it. But we all know that this pressman went there, was paid for his services, and in that manner received his reward. We know also that from the Minister's own constituency several other appointments have been made, and there are rumours of more. No matter how we may condemn the administrative ability of the hon. member, we must all admit that he is very fair and just to his friends. One of the Government proposals that requires most careful investigation is the subsidising of freezing works for the big cattle-men in the North. Last night the Premier mentioned the matter, and when asked for facts he hedged round the subject, and said that the whole of the negotiations had not been entered into or concluded. This House, I take it, will require to know something more of the matter before allowing any big monopoly to receive such a concession at the hands of the people. If freezing works are to be established, and I shall support their establishment, they should be established by the Government and run for the benefit of the people. What business have the Government to concede such a privilege to any body of monopolists or to any ring? The people of the State have during the past ten years suffered under the exorbitant charges of a meat ring, and by the proposed concession to that ring the Government will only be perpetuating the evil under which the people have laboured for that period. If the Government wish to assist the meat industry, let them build freezing works and conduct those works under Government supervision.

The Honorary Minister: The people will pay, and will get their money back.

Mr. TROY: How will the people pay? What does that mean? If the Government will lend the money to the members of the meat ring, they will pay it back? Why, by receiving the money and paying it back the ring will have an

absolute monopoly of the industry. We shall have a meat-freezing ring, and shall find meat no cheaper in the future than it was before. We shall be doing nothing else but handing over the whole meat business in the State to one gigantic monopoly. We have not had sufficient experience of monopolies in this State! We have had the timber monopoly, the goldfields firewood monopoly, the meat ring—

Mr. Gordon: And the Labour monopoly. We must not forget that.

Mr. TROY: You have a monopoly of all the nonsense and rot talked in this Chamber.

Mr. Gordon: I am a better man than I thought I was, by a long way.

Mr. TROY: The Premier said the Government intended merely to give a subsidy, which would be repaid in a certain number of years. The best thing the Government can do, next to owning and controlling the freezing works, will be to acquire the bulk of the shares in that concern. If they take most of the shares they will have a controlling interest, and the interest of the State will then be safeguarded to a greater extent than it could be by handing over the whole of the Nor'-West cattle country and all the cattle therein to the present meat ring. That is what the proposal means, and while in this House I will not agree to building up any farther monopolies in Western Australia. The existing monopolies have done enough injury to the State, and I do not wish to see the system extended. Much has been said regarding the dairying industry and the intention of the Government to encourage its establishment. Agricultural members will naturally conclude that they have a greater knowledge of that industry than has any other member, and no one wishes to deprive them of their opinion. But during my boyhood I lived in a dairying district, one of the most important if not the most important in New South Wales; and I conceive that a great change must take place in this State before the dairying industry can be carried on at all satisfactorily. The Honorary Minister in his fadish imagination that by importing a few head of dairy cattle he will put that industry on a sound basis.

Mr. Taylor: Who bought them?

Member: The Attorney General.

MR. TROY: That will be inquired into later. I should not wonder if someone as competent as the Attorney General to judge cattle did buy them. That would be in keeping with the usual practice of the present Government. During the recess I travelled in that portion of the State where we are told the dairying industry can be most successfully carried on.

The Honorary Minister: Where?

MR. TROY: In the Blackwood district, in the South-West generally. And there I found that compared with the Eastern States, the Government and farmers concerned have a lot of work ahead of them if they are to establish a successful industry. Last night the Premier said that dairying is an industry generally conducted in connection with mixed farming. That is true. The dairy farmer in the Eastern States is often a fruit grower. He always grows potatoes and raises pigs, and by a mixture of farming the whole of the industry is successfully carried on. What about the southern portion of this State for such purposes? Successfully to carry on the industry it will be necessary to establish a number of creameries, and the closer the creameries are to the farmers the more successful will be the industry. If the farmers have now to convey their cream and milk some ten or twelve miles, or, as in the Blackwood district some twenty-five miles, the case is different. How can a farmer who carries his milk ten miles to market get back to undertake mixed farming? He will be unable to do so; and no farmer can do it in our southern districts unless the old families who hold the land and will not use it are compelled to cut up that land and offer it for sale. Successfully to carry on the dairying industry we must have numerous small farmers clustered round the creamery. The larger the number of creameries the better, and we can always provide a central factory. Take Busselton, the district represented by the Treasurer. In that district there is great talk about the future of the dairying industry, but it cannot be successfully carried on there unless the old families are compelled to

cut up the land so that closer settlement may be encouraged. It is not being done now. The Honorary Minister wants the farmers to be scattered over a radius of about 30 miles and to cart their milk to the creamery. That is a suicidal policy. I have seen it tried in the Eastern States, but it has not succeeded. The only way to encourage dairying is to import cattle from the Eastern States, but at the same time not to give them to a few milkmen about Perth. They should be given to the struggling farmer on easy terms so that he can pay for the purchase of the cattle over a number of years. I take it that very few farmers in the South-West of this State know anything about practical dairying. Few of them are growing grasses. I have travelled the country, and only in connection with two ex-residents of the goldfields, who have taken up land in the Blackwood district, is any attempt being made in that direction. Is there any attempt at making ensilage? The Government are not doing anything in that direction.

The Honorary Minister: Yes we are. We are offering to build silos.

MR. TROY: I am speaking of the particular portion of Western Australia that is best suited for the carrying on of the dairying industry and which has been spoken of by members on the Government side of the House. The Government could, with great advantage, instead of importing silos, as the member for Cue suggests, import a few practical dairy farmers from the Eastern States, men who have some knowledge of the industry; because I am satisfied that before dairying is placed on a sound basis in Western Australia somebody must be engaged in it with a practical knowledge of the thing. I found a lot of good land in the South-West being held up. I met a gentleman who made an application for a piece of land in the Blackwood district. It was held as a pastoral lease, but the original lessee had died and his executor had leased it as a grazing lease to another gentleman. Application was made for the area by a practical man who wants to utilise it, but the Government say that it is reserved for timber purposes. I travelled over the whole of it and there is not a stick of timber on it

suitable for marketable purposes. Not a stick would be marketable for the next 50 years. The only timber I saw was red gum. There was no jarrah. I am told there was a little karri, but I could not see it. A few of the old families who have a big grip on this land are trying to dummy it in order to prevent others settling.

The Premier: Give us full particulars of the lease. You said in the first instance that it was a pastoral lease and that this man lets it as a grazing lease.

Mr. TROY: The man who has the grazing lease is Mr. E. Brockman, and he has more country than his successors will know what to do with for the next 100 years. [*The Premier:* The fact of it being a pastoral lease will not stop selection on it.] The Government in their wisdom say that it is reserved for timber purposes; and as I said there is not a stick of timber on it that will be suitable for marketable purposes for the next 50 years. I have written to the department regarding the whole matter. I know that the gentleman who wishes to take up the land is a practical man and he wants to put it to the best practical use. [*Mr. Bolton:* The Under Secretaries run the offices now.] It is hoped that we will have better results now that we are able to face Ministers in this House. I wish to refer to a few measures the Government propose to introduce. As to the land tax, I have already referred to the fact that it could have been introduced had a special session been held in February, and it was not introduced then because of the cowardice of the Government. When it is introduced this session I shall assist the Government all I can to have the measure put through, but I shall take up the stand, as I did last session, to have it put through without exemptions. We want something more than a land tax in this State to compel people to utilise their land. In addition to this tax which the member for Perth says is going to fall heaviest on the land in the city, we want a tax to compel the big land monopolist to use his land or give it to someone else who will use it. I wish briefly to refer to a reference made by the Attorney General in a recent speech at Kalgoorlie. I think every one in this House is well aware that the Attorney General secured election by his

drastic condemnation of the violation of the promise made by the present member for Guildford to introduce a land tax without exemptions. The Attorney General promised his constituents that he would support no land tax unless it was a tax without exemptions.

The Attorney General: When?

Mr. TROY: At your first election. I shall get a copy of the *Kalgoorlie Miner*. The Attorney General said recently, in a laboured apology regarding the action he took up in supporting exemptions last session, that he agreed to the exemptions because of a promise he gave to his colleagues in the Cabinet.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (in explanation): One can always understand inaccuracies in this House, but a colossal inaccuracy of this kind I must interrupt. If the hon. member wishes to read anything, let him read it. Let him not trust to a faulty memory on the point. I say that the statement is inaccurate that I said in my speech that I had given way to the opinions of my colleagues. It is absolutely and entirely inaccurate.

Mr. TROY: I withdraw if I am inaccurate; but in order to refresh the Attorney General, who has referred to my forgetfulness, let me remind him that last session, when the member for Mount Margaret said that the Attorney General was representative of certain mining companies, the hon. gentleman got up and made some statement in calling the hon. member to order, as he called me to order just now, and that then the member for Mount Margaret got the *Mining Journal* and proved that the Attorney General was wrong. I hope the Attorney General will not interrupt me again, but that he will remember that he is just as forgetful as any other member in the Chamber. He said at Kalgoorlie, "Could any honourable man do otherwise than keep the promise he made?" The promise he made was not to agree to exemptions. I ask, where does the honour come in—who is the honourable man? Is it more honourable to break your word to your constituents, whom you promised that you would oppose exemptions, than to break a promise made after the elections in violation of the pledge given to one's constituents? If the Attorney

General wished to do his duty honourably to his constituents, who were the first persons he should have considered, he should never have broken any promise he made to them, no matter how he was prevailed upon by any of his colleagues in Cabinet. Regarding the proposed mining legislation I shall have a deal more to say when the Bill is before the House; but so far as we can see, though we are told it is in the interest of the struggling prospectors and leaseholders, I want to say, as representing probably the largest body of leaseholders and prospectors in the State, that the leaseholders and prospectors have never asked for it, and that they have expressed no desire to have it. The only persons who have asked for it are several representatives of mining companies who from time to time have come to Western Australia, such as Mr. Hoover and Mr. Doolette. They have asked for it, and they are the only people whose wishes the Government are considering in attempting to abolish the labour covenants on mining leases. For the information of the Minister for Mines let me read a portion of the speech made by the Agent General in London. There was a cable by the Acting Premier to the Agent General saying: "Intend to legislate in order to give greater security of title and liberalising conditions under which mining property held." Mr. Rason said this, and in saying this as a representative of the State and of the Government he voiced clearly the intention of the Government:—

"You will have noticed, those of you interested in mining, that the Government propose to introduce legislation giving greater security of tenure and imposing less restrictions upon the working of mining properties generally. I welcome, personally, the introduction of legislation such as that; because I believe it will prove the necessary fillip that is wanting in order to send more capital to be invested in Western Australia—(Hear, hear)—I hope, to the benefiting both of Western Australia and the investor."

That clearly shows the intention of the Government. I remember during a long

sojourn on the Murchison when the whole of the field was kept back because of the mining companies holding large areas of mining land for years under exemption, I knew hundreds of good energetic prospectors with an interest and with a stake in the country who were trying to get hold of those leases to work them, but they could not get them because they were held under concentration, or exemption, or some other condition. Latterly the Murchison field has been going ahead considerably, with the result that to-day it is one of the most important fields in Western Australia. In fact, outside Kalgoorlie, there is no other field that can compare with it. I know that if this particular amendment is carried it is going to do no good to the mining industry on the Murchison. What the prospectors want particularly to assist and encourage them—I have lived amongst prospectors for many years and am here to represent their interests and to speak on their behalf—is to get their leases as easily and cheaply as possible. If the Minister wants to assist the prospector, let him give leases without payment of rent; and when the prospector asks for exemption, let the Minister refuse to take the fee the prospector has to pay, and also let the Minister abolish the high survey fees he now charges for taking up a lease. If the Minister would give the prospector easy access to his land and an opportunity of using his money to the best possible advantage it is the best thing he could do for the prospector. I intend to go into this fully during the session. There seems to be a sort of intention in the State to deal leniently with the present Government. God knows they want dealing leniently with, because there never was such a helpless crew in office; but if any Government pursues such a reactionary policy as to introduce measures against the best interests of the State and my constituents, I am going to oppose it all I possibly can. I saw in the newspapers this morning that there was not much difference between the Labour party and the Government and that this time all criticisms should be dropped.

At 6:15, the *Speaker* left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

Mr. TROY (continuing): When we adjourned, I was speaking with regard to the intention of the Government to abolish the labour conditions in our mineral areas. I said, and I want to emphasise the statement, that although I do not want to indulge in any unfair criticism of the Government, nor prevent them from carrying on legislation to the country's advantage, I shall deem it my duty, as one representing a large body of leaseholders and prospectors in this State, to oppose strongly the passage of this measure when it is introduced to the House. I have already shown that the Government is introducing it at the request of the big mining companies. I bear in mind the great disadvantages my constituents have laboured under for many years on account of the manner in which the large mining areas have been tied up, and the prospectors have been in consequence prevented from utilising them. There is the case of the Princess Royal at Cue, and the member for West Perth, who previously represented that district, will no doubt remember having received a great deal of correspondence with regard to this property and knows that the people of Cue endeavoured unsuccessfully, year after year, to force the people who hold that lease to work it. That instance is an absolute disgrace. Some time ago a business man of Perth, who was then a prospector, got up one night at 12.15 o'clock and put his pegs in on a certain portion of the lease; the result of that was that he got a corner of the block and obtained gold from it to the value of over £2,000. This is only one example of the way in which mining on the Murchison has suffered through holders not working their leases. The intention of the Minister for Mines and the Government in giving the fee simple of the areas to the mining companies will be a very bad thing for mining in Western Australia.

The Premier: Who said they were going to get the fee simple?

Mr. Taylor: That is the next step.

Mr. TROY: In providing for the abolition of the labour conditions the Government are doing much the same as if they were to grant the fee simple. The position is that if the mining companies spend a certain amount of money they are allowed to be exempted from

the labour conditions altogether. I should like to know what advantage it is to the country for the mining companies to be allowed to hold their leases without working them. At the present time exemption can be secured, after the expenditure of a certain sum of money, and the general conditions as far as exemptions and the holding of areas are concerned, are as liberal as they can possibly be made. I have indicated the means by which the prospector and the leaseholder, who are after all the backbone of the mining industry, can be assisted. If the Minister desires to help them he can do so by making advances, by reducing the charges at the public batteries, by charging a less rental for the leases, and by these and other similar means greatly encourage the work of mining development in this State. At the present time in my electorate one company has expended about £70,000 in the erection of machinery. Recently an award has been given to that district, and the Chamber of Mines is raising a very loud voice, and taking strong exception to the rate of wages paid there. In a new field like Black Range any number of "boodlers" and mining sharks can take up property, and merely by putting up machinery of a certain value on the lease absolve themselves from the need of putting a pick in the ground.

The Premier: Machinery is not counted as expenditure. Mining requisites like timber for shafts etcetera form the only improvements that are given credit for. The Minister for Mines will be able to explain the matter in detail.

The Minister for Mines: They do not want me to.

Mr. TROY: It is not our fault that we know very little about this proposed measure. All we are given to understand is that concessions have been promised to the companies. We have heard of requests from mining gentlemen who have visited the State and we have read Mr. Rason's speech at the Western Australia dinner held recently in London, and we can arrive at no other conclusion than the one come to by members of this side of the House. A very large quantity of land is held up in my district under the present conditions. As an instance of the results that follow th

present laws I know of a case of one gentleman who invested the sum of £10,000 on a lease, and has been able on this account to take a large area, and is simply holding it without doing any material good. I would suggest that when these leases are abandoned, a provision should be made that the owner who has abandoned, should draw up the pegs around the lease, so that the prospector will know that the lease is open.

The Minister for Mines: What penalty would you make for non-compliance with such a rule?

MR. TROY: You could make a penalty and prosecute the owner who failed to draw up his pegs. There are many complaints in any district of owners abandoning leases, and through leaving their pegs in the ground, making it impossible for the prospector to know whether the lease is available or not. I shall deal with this matter more fully when the Mining Bill is before the House. The next measure of any importance intended to be introduced by the Government is that providing for an amendment of the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, and we were assured by the member for Perth that this is desirable, because we on this side who were responsible for the initiation of the measure, objected to it in its present form. The amendments suggested by the Government are absolutely of no use, and not one of them will make the Act better than it is at the present time. I will ask the House whether it is possible for an Act to be more workable when the provision is made that not only unions can approach the court, as at the present time, but that it will be possible for any number of workers, acting irrespectively of a union, to make citations. This will do nothing but cause confusion in the working of the Act. It appears that the only intention of the Government is and can be, that they intend as far as possible to abolish labour organisations. Their belief is that if the unions are recognised before the court as they are now, the organisations will continue to occupy the standing which they would not otherwise possess; but they desire to muddle the measure by amending it, so that these unions shall not be recognised any longer, and that any body of men without responsibility can approach

the court and move it. I regret to say that when that measure is introduced I suppose that numbers of members sitting on the other side of the House, who know nothing whatever of the operation of the Act, and who will remain outside the Chamber while the Minister is fighting the measure, when the division bells are going will come in and vote solidly on a matter of which they know nothing. I will object to this all through the session, for we had quite sufficient of that sort of thing during the last session of Parliament, and the country does not desire that such a course of conduct should be followed any longer. What experience has the Government had of the Arbitration Act. The only member who has had any knowledge of it is the Treasurer, and his was only a limited experience. [*Mr. Scaddan:* 'The Attorney General advises for the Chamber of Mines.'] And the result of this is that he has inserted a regulation to provide against the recognition of unions, and such is the only regulation he could be expected to provide as the representative of that particular body. I recognise that amendments to this Act are necessary, but I do not admit like the member for Perth and others, that the Act has failed altogether as a preventive of industrial disputes, because it has failed once. Do we abolish the police force because they do not prevent crime; do we abolish the Criminal Code for the same reason; does hanging prevent murder? No, they are only preventives, and so is the Arbitration Act, although loosely framed as it is by a majority of the House who had no sympathy with it, and had no experience of how it was likely to work. There is great room for amendment, but I am sorry to say that none of these amendments which are needed are provided for by the Government, at all events this is the inference to be drawn from the Governor's Speech. I hope that when the measure is introduced, those members who have had experience before the Court will go closely into the matter, and that their views will be listened to, and advantage taken of their knowledge. The Arbitration Court and Act have done wonderfully good work. There have been more industrial disputes settled by it than those which have not been settled. The mining

industry would have been in a bad state owing to industrial disputes, had it not been for the operation of the Act. The majority of cases which have been stated in connection with the mining industry have gone against the workers without even the semblance of an excuse for the reductions which have been made. Notwithstanding this, the miners have accepted the awards of the court in every instance, and it is only in the case of the timber industry that the award of the court has not been accepted by the men. The court has settled all industrial disputes on the goldfields, and the statement I make that in every case the awards have resulted in the reduction of wages is proved by the fact that in the whole of the Murchison and East Murchison, and as far north as Leonora and throughout the North Coolgardie goldfields, wages have been reduced without any justification. The only time exception was taken to an award of the court was in connection with the timber dispute, and naturally exception was taken to that because the Arbitration Act does not give the court power to bring in a fair rate of wages. I desire to make a few remarks in regard to what the President of the court, Mr. Justice Burnside, said during the hearing of the Black Range case, on the question of a minimum wage. The Act says the court must fix the least minimum wage. The President asked me what Parliament meant by the least minimum wage, because he said some men can live on ten shillings a week. But did Parliament ever intend that? Parliament created an Arbitration Act in a slipshod manner. It is not the fault of the Arbitration Act that better awards are not given, but it is the fault of Parliament. Nothing has ever been created by man that cannot be improved. We have introduced into the House year after year amending measures and these are brought forward because the Act in the first place has been found to be defective. This is the case with the Arbitration Act. The Arbitration Act is defective and we must amend it, not to prevent its usefulness, but to make it more useful. We should wipe out the minimum wage section and provide some other clause by which the court can be guided to award a fair wage in every industry—the member for Brown Hill

says a standard wage. When the measure is introduced I shall endeavour to suggest something more effective than exists at present. We find the procedure in the Arbitration Court is such that the workers do not receive any sympathy. A mining company has only to go to the Arbitration Court and say the company is unable to pay a certain rate of wages, and therefore the wages should be reduced, and the court acts on that. The company shows the grade is low, probably only for the time being; but the wages are reduced. That has been the case in every dispute in the case of the mining industry. A man may have a business which does not pay, and he makes it his duty to go to the Arbitration Court and ask it to fix a rate of wages for an industry which should not exist. It will mean that anybody may start an industry in the State which may not pay from the start. The employer goes to the Arbitration Court and says, "I cannot carry on this industry without a reduction of wages," and he secures the reduction. I object to members on the Government side saying the dissatisfaction has always been due to the fact that the workers never get what they want. The workers have never got what they wanted. They have often got less than what the employers wished to give them: that is the reason of the dissatisfaction. With regard to the intention of the Government to introduce experts as against representatives of workers and employers, what will be the use of the system of experts. So far as the representatives of the workers and the employers in the Arbitration Court are concerned, for the information of the member for Perth I may say the workers have only one representative in the court; and if anyone benefits by the representation on that court, it is the employers. Take the position of the Judge. I believe he always tries to be fair, although I have objected to several of Mr. Justice Parker's awards, and some were very ridiculous awards. As far as he was concerned I believe he was always guided by his lights, and to the best of his ability he gave his award; but some of his awards were absolutely ridiculous. [Mr. H. Brown: From your point of view.] From everyone's point of view. Mr. Justice Parker's

awards were so ridiculous that Mr. Loring, recognising it, raised the wages. He said the awards were most ridiculous, and the reasons given were also ridiculous. Mr. Justice Parker and every other President who is a Judge lives in a certain environment, and under certain conditions of life which only allow him to look at the case from one side. A Judge cannot understand the conditions under which men have to labour. Mr. Justice Burnside raised his eyes in horror when I told him that men were sacked because they gave evidence before the Arbitration Court. He said "the employer would not do it"; but the employers do do it. Mr. Justice Burnside would not do that kind of thing himself. I believe him to be an honourable man, and because he would not do that kind of thing he cannot believe any one else would do it. Men who are occupied solely with the legal profession have no knowledge of outside matters. The Judge of the Arbitration Court, whilst he is reared and lives in a legal atmosphere, cannot give satisfaction in the Arbitration Court, and if he has any sympathy at all, it is never with the worker but with the class of people amongst whom he has been reared and with whom he comes in contact day after day. In connection with the experts, the representatives of the workers and employers always go into the case fully, and I doubt if either of the representatives misunderstands the cases which are brought before them. As far as the representatives of the workers are concerned, they fully understand the cases before the Court. They are practical men and are not reared in the atmosphere of the law, but have a knowledge of outside matters, and are engaged in industries themselves. These men give more satisfaction than the Judge does. I cannot see how the appointment of experts in connection with industries can give satisfaction. I would support the adoption of district courts. We should have district courts say for instance, one on the Murchison, one for the Eastern Goldfields, one for Dundas, one for the South-west district, and another for the Metropolitan district. Then we would have chairmen with a knowledge of the conditions of life in those districts, and more satis-

faction would be given. On the Murchison, if a gentleman were appointed chairman who resided on the Murchison, chosen by the employer and employee, he would live among the people, he would have to keep his wife and family there, he would know the conditions of life and the cost of living, and if that man were asked to give a fair rate of wages, he would be able to do so better than the president who lives in Perth. I object to the Arbitration Court being situated in Perth, because the cost of bringing cases to Perth is too great. The tendency of the Government has been to concentrate all legal business in Perth. I do not know if that is because the Attorney General resides in Perth and has a legal business here; but the present Government have a tendency to centralise all legal business in Perth, and unions are compelled to bring members from remote portions of the State and keep them down here so that the cases can be brought before the Court. Was the Arbitration Court established for the people's convenience or for the convenience of the Judge and a few people who live in Perth? I take it it was established for the people's convenience, and to meet that convenience we should have district courts. If we have a president living in Perth he should be compelled to visit the locality in which the trouble occurs, or he cannot obtain actual knowledge of the facts of the case which will enable him to give a fair award. Exception has been taken to my remarks that workers have been "sacked" because they have given evidence before the Arbitration Court. That was mentioned in the House in connection with the North Coolgardie case where Mr. McGregor of the Augusta mine, Laverton, was "sacked" for giving evidence before the Court. The Black Range case was heard recently, and the secretary of the union, a miner of the Black Range mine, came down with two others to give evidence. He was promised that his place would be kept for him, but when he went back and presented himself at the mine he was told he was not wanted, but to come back to-morrow. Day after day he was told the same thing, to come back again, while others were being taken on. This man became disgusted and went out 18 miles farther

to Maninga Marley, and took work with the underground boss. A few days later he was "sacked." He asked the underground boss whether there was anything against him and was told "no," but that he had been instructed to "sack" him. It is no good for the men to go to the Court, for it does not matter how good a man may be, it can be said that he is incompetent. It was the same when Mr. Teesdale Smith was represented by Mr. Moss before the Court, and Mr. Reynolds, from Yarloop, was there. The Judge said it was not possible that Mr. Reynolds and Mr. Teesdale Smith would do this sort of thing, but I say it is done. We must protect these men who by peaceful means try to obtain a fair wage for their district. I know that every one of the witnesses on the workers' side in the Black Range case gave truthful evidence. I was their agent, and I demanded that before they went into Court I should have the foundation of their case. They brought their bills with them showing the cost of living. They were successful in their appeal, but when they went back they gained no advantage from it. If we are going to have an Arbitration Act, let us provide for the under dog who requires consideration. I cannot see any advantage to be derived from the amendments proposed by the Government. They have never been asked for and they are not desired. I believe if these amendments were referred to the President of the Arbitration Court, he would throw them into the waste paper basket because he would recognise that they were useless. I hope when the Arbitration Bill is introduced satisfactory amendments will be made, so that the measure will work in a satisfactory manner. The intention of the Government to amend the Constitution, mentioned in the Speech, by providing for the reduction of the Legislative Council franchise is in keeping with the promise the Government made to the electors at the last general election. I suppose it is being done because in less than eighteen months time, if this Parliament does not dissolve sooner, we must face the electors. And since this will be the last Session of the present Assembly, I suppose it is only right that the Government should make some attempt at ful-

filling the promises made in this regard to the electors of Western Australia. It is unlikely that the Government will seek a referendum of the people on the question of the abolition of the Upper House; but if such referendum were taken, I am convinced that a large majority vote would be cast against the bi-cameral system.

Mr. Foulkes: Are you in favour of abolishing the Upper House?

Mr. TROY: Yes. I am surprised that although we have had a promised amendment of the Constitution, nothing has been said here about the reduction of Ministerial salaries. Have we forgotten how Ministers have said that they were here chiefly to serve the country, that they cared little for the salary, which was as so much dross? What has become of that long-promised reduction in Ministers' salaries? That is one other promise made by this Government to the people of Western Australia which is not likely to eventuate in fulfilment. We are promised an amendment of the Electoral Act, and what appears to me most humorous in the whole matter is that the Amending Bill is to provide for a pure roll. Imagine a Government which secured election owing to the fact that a majority of the people were disfranchised being anxious there should be pure rolls! What would "pure rolls" mean in the eyes of Ministers? [*Mr. Taylor:* Sausage rolls.] It would mean pure anti-socialist rolls; pure conservative rolls. Pure rolls in their eyes would never, I am sure, mean rolls embracing the whole of the people of Western Australia entitled to vote. The present Ministry are too fond of their offices to give the people of Western Australia an opportunity of registering their votes. Imagine the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory), who secured election by reason of the fact that 570 of his electors were disfranchised, all of whom were labour voters, desiring a pure roll. [*Mr. Taylor:* Pure rot.] I would not be surprised to learn that he desired a pure Gregory roll—he certainly would not desire a pure roll. And imagine the Minister for Works (Hon. J. Price) desiring a pure roll, that Minister who secured election not by the votes and trust of his constituents but by the promise of a

dock. Then there is the member for Collie (Mr. Ewing), who congratulated his committee and also Mr. Rason on the fact that he was able to rush the election through, thus preventing the people from getting their names on the roll. Can we imagine that member desiring a pure roll? Before the next election comes round I intend to get the weight of this "pure roll" proposal of the Government. The best thing the Labour Party and its supporters can do in this matter is not to depend on the Government to provide pure rolls but upon themselves; then, and not until then, will the people of Western Australia have an opportunity of expressing their will in the ballot-box. Does the Treasurer (Hon. F. Wilson) want a roll that will provide that all the timber men in his electorate shall be enfranchised? He wants to get them out of his electorate, and his supporters are asking for an alteration of the Constitution in order that the timber workers in that electorate may be included in some other constituency. I wish to conclude by referring to the policy for the development of the North-West. The member for Pilbarra (Mr. Underwood) dealt ably with this matter last evening; and since I am interested in that portion of the State I desire to see the North-West developed. I have always held that the North-West is the most promising portion of Western Australia, and has been too long neglected. The member for Kimberley (Mr. Male), speaking to the Address-in-Reply, omitted making any reference to one matter which is doing grave injury to the North-West—the coastal steamship service, which was dealt with by the member for Pilbarra. The member for Kimberley is fully aware that this combine is doing grave injury to Western Australia, particularly to the North-West; yet during the time he has been in the House he has never raised his voice once against the operations of that combine. [*Member: Why?*] The hon. member himself can alone say why. It is generally understood that he is the agent at Broome for this combine, but I am justified in thinking that no man, no matter what association he might have with the combine, would act in the interests of the combine and against the

interests of his constituents. If he would do so, his business is not in this House, but in the office of the combine. But I do not hold that view of the hon. member's position. I believe he represents his constituents, and he should therefore take action so far as this combine is concerned in the matter of the freights charged for the carriage of produce and goods along the coast and also in the other matter already pointed out, that the combine makes Singapore the port of transshipment for goods consigned to Western Australia, by which means the port of Fremantle is losing something like £15,000 per annum. That fact may interest the Minister for Works, who, no matter what his faults, certainly has some interest in the port of Fremantle. For this reason I am hopeful that we will have that Minister's assistance in providing for the people of the North-West better and cheaper means of transit. I hope that the policy of development for the North-West which has been promised in the way of railways will not prove merely a promise, to go by the board as so many of the promises of this Government have already done. I hope that during the session we initiate a policy of development, not only mineral but also in the agricultural industry, because I recognise that these industries must go hand-in-hand, and that we cannot build up the State unless we build up every industry capable of development. But I do not think the Minister controlling the Department of Agriculture is going the right way about developing the dairying industry. Take the case of the gentleman sent to the Eastern States to purchase dairy cattle. He is, I understand, a brother of the member for Swan (Mr. Gull), though I take no objection to that. What experience had the hon. member's brother had? The other day, in reading some Queensland dairying notes, I found that the Government of Queensland sent an expert to Victoria to buy dairy cattle and he purchased two head at £15 each; but he found, though he was willing to pay a fair price, that there was none in Victoria very much better than in his own State. Yet the member's brother, the expert from Western Australia sent over by the Minister for Agriculture, was able to purchase cattle at £7 10s. per

head. [*Member*: What sort?] Just so; what sort of cattle can you purchase in the Eastern States for £7 10s. per head? The hon. member's brother was gulled by the people of the Eastern States because he had no knowledge of the class of cattle he went over to buy; and the people of Western Australia are not going to reap any benefit from his purchases. Then again, what is badly wanted in the Treasurer's district is that someone should go down and educate them. If the Minister would devote more of his attention to the education of his constituents than to the education of the Geisha girls of Japan or the Sultan of Johore, it would be of greater use so far as the dairying industry is concerned. That Minister should be the last in this House to speak about the interests of his constituents, because no man having the interests of the country at heart would go away at a time when the country most needed his attention. The people should be educated in the growing of greenstuffs to make ensilage. I did not see a single silo during my visit to the South-West. (*Interjection by the Minister for Works.*) I know what a silo is just as well as the Minister knows what a dock is; and I believe the Minister for Agriculture would do the State a great service if he had the people taught to make ensilage. The lands of the State should be broken up and settled on, and only in that way can the agricultural industry be successfully carried on. I congratulate the Government—it is as well to congratulate them on something after so much condemnation—on the fact that if we give them sufficient inducement and make them toe the scratch they will do something during this session. I noticed a letter in the Press recently from one of the Government's supporters. It was a helpless cry to let the Government down light, "for God's sake, for the good of Western Australia, give them a hand; there is very little in principle separating you; drop your differences for the time being and help them." That is the advice the Labour party gets from the Government's own supporters; and I will say this that for the good of Western Australia we shall help the Government, as we have done in the past. It was this party that helped

the Government to get their land tax through the House, which could not have been done without that assistance. The party on this side of the House was the one which helped the Government most during last session in the discussion and carrying through of their measures. When important matters were under discussion most of the members sitting on the other side were in the Corridors. How could there be any intelligent discussion on the part of those members? They voted as they will vote this session, without listening to the arguments of both sides. The Minister for Mines interjects that he ought to be thankful for the assistance I gave him. I have already promised to give him every assistance in his amendment of the Mining Act, because I believe amendments are necessary, though I shall strongly oppose his proposition to abolish labour conditions on mining areas. There is a general tendency to decry opposition from this side of the House, but if fair play is not given to this side, we have our means of redress. That means is the platform of the country, and we shall go on that platform and give our views to the people. Our friends on the other side must remember that if the wishes and rights of the people are not granted and safeguarded here during this session, then every Opposition member is prepared to take the platform subsequently.

Mr. Gordon: You will take anything.

Mr. TROY: We shall hardly take another man's job, as you did. The hon. member should be the last man to speak of that, because he took the job of the member for East Perth (*Mr. Hardwick*). We are not taking that. We do not want it. We shall give the Government every assistance in passing wise measures, and I hope now that members on this side who have some experience of the legislation to be introduced have given their opinions, those opinions will be listened to, and when good will be embraced by Government supporters.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (*Hon. J. Price*): During the recess the Government have been subjected to considerable criticism. Sitting on this side of the House, I think some of that criticism has been rather unfair.

But at all events, I am able to congratulate my opponents on the vigour and pertinacity of their efforts. Personally I welcome the opportunity of meeting them face to face in the House, and giving an account of the stewardship at least of the Public Works Department of the Government. I did think of referring to some matters which perhaps had better be left dead and forgotten. During the recess we passed through stirring times, times that were perhaps calculated to arouse heat and passion; and some of the remarks made then it is just as well to let go. Up to the present this debate has taken a fair and reasonable form, in the mouths of all may I say, except the Whip for the other side (Mr. Troy). With the exception of one or two remarks which are open to a double construction, I think the debate has been very fair and even, and I do not wish to say anything that might revive some of the ill-feeling which in exceptional circumstances was undoubtedly aroused during the past few months. [Mr. Holman: It was all on your side.] I do not claim that we on this side monopolise all the virtues, and I am inclined to think that members on both sides have a considerable share of common humanity. There are undoubtedly occasions when men on both sides—I freely make the admission that I have done so—say things that on maturer consideration they admit might better have been left unsaid. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Bath) during his speech the other day appeared to think it was the business of the Government to attempt to wipe off the whole of the accumulated deficit of the State during this 12 months; and yet later on he recognised that other States during the past year had an exceedingly bad time, and that their now being able to make satisfactory adjustments of their loan indebtedness was due more to the effect of the generous bounty of nature than to financial administration. We have to remember that last year can by no means be called a normal year. Throughout the agricultural districts we had a very bad season indeed; and if we could have made for the last financial year arrangements similar to those which will be in operation this year, we should now be just about making both ends meet, which is a fair

proof that under normal conditions, or under anything better than normal conditions, we shall do more than make both ends meet, and shall take some steps year by year, in normal years, to diminish the deficit that has accrued. The influence of a bad season, of trade depression, is shown by the fact that in 1900, taking the whole of the Australian States together, the expenditure exceeded the revenue by £332,505, whereas in 1905, owing largely to the influence of good seasons and trade revival, we find that the revenue for the 12 months exceeded the expenditure by £1,644,891. Hence, if we can so adjust our finances that for the past year they would have made both ends meet in a normal year, then with a series of normal years we need not fear. I do not propose to traverse the ground of the Premier's Policy Speech, wherein he made it clear that had our taxation proposals been accepted last year, except for one or two extraordinary events, such, for instance, as the unfortunate timber trouble, which I think members on the other side will admit caused considerable loss to our revenue, we should have been able to make both ends meet. I should like to point out to members that, in common with some of my colleagues, I have when opportunity offered visited different parts of the State. But I venture to think that I have in no way neglected the administration of my department; and in the course of my visits, especially in the country districts, I have been agreeably impressed with the great progress, the rapid strides which are being made by our agricultural industry. I have come in contact with a large number of farmers, and am assured, and from my own observation the statement seems reasonable, that at least 10 per cent. more land is coming under crop this year than was cropped last year. I think that is a very low estimate, which will in all probability be considerably exceeded. We are also told that during this season the germination of the seed has been the best known for 10 years; and the general opinion of farmers is that with normal conditions for the rest of the season we may look to a better average per acre than we have had for many years past. If that be so it must mean added prosperity to the

farming community and additional freights for our railways, and all this should go far to assist in the general improvement of our finances for this year. Anyone who comes in contact with men from the Nor'-West knows that great attention is now being turned to the production of the baser metals, notably copper and tin. Within the past few months I have met many men who are just opening up shows which give every promise of a prosperous and certain future. Everything points to the commencement of a revival in trade and a period of prosperity. But personally I see one disquieting feature, and it is not altogether a feature for which this Parliament, either one side of the House or the other, is responsible. The other day I was looking over the trade returns of the State and noticed that our total imports for the year amounted to £6,820,933, and that of this amount some £3,780,495 came from beyond Australia, the goods yielding in custom duties to the Federal authorities £705,130, of which a considerable proportion is returned to this State. Now, we cannot lose sight of the fact—and I say this without expressing an opinion as to the merits of either protection or free-trade—that in the Commonwealth Parliament there is at the present moment a distinctly protective tendency; and if there should in the near future be any alteration of the tariff it is not likely to be in the direction of decreasing but rather of increasing the duties. An increase can have but one effect—to diminish the quantity of goods imported to Western Australia from outside Australian borders and to diminish the customs returns of which we are now receiving a large proportion from the Federal authorities. [*Member*: Make the goods here.] Nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see that done; and I am sure that members on both sides of the House earnestly desire to see manufacturing industries springing up all around us. But we cannot lose sight of the fact that the effect of Federation has been rather to discourage than to benefit our manufacturing industries. In the town I have the honour to represent there are factories which under the influence of Federation have been closed down; and I say, this de-

partment of our financial affairs deserves the closest scrutiny, and more than that, entitles this State to special and serious consideration from the Commonwealth authorities. Personally I should be most reluctant to join in any attempt to loosen the Federal bonds; but I can imagine a set of circumstances which would induce any man who desires to see this State progress and become a manufacturing State to determine that in so far as he is concerned, unless our requirements and our difficulties in this respect receive full, free, and just consideration from the Federal Parliament, he will put forth every effort to sever the bonds by which we are at present united. I trust that our special circumstances will receive due consideration. I desire now to express my deepest objection to any handing over of our borrowing powers to the Federal Parliament. We are not in the same position as the Eastern States. We have a large and undeveloped territory. We are at a great distance from the Federal centre. Unless we are free, and I care not which Government be in power, unless we are free to develop our own resources in our own way, to borrow money as we may think fit, then I say this State will be unfortunate indeed. Personally I hope that our representatives in the Federal Parliament, on whichever side they sit, will watch our interests in this matter; and I do trust that if we should not receive justice, both sides of this House will unite in a vigorous attempt to secure the due recognition of our undoubted rights. A great many criticisms have been levelled at the Government because of the assistance we propose to give to the establishment of freezing works in the North-West. I do not know who first used the word "subsidy" in this connection, whether it came from friends of mine on this side or from the other side—[*Mr. Bath*: It was the Honorary Minister in reply to a deputation]—I submit that any man who had our proposals explained to him intelligently—and these opportunities have not been wanting—should clearly see that there is no attempt on the part of the Government to subsidise any meat ring or any body of capitalists in this State. The proposals of the Government are of the

simplest possible nature, and I venture to say that when fully understood they will receive unanimous approval. The Government propose to loan £35,000 to any corporate body, or any individual for that matter, prepared to establish freezing works in the North-West. That money is not to be lent unconditionally. Offers have been invited to take advantage of the offer which the Government have made; but the terms and conditions have to be such that the smaller pastoralists are sufficiently protected, and that there shall be no opportunity for any capitalist to squeeze and cut down the prices at which he will deal with the stock coming from the smaller pastoralists in the North-West. [Mr Scaddan: When they repay the loan these conditions will not apply.] When they repay the loan they are in the position of dealing with their own money, and it would be impossible for us to impose conditions that would apply to them only when obligations to the State had not been fulfilled. [Mr. Walker: Feed the monster while he is obeying you.] I trust the hon. member will understand that there are men on this side of the House who take part in this deal, who are just as interested in protecting the rights of consumers and the smaller pastoralists as any member on the other side of the House. [Mr. Angwin: You would not lend a small man at Wagin money to run his mill.] We lend the small man money to build up his farm on the best terms; but we are not talking of milling now. If we have a reasonably fair offer, we undoubtedly shall fix up an agreement, and then if the member for Kanowna sees those loopholes for improper dealing, and for boosting up those capitalists who may be in a position to grind down the smaller pastoralists, which loopholes I prophesy he will so vividly pourtray in his speech, he will then have his opportunity; it will then be time for members to complain; but I can assure hon. members that unless I see clearly that the rights of the smaller men are being sufficiently protected, I shall have nothing to do with the affair. [Mr. A. J. Wilson: Will there be ample security?] There will be ample security in that at least £70,000 must be spent on the works, of which the Government propose to lend

half. As to whether the necessity for the works exists, any who cares to put himself into communication with pastoralists in the North-West—I am speaking of the smaller pastoralists—will know that the herds of some of the smaller pastoralists are being driven to the Queensland border for treatment there; and if the Government can secure fair means whereby this stock—which at present is in Western Australia, and which, unless freezing works are established at Wyndham may find its way to Queensland—if the Government can secure that these beasts are treated in our own borders, it is a proposal that will receive the general sanction of the people of the State. [Mr. Scaddan: There is nothing in the statistical record of these cattle going away.] I am given to understand that there are something like 17,000 at present on the way to Queensland. [Mr. Scaddan: Given to understand.] The hon. member is a veritable Doubting Thomas: unless I take him and show him the stock going away he will not believe. I will put him in communication with gentlemen in this State who will give him the information, and whose word I venture to say he will take. I regret that in one of his speeches the Leader of the Opposition should have seen cause to refer to some of the railway proposals of the Government as political railways.

Mr. Bath: What did the visitor from England say about it?

The MINISTER: The visitor from England was probably just about as well informed as the Leader of the Opposition. Their intellects in this direction seem to be about on a par. The visitor from England had been in the State about a few days; and I understand that when he was asked what he meant about his statement, he stated that he was referring to Victorian railways and not to Western Australian railways. That may or may not be so; but I notice that if the Government propose to put a railway through an Opposition constituency, everything is all right. One can build a railway from Coolgardie to Widge-mooltha and it will receive the approbation of the other side of the House; if we build a line from Mt. Magnet to Black Range there is nothing but eulogistic remarks; if we build a railwa

from Port Hedland to Marble Bar the gentlemen opposite will speak most highly of it; but the moment we commence to build a railway in one of our agricultural constituencies, then their sense of proportion is gone altogether; it is a political railway at once.

Mr. Walker: Can you deny that some of them have been political railways?

The MINISTER: I most emphatically deny that any of those railways have been political railways. Any member who cares to visit these railways and see the extension of our agricultural interests they have led to, and who sees the settlers who were at a great distance from the trunk lines before they were proposed, will feel that these are not political railways.

Mr. Bath: Then why object to give information about them? Why keep everything secret?

The MINISTER: That is just the sort of charge the hon. gentleman has been levelling for the last six months. Every member knows perfectly well that in my department are the facts and figures in connection with these railways, and if the hon. member desires any particular information in connection with any of these railways, if he will call upon me at my office I shall be only too delighted to supply any information I can. [*Mr. Bath:* That is not the place. The place is in the House when you introduce the proposals.] When our railway proposals were before the House last year, I venture to say, full and complete information was given.

Mr. Bath: There was no more information given last session than when the Attorney General combated the Government because they did not give it.

Labour Member: Or when the member for Fremantle declined to vote.

The MINISTER: In reply to an interjection last session, I fully explained the difference between the information given in this House at the time of the consideration of the railway proposals last session, and that given during the previous occasion; and I indubitably proved that, instead of having some 24 hours to consider our railway proposals, as was the case in the previous session, several weeks were allowed for their consideration. I farther showed that the information given on the maps last

session was considerably in advance of anything available to members in the previous session, and I am prepared to give this promise, that all reasonable information my department has been collecting in respect to railways this session will be available and will be brought before members. If the debate on the Greenhills-Quairading Railway Bill be read, it will be seen that I absolutely proved my position, perhaps not to the satisfaction of the member for Ivanhoe, but certainly to the satisfaction of any impartial individual who cares to read the debate. While I am on this point, may I instance an incident that occurred to me only a week ago in connection with our railway policy? I do not do so to make political capital out of the incident, but when I was at a siding on the Greenhills-Quairading Railway I met some 15 or 16 farmers who were settled there. I said to these men, "I want you individually to give me the extra areas you will bring under cultivation as a result of this railway within the next twelve months." This only applies to one section of the country served by the line. After totting up the figures, which reputable individuals informed me were reliable, I found that in one district within the next twelve months something like 3,000 acres extra will come under wheat as a result of that railway. As a matter of fact I think the acreage already cleared was something like 2,000 acres; but in the course of the next twelve months it will be increased until it reaches 3,000 acres. I have the names and addresses of these farmers, which I am prepared to give to any gentleman who is sceptical. This is not a solitary instance of what is going on in connection with these railways. I have had the advantage of seeing the country through which two of them have been constructed, and I believe that the amount of land being brought under crop as a result of these railways would stagger members if they took the opportunity of visiting the country and seeing what there is to be seen. It has been argued that because the land adjacent to our main trunk lines is not being utilised, and because some of it is in the hands of private individuals who are keeping it locked up, therefore those who are a considerable distance from the main

trunk lines should not have railway facilities given to them. I take it that if the criticism of the Leader of the Opposition means anything, that is what it means.

Mr. Bath : I mean to settle them on that land alongside trunk lines.

The MINISTER : I agree with the hon. member that if some feasible method could be shown of settling them on the land we should do so. [*Mr. Angwin* : Confiscate it.] "Confiscation" is a nasty word. I do not forget that many of these men who held considerable areas there in the early days went through hardships and took their part in building up this State, which entitles them to the position they have made. I regret their decision in keeping their land locked up, and, if a reasonable and fair method could be devised by which it would be opened up to the public, none would be more glad than I. Because that state of affairs exists in connection with these areas, that is no reason why those settlers who have been driven to a distance from the main railway lines owing to the fact that decent conditional purchase lands cannot be obtained nearer should not be served by some such system of agricultural spur lines as the Government are introducing and constructing. One other point in connection with the railway system. I have heard the argument used in all directions that we should economise on the railways, and that the profits we make by that means should be used to square up our financial position. I do not agree with that view, and do not believe that the railways should be run in that manner. My opinion is that whatever economies we can effect in the railway management—so long as we can pay the financial charges in connection with the capital amount invested—should go in the direction of reducing the freights on the railways. [*Mr. Taylor* : You have not paid interest and sinking fund.] It has been suggested that we should reduce expenses, and that any profits we might make by that means should be set aside to make up our financial leeway. I take exception to that because any money that may be made by the reduction of expenses in the railway system should be devoted towards enabling the agriculturalist or the miner to improve his

position by getting his products to market at a better price, for by that means we in the coastal districts will reap the reward as well as he. I have found in some of the agricultural communities that the greatest obstacle to progress has been the excessive railway rates. This may be due to expensive management—I do not at this moment venture to offer an opinion on that question—but if it is possible by a more economical system of management to be able to reduce the freight to the producer the country must benefit. We must not look to make up financial leeway from that source, but from other sources of revenue. I admit that the railways should pay for themselves, and I do not suggest that they should be run at a loss; but, assuming that they do pay for themselves, the balance should go towards the reduction in the freights. The Leader of the Opposition upbraided the Government because certain of our loan funds have been spent on what he considers to be unproductive works. I do not like the *tu quoque* style of argument, but did not the Government with which he was associated at one time find themselves in a similar position?

Mr. Bath : In connection with what?

The MINISTER : In connection with the rabbit-proof fence.

Mr. Bath : And why was this necessary?

The MINISTER : The hon. member should agree with me that if it was justifiable to expend loan money on a rabbit-proof fence, it is equally justifiable, considering the state of the finances of the country, to expend loan money on such works as the Claremont Hospital for the Insane.

Mr. Bath : It was done because the James Government so messed up the first fence that the rabbits got through, and it was necessary to build another fence.

The MINISTER : That is the hon. member's explanation, and it appears that what was a virtue in the Government of which he was a member, is a vice in us. When we found that the Hospital for the Insane was in such a state that improved conditions were absolutely necessary, and the state of the finances and the exigencies of the times did

not enable us to spend revenue on the work, we decided that the building should be erected out of loan funds. Possibly, perhaps, the hon. member was misreported, but I have noticed that when dealing with these figures, he is reported to have spoken of them as if they applied to the nine months of this year, but I think he will find that the figures really applied also to the 12 months preceding [*Mr. Bath*: They referred to the nine months of the financial year]. The hon. member will find that in that particular he is mistaken. The hon. member for Pilbarra extended his benediction to the Government in connection with their North-West policy, and he has every reason to do so. No Government in past years—at all events in the last eight or ten years—has paid so much attention to the development of the North-West coast as we have done. [*Mr. Scaddan*: By promises up to date.] I would remind the hon. member that the jetties and tramways on the North-West coast have been overhauled and brought up to date; for trade with the North-West is constantly increasing. The Government is pledged to bring down this session a Bill for the construction of a railway from Port Hedland to Marble Bar. A survey is already going on for the selection of sites for four lighthouses on the coast which must add to the safe navigation of those waters. These facts must surely be an indication that the Government are really doing more than making promises. I will go farther and explain that in the North-West artesian boring is being carried out and a thorough test is being made of doubtful areas for the purpose of ascertaining the existence or otherwise of artesian supplies. It is all very well for members to decry the efforts of the Government, and to say they only make promises; but these matters to which I have referred are all solid performances. In some of these great works the preparations cannot be completed in a week or two, but solid preparations are going forward for the large works which the Government have forecasted, and the Bills will be brought down to the House in due course. [*Mr. Taylor*: Has the artesian boring been a success?] Most gratifying results have been obtained in one or two cases. I

desire to refer to the policy of the Government in connection with roads boards. I have been subjected to a good deal of criticism on this matter, though my desire is not to harass and worry the boards, but to bring them into a state of greater efficiency. I recognise that in many districts there are a number of able men who are freely and gratuitously giving their services to their districts. Many are doing extremely good work, and private individuals, without receiving any remuneration, are carrying out and supervising loan works in a most economical style. I regret that these remarks do not apply to all the roads boards. Some of the members seems to forget altogether their responsibility. It seems to me very unfair that one board should raise a fair amount of revenue from the ratepayers; while another in an adjacent area allows the ratepayers to get off practically scot free, looking to the Government for assistance. Conditions in this respect should be more even. I find that the local revenue collected to June 30th, 1906, was £38,180, while the Government assistance amounted to £84,196. The expenditure for supervision and administration amounted to £17,334, and on works £99,825. On that average the 97 boards in this State contributed for every £100 provided by the Government £45 5s. 3d. [*Mr. Walker*: A very fair average.] In these circumstances the boards cannot complain that they have been unfairly or ungenerously treated. When we come down to the details of the boards' contribution, we find that for every £100 contributed by the Government the average amounts contributed by the boards were as follows:—From £4 15s. to £25, 32 boards; from £28 to £48, 36 boards; in excess of £48, 29 boards. I am glad to say that the state of affairs in connection with these Boards is being gradually improved. Many of them which in the past have been somewhat lax in the amount of revenue they have collected are now recognising their responsibilities, and this year there has been an all-round increase in the amounts collected. I have every reason to believe that the revenue raised locally by the Boards for the year ended June 30, 1907, will exceed that raised for the previous financial

year by from £16,000 to £17,000. At the present moment this is only an estimate, but I think that this will approximately show the result of the year's operations. There has been a reduction in the amount of the subsidy for Road Boards, but the amount raised locally will go a long way towards making good that reduction. In the new Bill which I propose to bring before Parliament this session, it will be suggested that we should give greater powers and supervision in connection with such matters as auditing to the Government officer so as to make the system uniform in the different Boards of the State. We also propose to give to the Boards an opportunity of declaring certain portions of their districts as special areas, and enable them to strike a differential rate for such areas, so that the small towns which draw their prosperity from the surrounding country shall not be divorced from the areas they should help, and to which they owe so much. There are various other amendments we propose in connection with the Roads Act, and one I am considering is whether it would not be possible to lighten the burden of rating for the first few years to settlers on conditional purchase lands. We should do everything we can to assist in securing agricultural settlement. There cannot be the slightest doubt—and I do not want to minimise the mining industry which has done so much for the State—that in fifty or sixty years the prosperity of the State will more largely depend upon its agricultural than upon its mining resources. That has been the experience of many gold-fields countries, and if we are wise legislators, we shall look ahead. May I be permitted to make one or two remarks in connection with the Government's proposals for a dock at Fremantle. If my friends opposite go carefully into this matter, they will see that this is not a question which I am bringing to the front now for the first time. It has been a burning question at the port for many years. In Sir John Forrest's time a loan was secured which was to be utilised for the construction of a dock, but, from time to time, the money was reappropriated. However, the question always was a burning one. [Mr. A. J. Wilson : It will

burn itself out.] No, it is nearer fruition to-day than ever before. The intentions of this Government are absolutely known on the matter. For the information of the House I will read a letter which I have received from the surveyor for the Underwriters' Association of Western Australia. He is a gentleman who has practically no property interests in Perth and, as far as he is concerned, if the shipping should ever come to Fremantle he could just as easily transact his business here, and would suffer no loss whatever from the change. He is an old P. & O. officer, so his information is worthy of consideration. The letter he has sent to me is as follows:—

As surveyor to the Marine Underwriters' Association of W.A. I am in a position to state authoritatively that a considerable number of vessels trading to Western Australian ports where I have had business relations with them have required dry docking, both sailers and steamers. When Millars' Karri & Jarrah, Ltd., insured their outward cargo in W.A. insurance offices I had to survey and grant certificates to all sailing vessels loading at Fremantle, Bunbury, and Rockingham, and I frequently met masters of vessels who would have docked their vessels had a dock been available, not on account of accidents but simply to clean and examine the vessel's bottom. There are vessels who discharge at Fremantle and have to load at Newcastle, N.S.W. Some of these require docking, and have to pay all the extra expenses of entering Sydney to dock. Again, I have known vessels in a partly disabled condition pass Western Australia and make the most convenient port in the Eastern States where a dock is available. Then we have the occasional disabled or injured vessels that come to Fremantle and have to go to considerable expense to tip the vessel or have temporary repairs effected by divers. If it were advertised in the usual manner that a dock was at Fremantle, disabled or partly disabled vessels would put in for repairs. I have not kept record of the vessels that have required docking for cleaning and painting the bottom, but they could average one a month, and most probably more. Last year there were several vessels required a dock, including the s.s. "Sophocoles," and s.s. "Norfolk," both large steamers.

This year there have been the following vessels that to my knowledge have required docking. The ship "Bullaclulish," discharged a cargo at Fremantle, and had to load at Newcastle. She had to enter Sydney to dock, and afterwards tow to Newcastle to load. The barque "Stephano Razeto" would have docked for examination, cleaning, and painting, before sailing. The barge "Sverre," now loading wheat in Fremantle would have been docked. The s.s. "Bullarru" had to steam to the Eastern States for docking, and most probably the "Coolgardie," that is now lying at Albany, tipping, to put new blades on her propellor, would have put back to Fremantle instead of going to great expense and detention at Albany. Take the case of the "Mildura:" I believe the vessel can be floated, but if a dock were available here the probability of her being floated would be much greater, because there is the additional risk, to be considered of taking a damaged vessel thousands of miles to a dock, which in her case must be Brisbane, to which port she will get smooth water by going around north of Australia. Wheat will be a large item in our export in the immediate future, and many of the vessels loading here will require docking before they obtain a certificate to load, if they have not docked for some lengthy period, which frequently occurs. In my opinion, a graving dock is absolutely necessary,

That is the testimony of an absolutely independent and impartial individual. We have in our port at the present time a striking instance of the necessity for a dock at Fremantle. Only the other day the steamship "Kolya," in going round from Owen's anchorage to the Port of Fremantle, got her steering gear jammed and the vessel struck a rock. I went on board the vessel the day before yesterday, and they were then engaged in patching her up so that she could go on to Sydney for docking purposes. The injury to the vessel occurred under the water tanks, otherwise if it had occurred in the vessel's bottom near the hold no doubt she would have sunk where she struck. In that case, owing to the absence of a dock in Fremantle, there would have been an absolute loss; as it is valuable time has been taken up. I do not want to speak with too much as-

surance on nautical matters, but in taking her round to Sydney, even if the best possible repairs are made to the vessel, there must be some risk. The repairs of the vessel will cost something between £3,000 and £5,000. With a dock at the port the whole of these repairs could be carried out in this State, and would find a good deal of employment in Western Australia. At the present time the fact that the port has no dock, and distanced some 2,000 miles of such accommodation, makes the port, shall I say, of second rate importance. There cannot be the slightest doubt that if accommodation were provided it must have its influence on freights. Owner's chartering vessels for Western Australia are well aware that there is no accommodation of this sort, and if any untoward incident happens on the voyage, they have to go to great expense in sending the vessel some 2,000 miles for repairs. Another class of vessel has to be periodically overhauled, and these vessels are precluded, if it is getting near the time for the overhauling, from taking charters to Western Australia, owing to the absence of docking accommodation. At the present moment the preparation of plans is proceeding in connection with the matter; it is a big and heavy work and will take some time to complete, but the Engineer-in-Chief assures me that he will use every despatch in connection with the matter, and I give my personal assurance that the Government will see that every effort is made to put the work in course of construction. May I be permitted to refer for a moment to the goldfields water supply. Members, especially those representing goldfields constituencies, have been to some extent perturbed by the external corrosion going on in the mains of the goldfields water supply. That is receiving attention at the hands of the engineer of the scheme, and wherever it is thought likely that external corrosion is going on the pipes are being opened up and the necessary repairs effected. It has led to some, I think I am right in saying, £8,000 in upkeep this year. Fortunately this discovery has been made in time, and I do not think any serious consequences are likely to be feared. [Mr. Scaddan: It will still go on.] We find in many

sections of the pipes that the line has practically no corrosion at all. Where any salt or other mineral compound is in the earth covering the pipes there is difficulty, but by far the large proportion of the main is not affected. Undoubtedly this is going to be a source of some expense to the country, but fortunately the whole thing has been taken in time. May I also refer to the question of the pollution of the catchment area raised by the member for Pilbarra last night. All I have to say about that is this, that the bacteriological reports received from time to time from the Government bacteriologist do not corroborate the remarks which have been made. We have given instructions to the inspectors to report from time to time any infringement of the by-laws. We have all the powers of a board of health in connection with the whole area, and we are prepared in specific cases to prosecute. I know there is a question whether we have power to secure a conviction; personally I think we have. But if we have not the power to secure a conviction, I am prepared to ask Parliament for greater powers. At any rate if the member for Pilbarra will supply me with sufficient evidence to prove the statements made last night, I undertake, as Minister controlling the scheme, to prosecute. [*Mr. Collier*: Are there stock on the catchment area now?] There are stock there, but may I assure the member for Boulder that we periodically have that water analysed, and that upon the slightest sign of any bacteriological impurity—this is becoming rather a statement of a scientific nature, and I want to be careful of my words—if there is the slightest sign of anything in the water deleterious or detrimental to public health, I shall advise the Government to go in for the purchase of the land which remains. The matter is spoken of at times as if the whole catchment area was being polluted. Of the 365,000 acres in the catchment area, 27,900 are freehold, 17,000 are conditional purchase, and 23,000 poison lease. We are prepared, however, when owners are willing to sell at anything like a reasonable figure, to negotiate for the purchase. [*Interjection by Mr. Gull.*] The hon. member's friends' ideas of what are reasonable figures are quite different

from what the Government's ideas are. I do not care twopence what it is or who is the owner; if it were my own brother I would take action just the same. The Government are not going to be rooked in that connection. Let these people come along and offer the lands at a fair figure, and the Government are ready to entertain the question of purchase. I would like to assure members that wherever an opportunity is offered to obtain the land at reasonable rates, we are quite prepared to take advantage of it. If it becomes evident at any time that there is any serious danger or the slightest danger to the public health by the pollution of the area, the Government will take drastic steps to remedy it. I hope members from the goldfields will take my assurance in this regard. I do not look on the price charged for the water as unreasonable. Members who complain at the loss to the State forget the advantage of the goldfields to other portions of the State, and the policy we are endeavouring to carry out while I am in the department is that where the domestic supplies are increasing, the charge for the water shall be brought down to the lowest possible limit. I recognise the conditions on the goldfields are not what they are on the coast; people live there under conditions which do not appertain to the coast, and we should let them have as cheap a supply of water as is possible. I regret the financial exigencies of the scheme do not permit me to bring the price of water still farther down, but if the people of the goldfields in their domestic supplies make full use of the water, I am prepared to see, if there is increased consumption with some slightly increased revenue by the increased consumption, that a smaller price be charged, and I am prepared to consider that. In so far as the metropolitan water scheme is concerned, at the present time a board is considering the question, and I saw one of the members to-day. They have several schemes under consideration for the supply of the metropolitan area with hills water, and he assures me that within the next few weeks the board will be able to report.

Mr. Scaddan: Whom do they represent?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The members of the board consist of

engineers, for the most part, of the metropolitan area; the chairman is Mr. Reynoldson, who is the chief engineer of the goldfields water supply scheme; and the City Engineer of Perth is on the board, so that he can supply the Perth Council with any possible information which the board gather in the investigations. Up to recently the engineer to the Fremantle Municipal Council was a member of the board, but on his resignation Mr. Newbold, a member of the Fremantle Council and the manager of the gasworks in Fremantle a man versed in practical engineering matters, took his place. The board are going thoroughly into the matter, and they have every probability of being able to put before the Government some feasible scheme for supplying the metropolitan area with hills water; and I give this House my assurance that as soon as they report, that report will be taken into consideration. The member for Guildford (Mr. Johnson) last year indulged in the prognostication that during the past summer a shortage of water would occur in Perth.

Mr. Scaddan: But you did what he said would prevent it.

The MINISTER: I have taken no advice at all from the member for Guildford.

Mr. Scaddan: But you did what he suggested.

The MINISTER: If the member for Guildford happened to prognosticate some course which the Government had already determined upon, it cannot be said that I took advice from him.

Mr. Scaddan: He suggested a certain action, and that was taken.

The MINISTER: I have not the faintest idea what he said, even at the present moment, but I know the matter was being carefully watched by the department, that proper precautions were taken, and that we have gone through the season without inconvenience.

Mr. Scaddan: Did you not get Mundaring water?

The MINISTER: Certainly.

Mr. Scaddan: That was the suggestion made by the member for Guildford.

Mr. Bolton: How many gallons were used from the Mundaring dam last year?

The MINISTER: I cannot be expected to answer a question of that kind off-

hand. Referring now to the public works policy, I have no doubt members will be interested to know how the department came out in the construction of the three agricultural railways. The departmental estimate for the construction of the Katanning-Kojonup, Wagin-Dumbleyung, and Goomalling-Dowerin lines was £37,247; and the actual cost, including £712 worth of extras ordered by the Engineer-in-Chief, was £37,307. So that we constructed those lines well within the price at which we estimated we could carry them out.

Mr. Angwin: What about white ants in the sleepers?

The MINISTER: I anticipated a remark of this nature, and accordingly I instructed a departmental officer to make an examination. He has made the examination, and informs me that so far there is no indication that white ants have at all seriously attacked those sleepers. In one or two cases ants were found in the outside shell of the sleepers, but so far as the heart of the wood is concerned he found nothing to cause alarm. In plenty of other timbers, white ants will attack the sap when they will not attack the heart. [Interjection.] At all events, so long as things are as at present, I am well satisfied. From the dismal prognostications made in this connection, I should not have been surprised to hear that the whole of the sleepers had been consumed. I am informed that the sleepers attacked are not actually part of the line, but lying alongside of it.

Mr. Angwin: That piece I gave you came from the heart.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: But the hon. member forgets he brought in a piece from a sleeper that was lying alongside the line. I am informed by engineers that the slightest vibration will to a very large extent, though not altogether, prevent the attacking of sleepers by white ants. I am quite aware that in some parts of Australasia white ants are in such abundance that this preventive is of no use whatever, and that despite the vibration which occurs when a train passes over the line the sleepers have been attacked and devoured. A fear seems to be expressed in some parts of the metropolitan area in connection with the sewerage of Perth, and I may say that the fear appears to be

shared in my constituency, that there is a possibility of a certain section of the metropolitan area being left out in the cold after the money is all spent. When I came into office I found that a certain programme had been laid down, and tenders were called for pipes in accordance with that programme; but I can assure the people of the whole of the metropolitan area that the Government have let a contract for pipes which are to be used as mains in the whole of the area, including Fremantle and Subiaco, and a farther contract has been let for earthenware pipes in connection with the reticulation of the whole of the metropolitan area, also including Fremantle and Subiaco. Certain alarmist reports have also been current with regard to the sinking of the filter beds on Burswood Island. There has been a certain amount of subsidence, but I am glad to be able to say that during the last month it has practically ceased. For a couple of months or so after the construction of the filter-beds, I admit this matter caused me a certain amount of concern; but I am glad to say that the idea of the engineers that this bottom would withstand the weight of these beds seems now to be sustained. The subsidence during June was scarcely anything at all. As to other works, already at Black Range we have two survey parties out, and we have survey parties out in connection with the Pinjarrah-Marrinup line, the Wonnerup extension, and the Widgemooltha-Norseman line; also one party starts next month for the Upper Chapman. Tenders are out for the construction of the Ravensthorpe Railway, returnable on the 6th of August. The Government also intend to widen the tramway at Carnarvon to a 3ft. 6in. gauge, in the same manner as has already been done at Roebourne, and the 2ft. plant and material taken from Carnarvon will be utilised elsewhere where jetties are required. There are one or two matters touched on in the fluent agricultural speech delivered by the member for Mt. Magnet (Mr. Troy) to which I wish to refer. I have always been willing to accept the hon. member's opinions on mining matters; but I have learned to-night that he has developed a new side to his many attainments. I can imagine if the Minister for Agri-

culture were to stand up in his place and criticise mining matters, with what contempt his criticisms would be received by the hon. member and by other members opposite. I think it is a case of the shoemaker sticking to his last; and when we hear a mining member saying we should go in for importing silos—[Mr. Troy: I explained that slip later on.] We have heard the hon. member's idea of the efforts of the Government in the direction of getting a pure roll. I hope I have a more generous turn of mind than he, and I want to say on behalf of all members of the House that the desire for pure rolls is not confined to one side of the House. What I believe every member desires to stop is the inflation of the rolls which takes place altogether independently of any political party. I could point to names on the Fremantle rolls—though I have not been through the rolls recently—that occurred on all the rolls of the Fremantle electorates at the last election. That is a state of things which neither I nor the member for East Fremantle desires; but we want to give every man a reasonable opportunity of getting on the roll, and to see that when a name is transferred to a new roll, it comes off the old roll. [Member: Like Menzies.] I know nothing about Menzies. The only thing I heard about goldfields rolls was about a palatial hotel with four beds in it, which hotel was represented on the roll by 37 names, one being that of the Leader of the Opposition. If that is a sample of what is going on, there can be no doubt that an amendment of the electoral rolls is necessary. Members opposite must not think that political purity is confined to their side of the House. We may disagree on great political principles, but I believe it is the desire of every member of this House to see elections fought out on pure rolls. We want to give every man reasonable opportunities for getting on the rolls, and we want to see that when he changes his electorate his name is struck off the roll of the other electorate. There is no reason why we should not, between the two parties, make every arrangement possible to have the political differences between us fought out on equitable rolls. I am willing to try for that, and to give credit to other members for a similar

desire; but if we are to listen to the member for Mt. Magnet, every member on this side of the House would seem to be a political scoundrel. Read his speech in the morning, and you will find suggestions of wrong-doing in every direction. I venture to think the country is sick of that kind of thing. The people do not want us to hurl charges against each other. They want the business of the country to be reasonably debated. Criticism is healthy, but it should be just. On the whole, with the exception of one or two slips made by the hon. member, I think the debate has proceeded on fair and reasonable lines. I trust that, before the end of the session, many members on the other side of the House will find the Government policy more commendable than they find it at the present moment.

On motion by *Mr. Holman*, debate adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9-31 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 11th July, 1907.

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THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4-30 o'clock p.m.

Prayers.

BILLS (2)—FIRST READING.

1, Statistics; 2, Marriage Act, Amendment; introduced by the Colonial Secretary.

DEBATE—ADDRESS IN REPLY.

Fourth day.

Resumed from the previous day.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East): I am pleased to have the opportunity of speaking to the Address-in-Reply, and have much pleasure in congratulating the country and the Ministry of the day on the optimistic character of the Speech. Unfortunately it does not seem to me that the man in the street looks with such hopeful eyes at the general prospects ahead of us; so the Speech should be the means of conveying to him an altogether altered tone and assure him that there are still great prospects ahead of us. If we all can look at things in the same light, it will help the Government considerably in fostering the many industries that are mentioned in the Speech. In the speeches that have been delivered by members a fair amount of attention has been bestowed on the important question of immigration, and we are not alone in this country anxious to encourage settlers to come to our shores, but we are pleased to see that the Federal Parliament recognises it is of the utmost importance to the whole of Australia, and people in the old country are quite willing to back it up. There seems to be a fair tangle in regard to the matter, because of the different claims the various States have to put forth, especially when we hear of a Federal Minister making the statements that have been attributed to him. It is a very serious matter indeed for us. We are paying an Agent General in London to advertise our country throughout the length and breadth, not only of Great Britain, but of the whole world. Yet while we are advertising our resources and are paying an Agent General in England to send us immigrants, we have a Federal Minister condemning our country. We also have other traitors in the camp who have not backed up the endeavours of some of our own people. It must be extremely hard in a country like Great Britain to persuade people to give up the livelihood they have been following for many years, to break up their homes and face the great distance that lies between us, and cut themselves off from all home ties and start out on a new life. They first of all have to put