

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 20th August, 1919.

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The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4-30 p.m., and read prayers.

BILL—DIVORCE ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by Hon. J. Nicholson and read a first time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Ninth day.

Debate resumed from previous day.

Hon. E. ROSE (South-west): It was not my intention to speak on the Address-in-reply but, owing to the unfortunate absence of my colleague (Mr. Ewing), I have been asked to say a few words. I wish to add my congratulations to you, Sir, on your elevation to the office of President, and I feel certain no member of this House, or any future member, will ever regret your appointment to the position. I express my deep regret at the death of Sir Henry Briggs, a gentleman whom we all learned to esteem and love; and we hope that you, Sir, following in his footsteps, will live long to occupy the chair as President. I am pleased that the Government are continuing in a practical way the settlement of the men on the land. This is, no doubt, one of the best ways of stopping the deficit which has been accumulating during the last three or four years. The deficit now amounts to three million pounds, and there is only one way to cope with it—by increasing production. To increase production, we must set to work in a systematic way, not only to settle our returned soldiers, but to provide land for anyone from England or other parts of the world requiring it. In settling soldiers on the land, we must make country life more attractive than it has been. In the past, the pioneers have been satisfied to go into the back blocks and start on their own, without any conveniences in the shape of telephones, telegraphs or mails. Now things have altered, and we should certainly make farming more attractive for settlers. We should provide telephonic communication wherever possible and, in the back blocks where trains run only once or twice a week, we should devise means of running motor carriages on the lines. These would be inexpensive and would suffice for passenger traffic and for carrying parcels and mails. The pioneers in the back blocks deserve every possible assistance and, if the means I suggest were adopted, the Government would be assisting them and would make their life much more attractive than it is. In the South-West we have a huge area of very rich territory. We have sufficient land there to settle thousands and thousands of farmers. From Fremantle to Albany, including the Katanning and Narrogin districts, we have hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of acres

of land which in time will be occupied and settled. I am pleased the present Government are tackling this problem in a proper and systematic way. Until such time as the land has been opened up, and a portion of it cleared, it will not be possible to push ahead with settlement. There are thousands of returned soldiers who require a lot of education and a lot of assistance before they go on the land. To educate the men going on the land, I advocate the establishment of agricultural colleges. I am sorry the Brunswick State Farm is to be cut up and sold for settlement. That might have been more profitably employed by the Government if they had founded an agricultural college there, being, as it is, in the midst of the dairying industry, where a college is so badly needed for the education of the young men in the industry. The Brunswick State Farm has sufficient buildings to accommodate a great number of men. Only this morning I had my eyes opened by a visit to the Ugly Men's Association school in East Perth. There were over 100 men, all returned soldiers, being educated in every branch of work required on the farm—carpentering, blacksmithing, repairing harness, machinery, and so forth. These men, I understand, have been turned down by the Repatriation Board because they had had no previous experience of farming. It is the intention of the Association to extend the premises to make room for several hundreds of men, and thus fit them for settlement on the land. This is a capital idea and one which should be carried further. We should have an agricultural college in the eastern districts and another in the South-west. The reason I advocate two is because the conditions of the country are totally different. The South-West is more of a dairying district, and the eastern districts are more suited for wheat-growing and sheep raising. When we consider the amount of money we are sending out of the State every year to purchase agricultural produce, mainly dairy produce—nearly a million pounds a year—we cannot help realising how far the expenditure of that money in Western Australia would go towards stopping the deficit with which we are faced annually. I am not at all afraid of the future of Western Australia or of the State not being able to meet its obligations. When the amount of the sinking fund is deducted from the total deficit, we are only about £300,000 to the bad, and the Western Australian sinking fund amounts to more than those of all the other States put together. Therefore, why should we be croaking pessimists? I do not agree with Mr. Sanderson, who is always complaining about the deficit and about the State going to the dogs. The huge State of Western Australia, with its good land, if properly settled with the population it should have, would very soon overtake the deficit. I expect to see the deficit continue for the next two years but, after that, we should be able to reduce it and, in a very few years extinguish it. Instead of sending a million pounds away every year for farm produce, we should be exporting. A few years ago we had to import all the wheat and flour required in Western Australia. What are we doing to-day? We are exporting and the great stacks of wheat are a monument to the present Premier (Mr. Mitchell). I hope the Mitchell Government, at the expiration of their

term of office, will be able to point to the settlement of the South-West as an equally fine monument to their administration. As regards agricultural education, every man taking up farming must learn the art. At one time people thought anyone was good enough to go on the land. If a man was not good enough to take a position in an office or to enter a profession, people said—"Put him on the land." Now it is recognised that men going on the land require brains just as much as in any other occupation. The Government should give all possible encouragement to the secondary industries such as butter and bacon factories. As regards butter factories, I would like more uniform treatment meted out. When the Government advance money to start such factories, there should be a settled rate of interest. The promoters of the factory in Bunbury were able to borrow £5,000 a couple of years ago at 6½ per cent. interest. In Northam, a factory has been started and the Government have lent them £5,000 for the first year free of interest, the second year two per cent., third year three or four per cent., and after that an increased rate of interest together with sinking fund. All such industries should have the same assistance on the same terms. Numerous factories are starting all over Western Australia, and I hope the assistance given to that at Northam will be extended to all of them. For the first time the Government have thought fit to mention Collie coal in the Governor's Speech. The Collie coalfield is one of Western Australia's greatest assets, and it is about time that the Government realised the benefits of the coal industry to Western Australia. The Collie miners have been very loyal to Western Australia throughout the strikes which have occurred all over the world. Here we have had sufficient coal all along for home consumption and also for the bunkering trade. In the past Collie coal was regarded as useless for bunkering purposes, but now that the ships have been obliged to fall back on it, they find it very good. I consider that the railways should in the future be run exclusively with Collie coal, as is now being done. The Government will, I trust, continue to encourage local industries as they have been doing. I was pleased to learn this morning that there have been good rains in the North-West, and I hope that they will continue right throughout the Gascoyne and the Murchison district. I am sorry Mr. Mills is not present. Some statements made by that hon. member the other day regarding the South-West show his ignorance of that district. As a member of this House he should, I think, have made himself better acquainted with the conditions there. He said that a friend of his who had resided in the South-West for 30 years compared that district to a potato with eyes for good land and all the rest bad land. If Mr. Mills knew the South-West as I do, he would consider that the position is the other way about. What was considered some of the worst land of the South-West is now believed to be some of the very best; that is, from Pinjarra right through to the plains country. Properly drained that land would be some of the very best in the State. Between the railway and the coast there are large areas of land which could be put under proper cultivation. Similarly, in the eastern districts what were considered useless

sand plains are now known to be some of the best wheat growing areas in the State. As regards settlement of the South-West, I think we shall have hundreds of thousands of settlers there in years to come. I agree with Mr. Miles that the North-West should not be neglected, but where a hundred returned soldiers could be settled in the North, a thousand could be settled in the South-West. I do not believe in neglecting one part of the State in order to assist another, but the Mitchell Government have already mentioned that the North-West is to be settled. In the matter of prices of food, there is now room not only for the grazier but also for the dairyman and the wheat grower. Vast areas of Crown land in the North-West remain unoccupied, and these must be taken up and settled. Between Wyndham and Derby there is land over which I have travelled, and I say that when this land is opened up it will carry considerable settlement and lead to a large increase in the number of our cattle and sheep. With the establishment of freezing works it is to be hoped that the prices of beef and mutton will be reduced very considerably. I do not wonder at anyone crying out against the present prices of beef and mutton and other necessities of life. The man working for 10s. a day must find it extremely difficult to make ends meet. The Government certainly have a policy for settling the South-West, but I should strongly advise them to be careful in their purchases not to pay too high prices for hilly country. My experience of that country is that it cannot be cultivated, being too steep and being liable to scour out and wash away into the flats. From what I hear, some of the land repurchased for closer settlement is too hilly, and the prices paid for it are such that the land is over-capitalised, so that the settler on it will not have good prospects of success. The South-West and also the eastern districts certainly require additional railway communication. I know some hon. members hold that for the present we have done sufficient in the way of railway construction and should not incur further expenditure on that for some time; but cheap lines might be constructed, at a cost of £1,000 to £1,500 per mile, in the good land which is not yet settled. I would not advocate expensive lines capable of carrying traffic at high speed. All that is needed is a railway capable of carrying products and passenger traffic at a moderate rate of speed. Spur lines might be constructed in the country between Bridgetown and Albany which will give a living to settlers on blocks of 10 or 20 acres. That a very good living can be made on blocks of that size has already been proved in the South-West. A settler told me recently that he had bought five acres of land in Benger swamp last year, and had put in three acres of potatoes, with the result that he had already paid the price of the land and his working costs and now had the land to the good. Dozens of other settlers have been similarly successful. One of the best planks in the Government policy is the opening up of the country. Lime is badly needed by our agriculturists, and I am glad that the lime deposits are being developed. This will be of great advantage to the farming industry. There are various other matters I might have touched on, but I do not think it necessary for me to do

so now, as other members have spoken on them at length. I am sorry that Mr. Ewing is unavoidably absent. Mr. Mills happened to say that the South-Western country was useless, as was evidenced by the fact that a number of the old settlers had left the South-West and cleared out to the North. But the hon. member forgot to say that all the young men who left the South-West for the North, as soon as they had made a little money returned to the South-West and took up land there. If those young fellows, including myself, had had the assistance of the Government to the extent of £1,000 in settling on a farm in the South-West, I know none of them would have gone to the North and spent the best part of their lives there. Numbers of settlers in the South-West have done well without Government assistance, and are, in fact, independent to-day. As regards Mr. Dodd's remarks on socialism, I am a socialist to a certain extent and in certain respects, but I do not think the Government should largely compete with private enterprise.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY (Central): I regret very much that circumstances over which I have no control have prevented me from giving much thought to the contents of the Governor's Speech. However, permit me, Mr. President, to join in the congratulations which other members have tendered to you on your election to the presidential Chair, a position which I feel certain you will fill with dignity, and with entire satisfaction to yourself and to the House. I had not the pleasure of previously sitting in this Council with Dr. Saw, and I now join with other members in heartily welcoming him on his return from the Front, where he has given of his best skill and energy in the relief of suffering. Recently I read a book giving a description of the heart-rending cases which come before the medical man and his able assistant, the nurse, at the Front. However, let us hope that this war will be the last; that the curtain, having been rung down on the greatest war of history, will never rise on such events again. Millions of money have gone up in smoke, and the flower of humanity has gone under. With regard to my old friend Mr. Pantton, my pleasure at his advent to this Chamber is second only to the more significant view I take of his election. I allude to the good judgment of the people of the province which he now represents here. I took a certain part in the election at Albany some few months ago, spending about a fortnight in the district. I suppose I may claim to be one of the 14 "sprinklers" who took part in the election. Mr. Scaddan, who was not even a member of Parliament although a Minister of the Crown, was holding, I consider, a most indecent position, and one which constitutes a disgrace to responsible government. At the same time it must be acknowledged that the people of Albany took the same view of Mr. Scaddan as the present Government have taken, inasmuch as Albany returned Mr. Scaddan as its member.

Hon. H. J. Saunders: Very sensible, too.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: Possibly; but the people of Albany will have an opportunity of reviewing their judgment on a future occasion. However, those people elected Mr. Scaddan. But, having an interest in the election and having

visited various portions of the electorate, I was at a loss to know what particular line of action Mr. Scaddan would follow. I knew perfectly well that if he touched on politics at all he was gone. I hardly knew what other line he was going to adopt. My first attendance at one of Mr. Scaddan's meetings was at Mt. Barker, where he spoke for about 40 minutes without touching on anything at all in the nature of politics. His whole stock in trade was law and order. Mr. Scaddan placed before the people of Albany the issue that they had to decide between the negation of law and order, as represented by Mr. Johnson, and constituted authority, as represented by Mr. Scaddan. He told them that if they supported Mr. Johnson they would be standing for Bolshevism and mob-rule and for the red-raggers of the Trades Hall. We have heard that sort of thing before. Mr. Scaddan persisted that the only issue that mattered was mob rule versus constituted authority. Evidently the voters took him at his word, for they elected him by a large majority. It must be remembered that the election took place shortly after the trouble at the Fremantle wharf, and that the electors of Albany were far removed from the scene and therefore could not be expected to have a true appreciation of the facts. Consequently, it is particularly pleasing to know that the people of the West Province, situated so much closer to the scene of the strife, have returned to Parliament, Mr. Pantton, who took a very active interest in the trouble from start to finish. By their action the people of the West Province have given the lie direct to the Albany electors, who accepted the Government as representing law and order. I regard the vote of the electors of the West Province as upholding the attitude of the Labour party in that trouble at Fremantle. I have been rather surprised to find in the Speech no reference to law and order. It seems that nowadays no speech is delivered in this Chamber or outside without some reference being made to law and order and constituted authority. Apparently the Government are now going to drop that stunt and look for something new. A couple of years ago it was conscription, then it changed to nationalism, and more recently to law and order and constituted authority. However, even these apparently received their death blow when Mr. Pantton was elected. It would seem that the Government have resurrected these old cries from the dark ages. Every tyrant that ever ruled a people has hidden himself behind the same cries of law and order and constituted authority. This has been shown right through history. In modern times the greatest exponents we have had of constituted authority have been Kaiser Bill of Germany and Kaiser Bill of Australia. Both those men have barracked for law and order, putting it each in his own way. They have introduced the iron heel and endeavoured to suppress what we regard as fair and legitimate means of obtaining what cannot be obtained by any other course. I was struck by a few remarks from Mr. Allen. I had not the pleasure of listening to the hon. member, but I have made a few notes from "Hansard" of what he said. The newspapers gave no prominence to many of his remarks. I never for a moment thought our friend was so warlike as, apparently,

he is. I have no desire to go back to the Sunday at Fremantle. I happened to be in Bunbury at the time, endeavouring to raise a few pounds to meet the poverty that had arisen in Fremantle. Mr. Allen referred to the poverty which existed among his particular friends. For my part I was endeavouring to raise a few pounds to meet the poverty among my particular friends. Mr. Allen asked whether the Trades Hall authorities were prepared to stand by their own guarantee given to the Government that there should be no victimisation and no intimidation following on the Fremantle trouble. I have yet to learn that there has been any such victimisation. Mr. Allen gave us no concrete instance, except that somebody who had been given a load of wood was unable to find a carter brave enough to cart it for him. If there were any victimisation I know well that Mr. Allen and his friends of the Employers' Federation would leave no stone unturned to place the guilty person in the dock.

Hon. J. F. Allen: Your own people put you there.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I have a very vivid recollection of once visiting this portion of the State, much against my will. It cost the organisation to which I belonged something like £1,000. All that the men were guilty of on that occasion was refusing to work with a man who would not join the union. I have often heard members of this Chamber claim that they would support a man standing up for his rights, and that they believed in a man belonging to an organisation controlling the industry in which he worked. On the occasion referred to it happened to be the miner's union. Unknown to the union, the men on the mine had endeavoured to get a non-unionist to join the union; but he refused, whereupon it was decided that a definite stand should be taken. The men resolved that they would not work with that non-unionist. In consequence of the trouble that ensued we were taken to court, and had to pay heavy damages. That was a case of victimisation of the organisation. Again, Mr. Allen spoke of the pledges given by the Trades Hall, which he said had been broken. Despite what Mr. Allen said, I know of no such breaking of pledges. But even if those pledges had been broken, a striking precedent for it was given by the Prime Minister of Australia. When the Prime Minister was sending our men to the Front he waved them off with a hand-shake and some flag-flapping, and said "When you return you will find things exactly as you left them; not a stone in the temple of labour will have been removed." But what happened? Not only were many stones removed, but the structure itself was shaken to its foundations. I am not prepared to admit that any pledge given by the Labour organisations has been broken, but even if those organisations had broken their pledges it would have been only following the example of the Prime Minister of Australia.

Hon. A. H. Panton: A very bad example to follow.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: It was indeed. But two wrongs do not make a right. I am not prepared to believe that there has been any victimisation in connection with the Fremantle trouble. And we have to remember that, even if there had been, those victimised would have deserved all that they got. I do not pro-

pose to go back to the 1917 strike, which, I admit, was in some respects a sympathy strike. At the same time those men had justification for their attitude, in that they were advised that the flour they were loading was finding its way to Germany. But on the occasion of the last trouble in Fremantle, the influenza fiend was surely a legitimate cause for the men refusing to unload the vessel. Their idea was to prevent the influenza coming into Western Australia. Their aspirations were clean. If those national workers on the wharf, for whom Mr. Allen and Mr. Lynn have so much consideration, and for whom they were making so pathetic a plea in this Chamber, were guilty of what they were accused of—and everyone knows they were quite prepared not only to introduce the influenza into their own homes but to spread it broadcast throughout the State—if those national workers were prepared to be used for that purpose, they deserved all that they may have got. But I am not prepared to admit that there has been any victimisation. If Mr. Allen seeks to justify the introduction of the influenza, I am quite certain he is not prepared to get on the hustings in Fremantle and express those sentiments.

Hon. J. F. Allen: It was introduced after the national workers left. What were your people doing then?

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I was surprised at hearing the victimisation plea seriously put up by a member representing a province so close to the scene of strife. I represent a remote province.

Hon. J. F. Allen: That is why you have spoken as you did.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: It brings to my mind another case. Some time ago the men on the Fenian mine at Meekatharra went on strike. I was in Geraldton at that time and saw evidence of much poverty which had occurred as a result of that strike. Whether those who were suffering were responsible for the strike is quite beside the question. That the poverty occurred is certain. At that particular time there was some little work available in various portions of the State. Being in Geraldton I was asked to assist in getting these men scattered about the State so that they could earn a livelihood. Many of these men eventually found their way to Kalgoorlie. They were quite honest in their intentions. They had no wish to hide their identity. They did not adopt fictitious names, but boldly applied for work. When their names were placed on the register, they were asked if they had come from Meekatharra and had been employed on the Fenian Mine. They replied in the affirmative, and were told that there was no work for them there. That is pure victimisation. If the workers throughout the State are guilty of victimisation so far as the loyalists on the Fremantle wharf are concerned, they have a shining example in the Chamber of Mines in Kalgoorlie, because they carried it out to a bitter conclusion. They victimised men throughout the length and breadth of the State. They drove many men with big families into the firing line, and some of these men never returned. Of course there was no victimisation so far as the military were concerned. The authorities would always give such men a job. I hope those people who drove these men into the firing

line will get extreme satisfaction out of their actions. My honorable friend made another remark which is most illuminating. He asks—

Who was responsible for the fiasco on that particular Sunday when the trouble came to such a dramatic conclusion?

What other conclusion would the hon. member have liked the business to come to? He did not say, but leaves us to judge for ourselves. He says too—

It is due to the Chamber and Parliament and the people to know what explanation was made to the caucus meeting of National members of another place on this occasion, and why the trouble ended in the way it did and who was responsible for it.

The hon. member has not told us what other way he would have required this fiasco or trouble to end. Did he require it to end in a more disastrous manner than it did end, or to have had more grave results than it did have? I can imagine my honourable friend emerging from the fray. If he had come into contact with the London military authorities they would have had him long ago. The hon. member has never attempted to indulge in a little fight there. Surely he had an opportunity of indulging in a war-like attitude either there or in other countries in the world. There have been plenty of opportunities of recent years for this sort of thing without his attempting to come with a wet sail at the death knock, and make these heroic statements at the present juncture. I am sorry that the fiasco ever occurred. It had a sad enough ending, and any man who requires anything more than that or anything more sanguinary is very hard to please. I am certainly prepared to draw a veil over the whole business, but, when these matters are brought forward, someone has to say a word or two in defence of the men implicated. I am satisfied that the Leader of the House will be well able to defend himself. I am not prepared to defend the actions of anyone at all who went there. I deplore any attitude of that kind and the fact that any Government should take sides in such a matter. I also deeply deplore the attitude of the Government in sending armed police on to the wharves. Possibly the leader of the House will afford some explanation as to his own attitude and as to his presence there. It was despicable of any Government or anyone responsible, be they members of a shipping combine or the Government, to take up an attitude of that kind and go to the wharves and tackle a mob of helpless men. I despise the attitude of whoever was responsible for this trouble, but I say that those who were responsible for preventing what would have been a blood curdling day, and have disgraced the fair name of Western Australia, whether it be the Minister for Education in his capacity as Premier or anyone else, are entitled to my heartiest congratulations. I have seen something of industrial strikes before in this State and I know how these sometimes end. Many innocent men, women, and children would have been shot down, and I am including in these both police and civilians, if the trouble had been accentuated. Whoever was responsible for putting a stop to it will receive my congratulations. If we desire a further instance of victimisation we have only to see what occurred last year in connection

with the strike on the wheat stacks. I had a few words to say on another occasion on this matter. The men on the wheat stacks at Spencer's Brook and other places went on strike. I do not disguise that fact. I had the honour of being an executive officer of the organisation to which these men belonged. Neither I, nor any other member of the Executive, knew anything about the strike. The men went on strike independently and individually. Whilst denying that they did wrong, I must say when the executive did get hold of the position they went before the Honorary Minister (Hon. C. F. Baxter) as representative of the Government. I accompanied a deputation, which admitted that the men were wrong and asked if they expressed their regret whether the Government would take them back. The Honorary Minister replied, "On no condition whatever." I asked a question in this House regarding the matter and received replies to the effect that there was no victimisation, but that the Government refused to re-employ these men. Apparently this refusal to employ does not amount to victimisation. The Honorary Minister refused to re-employ those men on account of their action at Spencer's Brook and other places. I am sorry this subject has been revived, but it has given me an opportunity of showing that the victimisations which have occurred are not confined to one side only. If there has been victimisation on the part of the workers, they have a shining example afforded by the present Government and the Chamber of Mines, and almost every other organisation and combine in the State. The Speech states that grave industrial turmoil eventuates as a result of every war. I suppose the history of this war is the history of all wars in this respect. I venture to say that the industrial turmoil in this case has been greater than it has been in connection with any other conflict. As one who has a passing knowledge of industrial matters in Australia, I say that this industrial turmoil and unrest will continue so long as the Governments of Australia permit exploitation and the profiteering to dominate the position. It is the homes of the people that are affected by this exploitation and profiteering. The people cannot live any longer on what they earn. It is impossible for them to pull through on the pittance they are receiving. We are expected to make £1 go where we require £2. This industrial unrest is a proposition which should be solved by people of brains and people who will give it some thought. It will continue so long as the Government take no means to stop it. The matter is in their hands. In my opinion the Arbitration courts are constituted on wrong lines. Although the Arbitration Court has power to give an increase in wages, it has no power to limit the cost of production, or to say that a man shall not charge more than a certain amount for his goods. So long as that obtains, so long will industrial unrest be seen in Australia. Sir Edward Wittenoom the other night said, "this is not a one-sided matter." He also stated that the workers were not always to blame and that there must be a little give and take. Coming as this did from such a high authority, it is to be assumed that the workers are sometimes in the right and that Governments are sometimes in the wrong. The Government have persistently pursued one course of action and one attitude

all along the line in the matter of industrial unrest. Every Government of Australia has been behind the big combines and the big employers of labour. Rarely do we find evidence of any Government in any country standing behind the worker.

Hon. J. F. Allen: What about the Scaddan Government?

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: That is not behind workers to-day. I do not know that the Scaddan Government were behind the workers very much. I held a semi-public position at that time, and have had conflicts with the Scaddan Government. The workers got little or nothing from them. They might have had their conditions improved considerably. When they had the opportunity they should have taken it and agitated in the proper direction. I admit that the present Government have assisted the workers to a certain extent. They have assisted those who through no fault of their own are out of work. I refer to the miners on the Eastern Goldfields. They have, however, not come to the assistance of the workers on the Kurrang woodline. Although possibly they have assisted in bringing about a settlement of the woodline dispute they have not assisted the workers in any direction. These men were out on strike for a certain thing. They are going back on terms which were hardly worth striking for. My honourable friend has referred to the actions of the Scaddan Government. This has brought home to me the attitude of the present Government. The other night a question was asked as to why the workers did not go to the Arbitration Court. There is no opportunity for these woodline workers to go there because they have to prove a dispute in more than one State. They are not registered under the Federal Arbitration Act and are not registered under the State Act. It may be asked why they are not registered under the State Act. Our State legislation will not allow of the registration of a composite organisation. The attitude of the Government is reflected in the position obtaining along the firewood line. If these men had been registered under the State Arbitration Act they would have had an opportunity of going before the Court, and possibly the matter would have been settled long ago. They had not an opportunity of doing this owing to the attitude of the Government in refusing time and again to register a composite organisation. Their object is quite easy to see. They require to keep these unions all to themselves, to keep these organisations fighting amongst themselves instead of allowing them an opportunity of becoming organised under one head, because then they would have endeavoured to put up a bolder front. The result of that action is seen in the industrial turmoil that has taken place on the Goldfields. With reference to the seamen's strike, I do not desire to go into the matter at very great length. So far as the attitude of the leader of that organisation is concerned—I refer to Mr. Walsh—I hold no brief for him and I hardly know what his object is. What may be Mr. Walsh's object, in putting himself into gaol, which I frankly admit he did, I do not know. It was either to bring about an early termination of the strike or he was looking for some cheap notoriety. Not knowing the individual I cannot give an opinion, but whatever might be the object of

Walsh I can say that, so far as the seamen are concerned, they are quite right in their demands. The seamen had no option but to act as they did on this occasion. The country will admit that the conditions under which those men have worked for many years have been a disgrace to the mercantile marine and a disgrace to any Government in control, and no one can say that the men were not justified in endeavouring to bring about an improvement in their conditions. Whilst I was in the Eastern States a few months ago I had the opportunity of going into this matter and I came into contact with some of the people who were against the seamen, and I asked them to pay a visit with me to some of the forecastles. Those people were astonished to find the disgraceful conditions under which the men had been asked to work. Admitting, therefore, that the seamen are right in preferring the requests which they have put forward, how is it that the differences cannot be adjusted? Whatever may be the outcome of the trouble, I regret that it has spread to such an extent, but all credit must be given to those in the Labour ranks who have prevented the trouble from spreading further. We have to admit that sometimes men are a little bit hasty, that sometimes they act off their own bat. While admitting that to a great extent, we are not prepared to admit that the thing is one-sided, but it does seem to us that on nearly every occasion the Government stand behind those who are in authority and particularly in this instance are they standing behind the shipping combine. It is regrettable to find that there have been such a great number of strikes. In order to bring about a better state of affairs, those in authority endeavoured to create an arbitration court which would have the effect of settling all disputes. What do we find? That there are certain objections raised in many circles against arbitration, and although the organisation to which I belong is probably one of the most militant in Australia, they voted in favour of arbitration. But there are certain objections being raised each year against arbitration. During the past four years it has cost the Australian Worker's Union £9,000 to appear before the Arbitration Court. That is a fairly decent sum for an organisation to be called upon to have to pay. But they would not complain, because the expenditure of such a sum of money might be cheaper than striking. The red-tape methods which surround the arbitration courts, however, are such that it is an exceedingly hard job to approach the court, and that is what they complain of. When I was in the East there was a dispute in connection with the wheat carriers and, in order to prove that a dispute existed, it was necessary to show that it existed in two States. That was not a hard matter because there was industrial turmoil in Sydney and Melbourne. Arrayed against the secretary of the Union were four legal gentlemen whose fees for that day would have run into perhaps a couple of hundred pounds, while the salary of the secretary was, perhaps, £6 a week. It was the people's money which was put up against the union, the money of the Wheat Pool. When we find that sort of thing occurring, when a man is sincerely endeavouring to get before the court, we cannot be surprised at the industrial unrest that pre-

vails and the anxiety on the part of the men to break away from the court and take the law into their own hands—by striking. If some alteration is not brought about we will find that the industrial turmoil will be accentuated instead of being done away with. The only advice we got from our critics is abuse, or we are called Bolsheviks, extremists, red-raggers, and such like. So far as the red-raggers are concerned, I am always suspicious of the man who is continually parading his solidarity and talking of the red flag. My personal experience is that when the flag has to be carried at the head of a procession, it is the other chap who has to do the job. He is like the man who looks for fight and when he gets into a squabble "ducks" off and leaves his mate to do it for him. Both individuals can be likened to those who have talked fight for five years, but sent the other chap to do it while they stayed at home. In these days of deportations, if there was any to be done I would put three of them together and send them away in one boat. In regard to the question of repatriation, ever since I have been in this House, members have had something to say about the subject, but that seems to be as far as we got. One can hardly criticise the present Government because they have not been in power very long. A great deal has been said about what they are prepared to do and I trust they are serious about it. To my mind repatriation should have been taken in hand some years ago, and legislation in connection with it should have been presented concurrently with the war. As a matter of fact a commencement should have been made at the very outbreak of hostilities. But what do we find? There is a deplorable state of affairs existing throughout the country in connection with our returned soldiers, many of whom are tramping the country. We have not had an opportunity of criticising the present Government. I am prepared to remain silent for a time so as to let them prove what they are capable of doing. Heaven knows something is wanted badly enough. Mr. Stewart told us that there was work for all and that no one need go hungry. I interjected—I am not often guilty of doing so—that if our friend had been placed in the position of looking for a job for a soldier he would have found it an extremely difficult undertaking.

Hon. H. Stewart: I referred to Australia, not particularly Western Australia.

Hon. A. H. Panton: There are 22,000 soldiers out of work in New South Wales.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: I am speaking of the position in Western Australia. I know nothing of what is occurring in any other part of Australia. I have interviewed the Repatriation and other departments and possibly they are doing their best, but it is the fault of the previous Government that the position to-day is as we find it because action should have been going on concurrently with the war. With regard to pastoral leases, it will be remembered that during last session I submitted an amendment to the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Bill and this Chamber took a broad view of the matter. It is gratifying to remember that this House carried the amendment although only by a small majority. The leader of the House on that occasion expressed sympathy with the amendment although he voted against it

entirely from different motives. What was the position when it went to another place? I am almost inclined to disagree with Mr. Panton, who talked of the abolition of this House. The amendment was received with the greatest hostility in another place and the result was that it came back to us in a mutilated form, so much so that it was worthless. The only regret I have is that this Chamber did not disagree with what was done by the other place. It is not too late now to cancel those leases and give the opportunity to the soldiers to take up areas in that country. The position to-day is that the Governor-in-Council has power to resume agricultural country for the purpose of the settlement of soldiers and I have never heard a protest raised in this Chamber, or in another place, against that. If that is right, is there anything wrong in the other proposition? If it is right to resume agricultural country, it should be right to resume pastoral country, and the amendment which I submitted should have been agreed to. But another place declared "You must keep your hands off the big land holders, those who have a million acres or more." Anyone who knows anything about those propositions knows also that that country I am speaking of would settle a great number of returned soldiers, who would be capable of opening it up and stocking it to its fullest carrying capacity. I am not one of those who believe that because an individual has a big area of land, or a great deal of money, we should cast covetous eyes on either or both, but there should be something like a decent distribution so that our returned soldiers might get some benefit from it. In that particular country I would not definitely confine the areas to 20,000 acres. On a previous occasion I supported an amendment moved by Mr. Drew in this Chamber giving power to resume 20,000 acres within a reasonable distance of a railway line or the seaboard. Some specific area had to be mentioned. As far as the area is concerned, I would be prepared to leave it to a competent board who would decide what was a fair area for a soldier to get a living from. Twenty thousand acres would be ample in some instances; in others, a board might decide that 30,000 or even 100,000 would be necessary. It is not too late yet for the Government to cancel these leases and give the returned soldiers a chance. Many of the returned soldiers have been on stations and have a thorough knowledge of sheep and stock, and such men would make good on some of these smaller pastoral areas. I hope the Government will make a move even at this late hour, and give this very deserving section of the community a chance to open up valuable country, which is carrying far too little stock. Mr. Dodd has a motion on the Notice Paper for the taxation of unimproved land. We have power to resume land and I trust the Government, in the interests of the soldiers, will resume some of those areas now lying idle. Much valuable land is not being worked. If the hon. member's motion will have the effect of bursting up some of this idle land, my object will be met; but if it will not have that effect, it is the duty of the Government to resume land and place the soldiers on it, instead of sending them out into the jungle where the chances will be a thousand to one against them making good. No mention is made in the

Governor's Speech of new industries. There are industries such as woollen mills which could be established in this State. I mentioned this matter before and was told that it would provide work for only women and girls. Many of our soldiers have returned incapacitated, and could be employed in such mills. It is almost a crime that Governments have carried on year after year, some of them committed to the establishment of woollen mills, and yet nothing has been done. We produce in this State large quantities of wool and ship it away without making any attempt to manufacture it in the State. Woollen mills would create employment in many directions and would have far-reaching effects. I do not think the establishment of such mills should be confined to a particular area. The metropolitan area has turned down the proposition. The Government evidently do not think it necessary to have woollen mills here, but there are opportunities in other centres where the wool is produced, such as Geraldton. When I suggested this on a previous occasion, I was told that the climate of Geraldton was against the production of good material; also that the water supply was another objection. The latter can be overcome by an energetic, enthusiastic and sympathetic Government. The water works have been in hand for a year or two and to-day the Government are withdrawing the mon. What their attitude is, I do not know. Unless the Government adopt a different attitude, Geraldton will remain without a water supply. This is one of the drawbacks to the establishment of freezing works and practically the only drawback to the establishment of woollen mills. But I am not parochial. If the Government cannot establish woollen mills at Geraldton, which I think is the natural centre, they might establish them elsewhere, but on whatever centre they decide, they will receive my hearty support. Prospecting has been mentioned in connection with repatriation. The Government are doing a little; the previous Government did a little, but their efforts have been feeble indeed. Really, they are paying little attention to prospecting and yet the mining industry has been the salvation of Western Australia. It gave us our start; it made opportunities for the development of the farming areas. Unfortunately, it is now under a cloud, and consequently, the State as a whole is under a cloud. But with an energetic Government and sympathetic administration, there are opportunities for prospecting, particularly from Yalgoo to Peak Hill, where there are miles of country which has never been touched. Prospectors cannot afford to go out into this country but returned men, if given an opportunity, would go into it and, given decent conditions and unhampered by the red tape of the department, they would make good and open up new fields. A few days ago I received word that country had been opened up 10 miles from a railway in the Stake Well district. I got samples which have proved good values and I am satisfied that, if they develop as they promise to do, it will prove one of the best low grade propositions in the State. This will give an impetus to the Murchison and to mining generally. If the soldiers are given an opportunity, they will test the Meekatharra, Cue, Peak Hill, and the further north country, and give the prospectors a chance to open it up. The present

Government do not appear to be taking much interest in mining generally. No attempt seems to be made to bring about a reduction in the cost of explosives, though some remarks were made by the Minister for Mines to the effect that progress had been made in various directions. It seems impossible to develop mining propositions to-day. After overtures were made to the previous Government through Mr. Hudson, a State battery was erected at Cue. While that proposition is a good one, I am afraid that, on account of the high cost of mining, particularly of explosives, it will be found very hard to make ends meet. I would suggest the establishment of something in the direction of a State explosives works. I know the objection of some members to State enterprise but, when it is found to be the only means of helping production, something of the kind must be done. The cost of explosives has increased in many instances 100 per cent. and it is impossible for those working low-grade propositions to pull through. The same even applies to big mining ventures. Being the biggest users of explosives in Australia, this State should make a start. We use 500 or 600 tons of explosives a year, and to establish State works might pave the way for a munition factory here. It is said the Federal authorities intend to establish a munition factory and Western Australia provides the best opportunity. I trust the Government will seriously consider the question. There are many matters to be considered in connection with the establishment of such a factory.

Hon. J. Nicholson: The cost of production, for instance.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: The cost of production at present is very high but we have to take into consideration the profits of the companies manufacturing explosives. The very fact of the Government taking action in this direction will probably have the effect of a price fixing Bill, namely that it will place a restraining hand on the people who are responsible for charging high prices for explosives. It is quite certain that the prices are unwarrantably high, and very few commodities have made such a big jump in price. Another thing which is retarding mining generally is the granting of indiscriminate exemptions. There are many mines tied up and men, if given an opportunity, would deal with them and make a handsome profit. I might refer to the Fingal Mine, which closed down a few months ago. The miners protested against the exemption and took it on tribute so that, to-day, it is a handsomely paying proposition, though they have to send their ore 40 miles and then cart it four miles to the battery. The same thing is happening throughout the State, particularly in the Murchison. If the Government considered the protests coming from genuine men, who could prove their case, and granted them favourable consideration, it would have a good effect on the industry. I was glad to notice the optimistic tone of the Government as regards Collie coal. Western Australian coal should be used exclusively by the Government on our railways and in every department. I have criticised Collie coal from time to time but, wherever possible, all sections of the community should work in harmony and, when a decent article is produced, it should receive the treatment it deserves. I hope attention will not be

confined to Collie. I hope the Government will take into consideration the establishment of various factories not exclusively in the metropolitan area, but in places like Geraldton and Bunbury and thus help to develop the country. We have deposits of coal in other parts of the country such as at Eradu and Irwin. Some years ago coal was discovered in the former place and the Government started a plant, but before they had proceeded far, the plant was handed over to a local syndicate. Now, local syndicates have not the same opportunities as the Government to develop such propositions and this syndicate, after boring one hole, finished with the job. The coal is there; it has been proved that the indications in that locality are good. The Government should give favourable consideration to this proposition. A deputation is to wait on them in the near future, and I hope that in the leader of this House they will find a supporter. As regards the Irwin, I understand the Government are now doing something in that direction. I hope that there also a payable coalfield will be discovered, if not another Collie. The attention of the Government has already been drawn to the position of the base metal industry. I have no intention of dealing with the subject at length just now, but I hope our Government will lend their support to the efforts being made to obtain the removal of the Federal embargo. I quite agree that during war time the embargo was necessary in order to prevent the possibility of our metal reaching enemy countries, but surely there is no reason now why Western Australia should not send its lead to England. Why should we not be permitted to seek a better market elsewhere, instead of shipping our lead to the Eastern States for treatment? The Surprise Mine, at Geraldine, has during the last couple of years produced about £70,000 worth of lead, and the mine has been developed most systematically; but the company owning it have so far made only about £4,000 profit, and, naturally, they are anxious to have the embargo lifted in order that they may seek a market. In the matter of treatment our lead producers are entirely in the hands of the Fremantle Trading Company, who have closed down their own mines—as they have of course a perfect right to do—and also their smelter. We claim that the Government should erect a smelter at the place where the lead is won, so that the miners may have the opportunity of developing a very rich field. I do not say another Broken Hill will result, but I have had several years' experience of working in the Broken Hill mines, and I say that I have never seen better prospects than those in the Geraldine district. In this matter of the embargo, there seems to be a disposition on the part of the Federal Government to centralise everything in the Eastern States, in Melbourne, just as our State Government seek to centralise everything from the back country in Perth. The prosperity or adversity experienced in the back country, as is well known, is very speedily and completely reflected in the prosperity or depression experienced in the Capital and in the towns and ports. It was my intention to deal with the cost of living problem, but the Governor's Speech mentions that a price-fixing Bill is to be brought down at an early date, and I will reserve my remarks for that measure. Many members,

however, have expressed doubts as to whether there is profiteering going on. I say there is ample evidence of profiteering throughout every State of the Commonwealth. In another place the Premier has said that this question of high prices is a world-wide question. But Governments are refusing to deal with it. Any Government can deal with it if they choose to exercise their powers. A sympathetic Government could do a great deal of good in this respect. It is now difficult even for a man earning a decent wage to pull through, and it is practically impossible for him to do so if he is knocked out of his stride by, say, the loss of a day's work, or illness in his family. The Government should bring along their price-fixing Bill at the earliest possible moment. Personally, I confess to a lack of faith in this respect. I do not wish to show myself critical at this juncture, but I cannot forget the hostility displayed by this House towards a price-fixing Bill introduced by the Labour Government; I cannot forget how the present leader of this House opposed that Bill. I cannot bring myself to believe that the hon. gentleman has changed his coat to the necessary extent. I do trust he will give serious consideration to the various public demonstrations throughout this State, in farming communities and in industrial centres, on the subject of the cost of living. I hope he will see the error of his ways, and that he will introduce the forthcoming Bill to this Chamber in a sympathetic manner.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The Bill will be carried.

Hon. J. W. HICKEY: That is not the question. Legislation is one thing, and sympathetic administration is another. We want the measure put into operation properly, so that the profiteers now exploiting the people may be put in their proper place. The Government should stand behind the co-operative societies, who are doing their best to reduce the prices of commodities. If the Government are not so prepared, perhaps they will stand behind the farming community. I would support anything tending to bring the producer and the consumer more closely in touch. My idea is that the Government should guarantee the credit of co-operative societies of farmers trading on the world's markets, so that the credit of these societies will be such as to enable them to compete with the big merchants and the combines. I have pleasure in supporting the adoption of the Address-in-reply.

Hon. J. CORNELL (South): Allow me to extend my congratulations to you, Sir, on your elevation to the Presidency of this Chamber. Like members who have spoken before me, I know that the position of this House is safe in your hands. So much has been said, and so many suggestions have already been offered, that probably there is no need for me to speak. However, at the risk of being classed with Mr. Holmes as a political Jeremiah, I come forward on this, the first opportunity I have had during the life of this Parliament, to speak on the Address-in-reply. I have been forced to the conclusion that politically I am a sick man. Certainly I am sick and tired of Parliamentarians who have failed to profit by the greatest upheaval in history. I believe that the only institutions in Australia to-day that are endeavouring to carry on as they did before the war, are

the various Parliaments. If they do not wake up, then, like a certain individual, they are likely to find their occupation gone, and that very shortly. I have had time to look around, and to square my sails to the wind, and I have come to the conclusion that I and certain other individuals who took a genuine and dinkum risk during the war are the only ones who are in danger of losing their political scalps. I know that someone is waiting round the corner for me with a piece of hose-pipe. That being so, if I am to have a short life, it shall be a merry one, and somebody is going to get hurt. The people generally will respect a man if he stands up honestly and says and does what he thinks is right. Such a man, if he does not win through, at least wins general respect. In most cases, I believe, he does win through. That brings me to the present Government, of whom hon. members have taken a considerate view. During their short term of office Ministers have boxed the political compass. They came into office with the highest aspirations, national and otherwise; and they have ended by being led by a gentleman for whom I have the greatest respect personally, but who was anathema to them at the beginning and who has proved a thorn in their flesh all along. Whether the present Government will succeed or not is on the knees of the gods. Personally, I intend to do nothing drastic against the Government. I recognise that if ever an opportunity presented itself in the political history of this State for a man to stand out boldly and induce a majority of the members of both Houses to follow him, this is the opportunity. I have no doubt what the result would be if an appeal were made to the public. However, I am not the man to take that course; I cannot offer the Government any suggestion. In the past I offered a few, and my doing so was waste of breath; and I do not intend to waste any more breath.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Hon. J. CORNELL: Before tea I was referring to the Government. It would be tedious and ridiculous to go over the many weak spots in the armour not only of this Government, but of all the Governments that have followed the Scaddan Administration. It is sufficient condemnation of those successive Governments to reiterate the criticism by the leader of the House and others now supporting him, of the late Scaddan Government. Summarised, I think it can be said that the chief point they endeavoured to make against the Labour Government was that the keystone of the arch of Responsible Government was sound finance. That being so, I think the unvarying result of attempts of succeeding Governments to square the finances is sufficient condemnation. I recognise that the task was a hard one. That task would have been much easier if, during the early stages of the war, we had been spared the reaurroction of a new Jerusalem in the gallery of this House. I refer to that memorable night early in 1914 when a legitimate taxation proposal brought down by the Scaddan Government in order to meet the financial difficulties was jettisoned by this Chamber. We have now reached a pass which compels me to say that if the tide is not soon

stemmed, I will go over, horse, foot and artillery to Mr. Sanderson and agree with him that there are only two alternatives in front of us, namely, being taken over by the Federal authority, or appealing to the Bankruptcy Court. Another alternative presents itself, namely, that the Government will be superseded by a Labour Administration. As one who worked in the Labour party for a quarter of a century and who only parted company from it on a question which I think should have been left to settle itself, I have arrived at the conclusion that, although the heart of the Labour party is sound, and although its brain is anxious to do the right thing, yet just as a minority controls the present Government, so does a minority control the Labour party. I can see no hope for the third alternative I refer to, because for years and years past the doctrine has been preached—I preached it myself, but I admit to-day that I was wrong—that the stability of the State can be maintained through Parliament. I say it cannot. A party or community that leans on Parliament is just about as effective as an individual leaning against a lamp-post; with this difference, that the party leaning on Parliament is leaning against a post eaten by white ants. If the country is going to get out of its financial slough of despond, it will be by the collective efforts and enterprise of the individuals that compose it. Parliament may direct a sound, sane, and reasonable policy, but if we are to look to Parliament, we shall have to look long and in vain. Much has been said regarding repatriation. I remember the question being discussed in this House four years ago. We then asked ourselves how we were going to meet the needs of the returned soldier. The question should have been persisted in until something was done. I still admit that, right up to the armistice, the absurd question of who was going to come out on top was being asked throughout the civilised world. When Mr. Panton and I were at Home, what agitated the minds of the people of England was, not so much providing for the aftermath of the war, as how to come out on top.

Hon. A. H. PANTON: The soldiers never had much doubt about it.

Hon. J. CORNELL: In March and April of 1918, I met a lot who had. But that position which presented itself in the Old Country did not present itself in this country to any marked degree. I have advised the soldier right through the piece that, if he is to get the recognition that is due to him, it will only be by his collective efforts and by the pressure he can bring to bear upon public men and public institutions, State and Commonwealth. He has an organisation numerically strong, and with proper unanimity of purpose he will eventually achieve his goal. But there is another aspect to the question. Side by side with the repatriation of the soldier comes the repatriation of the men who could not go, and of the working men of the community generally. After all, very few soldiers can be accused of wanting special consideration because they went to the war. Once they are put back into citizenship they approach the situation from the citizen's standpoint only. I know there are many disabilities under which the soldier lies to-day in respect of repatriation, and I am not going to enter upon the question of

land settlement beyond saying that land settlement is not going to repatriate the soldier. There are thousands who cannot and will not go on the land. The surest way of repatriating the soldier is to return as quickly as possible to a state of thrift and productivity. Then will the problem solve itself. A paragraph in His Excellency's Speech states that Ministers are greatly concerned about the industrial unrest. The industrial unrest is not surprising to any thinking man. Can we expect the world to have gone through what it has without the existing crop of industrial unrest? Biblical prophecy tells us that after this great war we shall have three years of unrest. That is not in Jeremiah, but in Isaiah. Nor is it pessimistic; rather it is optimistic, because it predicts that the thing will right itself after three years. Still, we have to do something to bridge the gap of two years and three months remaining. Can we wonder at men being dissatisfied with their conditions? Who won the war? I think it will be found recorded in the proceedings of the House that early in the piece I said, that if this war was won by the Allies, the greatest glory would rest with the manhood and the womanhood who were voiceless in the election of their representatives in Parliament. That is to say, in my opinion the collective effort of mankind and womankind won the war for the Allies. Without that man power, wealth and statesmanship would not have prevailed. It is only a natural inference to draw, that when men and women realise that they have played an important part in maintaining the freedom of their country, and its institutions, they should believe they are entitled to more representation than they enjoyed at the beginning of hostilities. There are individuals who are making the best of the opportunity and are advising the manhood and womanhood of the State, and the world generally that, to obtain this justice and right to which they are entitled they must adopt some of the methods which the Huns adopted to override the world. As a workman at one time I say advisedly that the manhood and womanhood of this country can best gain their aims and ideals by recognising that, whether we like it or not, for the next few years we are going to have hard times. Having recognised that, the shortest way in which they shall assume full citizenship and a voice in the affairs of the country is by rational and constitutional means. Anyone who to-day says that these men and women, who are voiceless and voteless, have no right to recognition is unfit to occupy a position as a public man. He must jettison these old ideas and throw them on one side. He must give up the old ideas of property and birth and come down to the new brotherhood in order that the safety, wellbeing and continuity of the nation may be backed up by the collective enterprise and collective efforts of its people. Much has been said about Russia. If we read the Bolsheviks' side and the others' side, and strike a clear line of demarcation, we shall probably get some idea of the truth. I am no apologist for the position in Russia to-day, but I do say that there is no analogy between that which exists there and that which exists in the British Dominions. Any student of history knows that what happened in Russia had to happen. What has happened in Russia, however, is not likely

to happen in Australia. Our people are not of the same class as the Russians and are sensible people. This brings me to the profiteer and the question of direct action. I agree with my leader, Mr. Hughes, and say, "Damn them both." I said in Boulder, shortly after my return, that there was a business section of the community who scrupled to profiteer during the war because they were afraid to do so, and their consciences pricked them; but as soon as the war was over that scruple would cease to exist and they would endeavour to again pursue their old practice of making money out of the people. I will not weary hon. members by illustrations of this profiteering. I am satisfied, however, that it is going on. I agree with what the British Government have done. Australia has not much to learn so far as Great Britain is concerned in any respect, if she will take the lead and do things for herself. I agree there is only one sentence that will stop the profiteer, and only one which should be imposed upon him if he is found to be unduly inflating prices. That man has more right to spend a month or two in Fremantle gaol than a man who has stolen a loaf of bread for a starving child or a baby. That is the only remedy for the actions of the profiteer. When the Bill comes down I hope provision will be made that, where it is clearly proved in a court of law that a man has profiteered, he shall be shown the inside of a gaol and serve his time there. He will then think twice before he does it again. Of what use is it to fine a profiteer? Every sensible and thinking man, who disagreed with me in the past, is realising to-day that we must take drastic measures to deal with the profiteer. On the other side we have direct action. The direct actionists have a mission to perform. I thought I had at one time. I preached doctrines in this Chamber which probably made hon. members feel that they would rather have cotton wool in their ears so as not to hear me too plainly. Some five or six years ago things were vastly different from what they are to-day. Any man who has the well-being of the community at heart must be guarded in what he advises, and how he directs his fellow men to act. His fellow men are not in the same normal thinking condition that they were in five years ago. The direct actionist preaches "Go slow." That is not a legacy brought from America to Australia, but it has come out from the old Country. If anyone can go slow it is the average British workman. He can show the Australian many points in that way. Hon. members have pointed out the vast preponderance of production by American workmen over that by British workmen. That is tantamount to saying that the policy of "go slow," or "canny" did not come altogether from America. At one time when I worked for my living the anathema of all workmen was the "pointer." No self-respecting workman had any time for him. We have only to go back eight or 10 years and find that workmen were unanimously of the opinion that they should do a fair thing for what they were paid. If there was one thing that grated on their nerves more than another it was the "pointer." In those days of honesty they had to do the "pointer's" share as well as their own. I have seen this happen often. In my opinion such an individual was inclined to be either religious or a wowser.

Hon. J. J. Holmes: Are not wowsers religious?

Hon. J. CORNELL: To-day we find that what occurred in isolated instances only a few years ago has now become a new religion. The student of economics knows that if a man does not produce what he is paid for the money has to come out of someone else's pocket. In making that statement I make no apology for the employing individual who desires to get all he can out of his men. Unless we restore some semblance of mutual trust and respect between the employer and the employee we shall go from bad to worse. I am not going into the question of profit-sharing except to say that I have an idea that there are many industries which are essential and which are good industries, and which cannot be otherwise than reproductive. A start could be made on these industries to limit profits. If they made over and above a certain profit this should be earmarked and expended in assisting other industries which, owing to the times and to the necessities of the situation, are not reproductive. If we are going to share profits in the ordinary way we shall only confer a benefit upon all those directly concerned, and leave out those directly connected with non-reproductive industries. There is a long list of proposed measures in the Governor's Speech. It may be said that, like the Bourbons who learned nothing and forgot nothing, there is nothing new in this programme. There is a measure for price-fixing mentioned. It is not new and we had it in the first stage of the war. We are going to have it again, and I will reserve my remarks upon that measure for the time when the Bill is brought down. Many different sides may be taken and debated on this question. In my opinion the Government have awakened to the position too late. It was only by the direct pressure of the people that they were induced to bring down this legislation. Had such legislation been brought in earlier and remained in operation during the war, it might have had some effect. The remedy I have suggested, that is gaol, is the only one which would have any effect upon the profiteer. The question of electoral reform is mentioned. I do not know whether the Government propose to bring down a Bill to provide for the redistribution of seats. In my opinion that is necessary. If the Government think it is necessary this session let them bring it down this session, and not leave it till the next Parliament on the eve of the general election. This is the session in which to bring it down. We will then have at least nine months in which to prepare the new boundaries and the new rolls, and give all political aspirants a reasonable chance of having a fair contest when election time arrives. It would hardly be fitting for me to complete my remarks without some reference to this Chamber. I stand where I always stood regarding the position of the two Houses of Parliament. I say that Australia is over-governed and that one House of Parliament would suffice for each State. In my opinion the Federal Constitution is wrongly cast. Instead of it being cast as it is, it would be infinitely better for Australia and the people were it cast on Canadian lines. That is to say, the State Constitutions should have written powers and the Federal Constitutions should have unwritten powers. The cost of living and profiteering

arise from the fact that the written Constitution ties us down. If the position was as I have just stated, the Federal Constitution would be infinitely better. Though I say I am in favour of one House of Parliament, I think that reform will only come about in a comprehensive manner after a thorough remodelling of our Federal and State Constitutions and beginning anew. The war has taught us that which is absolutely essential and if posterity is satisfied to be guided by the dead end of the Constitution, the new democracy which will arise I am sure will not be so satisfied. I notice hon. members have made reference to the franchise of this House. I do not intend to say very much about it other than to say there must be some ambiguity in regard to the definition of the word "elector" or some under-handed work must have gone on while I was away from the State. I found on my return that a larger number of people were enrolled in my province than was the case when I was elected in 1912, and in that year, I and my esteemed opponent Lieut. C. R. Davies left no stone unturned in seeing that every one was enrolled. Then despite the decline of the goldfields, we find a greater number of names on the rolls in 1918 than was the case in 1912. Since 1918 over a thousand names have been removed from the roll. Surely there is something ambiguous about the position or somebody did something which should not have been done. I will leave it at that, but I hope that if the other House does not take the lead, and if it is decided that a property qualification shall be the qualification of this Chamber, a qualification will be clearly and definitely set forth which will not be capable of two interpretations. So long as we have a qualification which is capable of different interpretations, so long shall we have people endeavouring to put on the roll the names of those who should not be there. The question of giving soldiers a vote has also been referred to. It is said that a soldier, because he fought for his country, should have the right to vote for the legislative Council. If that is to be argued, the logical deduction is that disfranchisement must follow for those persons who held the qualification and who offered their services to the military authorities, but who did not go. I am satisfied that the soldiers collectively will not ask that because they served in the war they should be given a privilege that cannot be extended to their parents who were responsible for their being in the service, and I say it would be an insult to the parents, because if we value the soldier and what he has done for us, so must we take our hats off to the parents, or to the wives who allowed the men to go. Why not then give them the franchise as well? I hope soldiers will not be led by the mere sop that because they fought they are to have the right to vote for this Chamber. Let the soldier stand out as he stands to-day, second to none, and lead the way, and let him say what he can truly say, that so far this country has not profited at all by the war. To-day the franchise of this House is what it was at the beginning of the war, and the soldier stands out and his friends with him, and he asks for equitable citizenship so that he may carry the day. Then he can truthfully say, "I can point to one standing monument. My effort in the great war resulted in bringing about equality of citizenship in the Legislature

of our country." I thank hon. members for their hearing and I desire to say in conclusion that I am not pessimistic in regard to the outlook. Hard times are coming; they are with us now. It is the duty of all to so mould and create public opinion and so direct public institutions, that those hard times may be easily borne. I am satisfied that the good sense of the people and the resources of Australia will bring us to a harmonious end.

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM (North-East): In common with other hon. members who have spoken I desire to express my regret at the death of our late President, Sir Henry Briggs, I also wish to congratulate you, Sir, on attaining the position of President of this Chamber. I believe with other hon. members that you richly deserve the position you now occupy. The Governor's Speech made reference to price-fixing. Whilst listening to the remarks of Mr. Cornell I had the pleasure of hearing him say almost what I intend to repeat, and that is that the price-fixing legislation proposed by the present Government seems to me to be arriving a little too late. We know that the Labour Government at the outbreak of war brought down a price-fixing Bill which was made law and it remained on the statute-book for something like 12 months, but when the then Labour Government proposed to re-enact that legislation at the end of 12 months and were successful in passing it through another place, this House saw fit to defeat the Bill. Since then, so far as I can learn, the majority of the members of this Chamber have awakened to the fact that it would have been a good thing in the interests of the people if that legislation had passed when it was introduced in 1915 or 1916. It was claimed throughout the State that this cry of profiteering was a delusion, and that the business community of Australia and particularly Western Australia, were too patriotic to think of robbing the people during the period of the nation's distress, that is during the war period. However, it seems to me that not only are the Government of the State convinced that robbery has been going on, but the majority of people are realising that there has been thieving going on so far as the cost of commodities is concerned, and it is now proposed to introduce price fixing legislation. It is pointed out that when enacted it will not have such control, or at any rate great control over the cost of commodities which are so necessary for the people. But we also know that we have in our Federal Parliament what is known as a National Government, and I believe they, too, are interested in this direction and purpose passing price-fixing legislation under the title of a Commerce Bill. It must be fresh in the minds of members that, 18 months ago, the Labour movement in this State brought under the notice of the then Nationalist Premier, Sir Henry Lefroy, the need of doing something to control the prices of the necessities of life in the interests of the community.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Was not Federal price fixing in operation then?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: Yes, but unfortunately the legislation passed by the Federal Government did not receive the sympathetic administration it should have received. As a matter of fact, the very people administering

the Federal Act were not in sympathy with price-fixing. It was pointed out that it was against the principles of the Nationalists throughout Australia, and against the principles of some members of this House. Sir Henry Lefroy, on that occasion, promised to give the matter every consideration, and agreed to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire whether profiteering was going on or whether there was any need for legislation to control the ever-increasing cost of living. Before the Commission finished its labours, however, the Government cancelled it. Nothing came of the repeated requests from consumers throughout the country. On second thoughts, and no doubt to meet the demands of the people who have been driven to action through the high prices of the necessities of life during the last few years, the Government now propose to introduce price-fixing legislation. If the proposed legislation is in the interests of the people, I shall do nothing to retard its progress in this Chamber. I assure the leader of the House that he will have my support on any effective price-fixing legislation. I referred to the arguments adduced when the price fixing legislation of 1914 was before the Chamber. It was pointed out that representatives of large trading firms operating here were too patriotic to rob the people; but experience has taught us that we have amongst us men who, while professing their patriotism on the public platform, waving flags and appealing to men to enlist and defend their country, would stoop to rob those left behind of some of the money in the shape of military allotments left for their support. Industrial unrest is a matter agitating the mind of the Government. Is it any wonder that we have industrial unrest when the prices of the necessities of life are so high and the store houses are filled with stocks of those self-same necessities which the people cannot obtain? Owing to the heavy increase in the cost of commodities, the people are not getting sufficient to enable them to live on anything like the 1914 standard. This is the cause of industrial unrest in Australia, and it is one of the problems to be faced if we desire to bring about an improvement in industrial conditions. It has been pointed out by Judge Heydon, President of the Arbitration Court in New South Wales, that the increasing of wages cannot continue to follow the high increases in the cost of living. Many people are of opinion that the demands of the workers for higher wages are responsible for the increased cost of living, whereas it is the other way about. Those responsible are the profiteers who manipulate the prices, force the workers to go to the Arbitration Court and take direct action to retain something like their old standard of living. Unless the Government are prepared to act in the direction of bringing about a reduction in the cost of living, we can only expect a continuance of the industrial unrest experienced during the last 12 months. The workers will not submit to a lowering of their standard of living. They are out to retain and improve upon the 1914 standard of living in this State. It is opportune to point out that the policy of the present Government contains no reference to legislation of an industrial nature. There is reference to a Shop and Factories Bill, but seeing that nothing has been done to improve industrial legislation during the last five years

one would surely have expected the present Government to bring down legislation to remedy many of the well known defects in existing laws. There is the Arbitration Act. Union after union has tried to bring its business before the court, only to find many difficulties in the way to prevent its getting to the court. When the Arbitration Act was passed, it was not regarded as a perfect piece of legislation. Experience teaches. But the Governments of the last three or four years have made no attempt to amend the Arbitration Act, to make it at least more workable and a little more popular with the workers. The defects of the Act are well known. Those desirous of mitigating the industrial unrest should try to give the workers a little more confidence in this statute. The Workers' Compensation Act contains many known defects and nothing is mentioned in the Governor's Speech about amending it. Members ask what can be done to bring about some measure of better feeling between capital and labour. If we wish to improve the feeling between capital and labour, we must make an honest attempt to place on the statute-book legislation which will mean some improvement in the interests of the workers. Nothing is suggested by the Government in the direction of improving the health conditions in the mining industry. I have pointed out on two occasions the need for legislation to exclude consumptives from underground work in the mines. We pride ourselves on our advanced legislation in health matters: yet in South Africa a worker suffering from tuberculosis is not allowed to work in the mines. There, it has been realised that a workman infected with the tubercular germ, working in a confined place with another man, is a danger to the other man, and to every man in the mine. Yet year after year we have gone on, knowing that many consumptives are working in our mines, not only on the Golden Mile but in other mining centres, and nothing has been done. In the newspaper of the 27th October, 1917, was a report of a party of British soldiers, taken prisoner by the Germans, having been imprisoned in a quarry with consumptives, and it was characterised as a disgrace to civilisation that the Germans should herd together healthy and diseased men. Yet that same thing is going on here under our very eyes year after year, and no attempt is made to effect an improvement. No attempt is made to exclude consumptives from underground work. It may be argued that provision would have to be made for men so excluded from their occupation. If that excuse is put forward by the present Government or any other Government, I shall say that we have not reached that stage of civilisation in which many people claim we are living.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: Would the State have to provide for these consumptives?

Hon. J. CUNNINGHAM: What else? Many of them could follow a surface occupation, not being so far advanced as to require to be placed in a sanatorium or a home of peace. But employment would have to be found in other cases. That is no reason, however, why the present state of affairs should be allowed to continue. A tubercular case leaving the gold fields for the sanatorium is provided by the Railway Department with a separate compart-

ment in which to travel to Wooroloo. Yet the same man may have been going down in a cage into the mine day after day with four or five men and working with them in the stopes. When he has developed the disease to such an extent that he has to go to the place where all miners go who stick to their job long enough, namely, the sanatorium, then a separate compartment is provided for him, segregating him from other travellers on the railways, because it has been realised that he is a danger to the public health. Let me repeat a few considerations I urged regarding the Wooroloo sanatorium when speaking on the Address-in-reply last year. I pointed out then that, under the conditions obtaining at the sanatorium, many of the patients who enter the institution do not get a fair deal. I refer to those cases which are in the early stages of the disease. I stated last session that the doctor in charge of the sanatorium was not receiving a fair deal either, because under such conditions the person suffering from the disease in an early stage is placed with a person who has entered the sanatorium only to die. When the sanatorium was first erected, I understood that it was to be for the treatment of tubercular cases in the early stages, with a view to effecting cures if possible. But there is no chance of that under the conditions which obtain. The depressing effect that the sight of those in the advanced stage has on patients entering with the disease in an early stage, is such as to cause the newcomers to lose heart. The patient says to himself, "This is what I have to come to, this is what is ahead of me. What an outlook!" There is no incentive for the new patient to try and get well. That is something which could and should be remedied. Cases entering the sanatorium in an advanced stage should be entirely segregated from cases in the early stages. Last session a measure was passed for the settlement of returned soldiers and sailors on the land. I have had a few communications from the Land Settlement Board asking me to supply certain particulars of returned men who have applied for land. Upon reading the questions, with a view to furnishing answers, I arrived at the conclusion that the returned soldier who has not had previous experience of farming stands no chance of having his application granted. The title of the measure is the Returned Soldiers and Sailors Settlement Act. But where can the sailor possibly come in unless he has had farming experience when very young? If not, there is no prospect whatever of his receiving any of the benefits supposed to be granted to him by that Act. I understand also that the Act contains provision for settlement on the land of the dependants of soldiers who have been killed. Many of those dependants are young, perhaps 15 or 16 years of age; and what chance have those lads of getting any land under the measure if the Land Settlement Board continue to administer the Act as I understand they are doing at the present time? In his reply the leader of the House should at least afford some enlightenment on these points. Let me refer briefly to the present position of the mining industry, and say a few words on the administration of the Mines Department during the last 12 months. Last session we were told that a sum of £50,000 had been set aside for

the purpose of assisting the mining industry, but now we find that a sum of only £6,000 has actually been expended in that direction. I know for a fact that in the country north of Kalgoorlie the mining industry has almost gone out of existence; that is, outside the well established mines. Certainly some well established mines are still operating, but most of the smaller mines have gone; and many of the prospectors who formerly made their living in the country have also left the district. That state of affairs has been brought about by the very great increase in the cost of production, including the cost of living. Some years ago the local business people could afford to back prospecting parties. Owing to the heavy increase in the cost of living and also increases in railway freights, business people cannot now afford to back prospecting parties. In addition, we have the increase in the cost of steel, gelignite, and other mining requisites. These factors to a large extent have brought about the decline in the mining industry, and, unless some alteration is effected, mining in the back country will go out of existence altogether. One of the hardest blows that the mining industry has received since the armistice is the additional impost of about 12s. 6d. per case on gelignite. I have been told by mining men on the Eastern Goldfields that that increase means an additional burden of £72,000 per annum for the industry. Very little has been heard in the way of protest against this additional impost. That is a most remarkable thing. When the workers make a demand for a slight increase in wages, they are immediately told that they are doing something which is going to kill the industry. They will be told this even if the demand amounts to only a few paltry thousand pounds per annum. But here in one hit we have £72,000 added to the annual cost of production, and very little said about it. No doubt those who could protest realise the position in which they find themselves. They know that they are in the maw of the monopolists of Great Britain, because shortly after the signing of the armistice Nobel's of Glasgow amalgamated 37 companies manufacturing explosives in Great Britain, and thus a combine has been established, with the result of this additional burden of £72,000 per annum on gold production in Western Australia. These are some of the things which are helping to cripple our mining industry, and it is only right that attention should be drawn to them, since many people hold the opinion that it is the ever increasing demands of the worker that have brought about the present condition of mining in this State. Before concluding, I desire to refer to certain remarks which Mr. Allen made here a few nights ago. Referring to some victimisations at Fremantle, Mr. Allen asked, "Are the Trades Hall authorities prepared to stand by their guarantee to the Government that there should be no victimisation and no intimidation?" It is not the policy of the Trades Hall to throw its protecting mantle over those unfortunate people who were known at Fremantle as loyalists. What the Trades Hall agreed to was that, so far as the Labour movement is concerned, there should be no vendetta against these people, that these people were not to be pursued. And the Trades Hall have stuck to that; there has

been no breach of their undertaking. But as for going round and following up members, whether they be lumpers or miners or navvies, and standing between them and the people known as national workers, such is not the function of the Labour movement. That is not the duty of what is called the Trades Hall. It is not the policy of the Labour movement to protect people whom we look upon as scabs and blacklegs, to put it plainly. That is the way those people are regarded. Attention might be drawn to another aspect of this matter. I do not know that Mr. Allen busied himself when the families of the Fremantle lumpers were being victimised for something like two years after the trouble of 1917. No effort was made by outsiders to come to their rescue. The Labour movement had to do its best in collecting money to feed the people who had been victimised through their action in 1917. It is not the policy of Labour to go around policing those who have done something detrimental to organised Labour. Mr. Hickey referred to the strike in Meekatharra in 1916. Some 40 or 50 men left Meekatharra and went to Kalgoorlie. When they made application for employment they were asked by the employers whence they had come, and on stating that they had come from Meekatharra they found there was no work. There is victimisation. Yet no member in this House other than a Labour member, tried to do anything about that. Now we are expected to throw the mantle of Labour over those unfortunate people in Fremantle. I do not intend to say very much in connection with the trouble which took place in Fremantle. We all admit that it was most unfortunate. I believe it would have been settled had it been taken in hand by the Government earlier. But the trouble was not handled as firmly as it should have been and, in consequence, we had that fiasco on the Sunday morning. It has left a great deal of bitterness, but I do not know that we can improve things by continually referring to it. I believe that we have constitutional means for remedying some of the ills under which we labour. Mr. Cornell pointed out that political action was useless, and said also that direct action was not only useless but was a menace to society. If political action is no good, and if direct action is even worse, what means are the workers to adopt to bring about any betterment of their conditions? The only thing remaining is to crawl and smudge. I believe we can, by constitutional means, better the conditions of the people, not only of Western Australia but of the Commonwealth. If a proper feeling is desired between the capitalists and the workers, the capitalists will have to meet the workers in a more friendly manner than in the past. Every advance that has been made by Labour to better the conditions of the people has been met by the employers with open hostility. They have never made any advance to meet the workers in the direction of trying to understand their wants and requirements with a view of legislating to bring about a better state of affairs. When the employers are prepared to do that and to give the workers a fair deal, we may expect a better feeling than obtains at present; but as long as the employers sit back and fight all industrial legislation we shall continue to find ourselves surrounded by the unrescued

of to-day. Unless the cost of living is reduced this unrest will certainly continue; because the workers realise that it is not a matter of going to the Arbitration Court and getting 1s. a day increase. They know that what is necessary is to reduce the cost of living. They go to the court asking for an increase in wages and they get, perhaps, 1s. a day increase. But the profiteer has the right to increase the cost of living, and so within three months after the award is delivered the evidence on which it is based has been destroyed by the increased cost of living. When the Government are prepared to control the cost of living some better feeling will be brought about between the worker and the employer.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (East): I deeply regret the loss sustained by the death of the late President, and I congratulate you, Sir, upon your elevation to the presidential Chair. We all appreciate your marked ability for the position, and we have the utmost confidence in your determination to fully protect the rights and privileges of the House. I trust you will have long life and health to continue for many years in your honourable position. Also I wish to extend a welcome to Mr. Pantou. With other hon. members, I deplore the almost universal industrial unrest and the greatly increased cost of living. I do not hold that the work of repatriation should have been put in hand long ago. The soldiers have done much for us, and I am convinced that Western Australia and the Commonwealth intend to do justly by the soldiers. But it is clear that to have gone ahead too hastily with repatriation schemes would have been to invite serious and perhaps costly mistakes. While our men were away at the Front the available labour remaining in the State was reduced to a minimum, and production would have ceased altogether had that labour been diverted to the preparing of farms in anticipation of the return of the soldiers. For want of labour our production has been greatly reduced. I feel that the value of our wheat, when production shall have resumed normal proportions, will do much to help the State out of her financial difficulties. It is all very well to find fault with the Government for not having made more rapid headway with repatriation, but when we remember the strain under which the State has been working, it will be seen that much has already been done.

Hon. J. Cornell: Even the machinery Act was not passed until the war was won.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: A great many returned soldiers have not been very anxious to leave the towns. I agree with Mr. Pantou, who said the other night that, owing to the strain they had been under, many of them were not anxious to embark upon any definite vocation until they should have enjoyed a brief spell. They have practically ceased to take any responsibility for anything. They were so long waiting to carry out the work they were ordered to do

that they were not inclined to jump into the new life before them, and take the responsibilities attached to whatever they might undertake. The Premier is to be congratulated upon the great work he has now started in the matter of land settlement, and the great impetus to that settlement which has taken place. I well remember passing through the Lands Department some months ago when one's footsteps echoed down the corridor from one end to the other. The inactivity of the Lands Department has been a blight upon the country for the last four years. Those who were likely to embark upon the land had their confidence destroyed.

Hon. J. Cornell: That is to say they were waiting for the Hon. Jas. Mitchell to become Minister for Lands.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The fact remains that within a week of Mr. Mitchell taking over the Premiership a very different position arose. I heard one or two men in the Lands Department remark that there was a different atmosphere about the place now. Within the last day or two I have been astonished to find the number of people who are eagerly scanning the maps to take up land, and the number of inquiries that are being made. There are also many people eagerly inquiring for some of the land originally taken up, and there are men beginning to scour the back country to find some property which they can secure. The Premier has started that enthusiasm so necessary to the life of the community, which will restore in a great measure the confidence of the public and our financial institutions. If the Premier's enthusiasm has this effect, it will go a long way towards the repatriation of our soldiers. Repatriation does not rest entirely with the Government, but rests too with the communities in which the settlers are going to start their new life. The surrounding settlers can do very much that the Government cannot do for those people.

Hon. H. Millington: There are many of his old victims eagerly inquiring for buyers.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: We have land here that is cheaper than in any other part of the world and climatic conditions which cannot be beaten. Mr. Mills referred to the opportunities men have for settling on the pastoral areas, and said that a suitable home could be built for £50. I agree with him. I have heard the remark made by old settlers that a hollow log will make a very good home at times. In these days the cost of a home should not be one of the first things to which attention should be devoted. Many of our finest settlers have done without expensive homes for a few years. While a man is single he does not require to have a large house on his selection. When his selection reaches that stage of development when he can bring a wife to it, he can build his house and we shall then be on the right road to success with our closer set-

tlement scheme. Attention can then be turned by our settlers to dairying. Without a family a settler cannot well make a success of dairying. Every country which has made a success of this industry has done so by means of child labour. We cannot force this industry until men who have settled on our lands have got their families growing up around them, from which they will derive the necessary labour to enable them to carry on their operations. The absence of our men at the Front has made it impossible for settlers to rely upon the necessary labour required to develop their farms. Many important works would have been embarked upon had it not been for the scarcity of labour, because the owners dared not start them lest it should be impossible to get the necessary labour to complete them. In time we shall find that men will be prepared to take on the responsibilities of farming. With the return of our soldiers, greater confidence and a greater feeling of security will be engendered amongst the investing public. We shall then be able to re-open some of our larger areas and in all probability our mining industry will go ahead again. The mining industry could not have continued when gold had to be sold at a fixed price. The working costs have gone up and values in the mines have gone down. Wages have also increased, so that gold production has been anything but a payable business. Those who represent the mining areas in Parliament will have a hard row to hoe to keep their electors in their districts. There is indeed a danger of an exodus from the fields to the pastoral areas. We hope to have thousands of men coming to us from overseas. This magnificent country is bound to attract men to-day. With this confidence in the country and its finances restored, I feel satisfied there will be very much better progress made in our mining industry. I am also confident that we shall receive better prices for our wheat, and that wheat growing will become a sound proposition in this State. It is a good thing to have had our present Premier to take hold of the destinies of the country. It has been claimed that one of the panaceas of our evils is the taxation of unimproved land adjoining our railways. I do not altogether agree with that idea, nor with the idea that we have built enough railways. It has been said that we have too great a mileage of railway per head of the population when compared with other countries. We have no need to be afraid of this position but should be proud of it. I hope we shall keep well ahead of other countries in this respect. We may consider that the cost of railways here is so much less than it is in other parts of the world. If it is not, it should be. Mr. Teesdale Smith once offered to build 1,000 miles of light railway to open up this State at a cost of a million pounds. That was the price at which he considered railways should be built here. This country is very poorly supplied with rivers. We have no means of transport except by either road or railway. If we want to develop our inland

resources we must build roads, but if we can build railways as cheaply as that it is better to do so. That being the case, we should not compare the mileage per head of the population with that appertaining in other States but should take into consideration the cost at which the work can be done. Those who took up land along the railways have probably had to pay more for it. The Government are also reaping the benefit of the revenues derived from increased prices put upon the land through which the railways ran before that land had been taken up.

Hon. G. J. G. W. Miles: What about the land held before the railways were built?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: So far as that land is concerned I think the majority of people who held it sold it and got out of the country, and unfortunately for those who bought it they felt they had rather the worst end of the bargain. Certainly they did, and so far as the unimproved value was concerned they paid for it very dearly. I put this question to those who think in that direction, that had it not been for those people at the end of the railways which were built the people living in the towns would have starved or else would have had to pay high prices for their produce, because in the absence of railways that produce would have had to be carted over great distances. At the present time it is suggested that an Act of Parliament shall be passed to control the cost of living. If the railways had not been built years ago an Act would have been demanded by the people in the towns as against those in the country districts to keep down the cost of commodities. However, that was not done, and it is a good thing for the State that it was not done. The railways have been cheaply constructed, but I am not satisfied that we are getting the best results. Up to the present time I do not know what the position is with regard to the Commissioner who is to be appointed. There might have been some mention made of the matter in the Governor's Speech. We have been looking forward to drastic changes in the Railway Department. I am convinced that the Midland Railway, which is controlled by a company, is giving much more satisfaction to the people served by it than is the case with the State owned railways. It would be interesting to make a comparison between the two systems. Personally I think the result would be in favour of the privately owned company.

Hon. H. J. Saunders: The Midland Railway is run at a loss.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The State railways are also being run at a loss. The loss on the Midland Railway, I believe, is due to the fact that the company have to pay very heavy State and Federal taxation. Of course that is a very severe drain on their resources. With regard to our own railways and the question of education, it is a pity we have not been able to make greater use of them to reduce the number of schools in the country districts. It seems to me that it would be a simple matter to run motor vehicles on the rails. These could travel over many

miles and take many children to school. The vehicles could also be utilised to carry a few passengers, mails, and parcels from time to time. In many instances I am convinced we are not getting the best service from our country railways. I should be glad to see a definite appointment made to control the system, and then to see whether we cannot get more up to date methods introduced. I would like to have seen some mention made in the Governor's Speech of an agricultural college. This question, I understood, was being taken up by the Government. If we did establish an agricultural college in the State it should be one that we could be proud of. It should be in a sufficient area of ground that would leave room for much work to be carried out. The misfortune we have suffered under is that our overhead charges have become too great. The establishment gets overloaded with buildings and it is not in a sufficiently convenient position to attract the number of students required to make it a successful institution. Preparation should be made for a large number of students. They need not necessarily be drawn from within the State, but we should anticipate getting a number from the Old Country or from the outside world. There are many who would take exception to my suggestion that a large area should be set aside, but I would like to stress the point that it should be a large area so that the students would be convinced in their own minds that they had gone through a complete course of training, and at the same time those who would be likely to employ them afterwards would be more convinced of the value of the education the students had received. We would in that way experience greater success. There are many properties which require managers and those in control of them would invariably approach an agricultural college and select students from such an institution. I hope the Government will not lose sight of these facts which I have related. When an agricultural college is established, an area should also be set aside for forestry, because we want every one of the settlers who has a large property to give his attention to forestry. Every one of these estates must give its attention to its own supplies of firewood and its own supplies of wood on its own property for fencing purposes in the future. Hence the manager we shall want to employ will have to be someone who will give his attention to that kind of thing. I mention these matters because, as time goes on, it will be found more and more necessary to give attention to these questions. We cannot expect to give satisfaction to those who are likely to require the services of graduates from such a college, unless the college is established on wide lines. Before I conclude I desire to endorse the remarks made by Mr. Rose to-day, when he referred to the work which was being done by the Ugly Men's Association in the way of educating and training some of the returned soldiers and others who have to await the decisions of

the Lands Department or the military authorities before they can turn their attention to some definite pursuit. I have seen some of these young fellows about town, and felt sorry for them, because time appeared to be hanging heavily on their hands. They are being given an opportunity to learn a little about tinsmithing, blacksmithing and carpentry, and various other things which will be of the utmost value to them, and I feel that the people who are doing such good work are doing more perhaps than those who put their hands into their pockets and give £5, £10, or £20. I thank hon. members for their attention during the opportunity I have had of making these few remarks.

On motion by the Minister for Education debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 20th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—PINE PLANTATION, LUDLOW.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What is the reason for cutting down the large area of pines on the Ludlow plantation? 2, Who was responsible for the planting of the pines, and what was the cost? 3, What is the intention of the department with regard to the denuded area? 4, If this action was necessitated owing to an error in planting, what is the estimated loss to the State consequent thereupon?

The HONORARY MINISTER (for the Minister for Mines) replied: 1, Because they were dying. 2, Forestry Advisory Board, consisting of Mr. Adams, Mr. J. C. Port, and Sir Newton Moore. The cost will be ascertained. 3, Replant with a pine that will grow (viz., Maritime Pine) in the soil and climate of the district. 4, This can only be ascertained when the pines being cut are sold.