

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 29th August, 1918.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 11 a.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—MINE CREEP, GREAT BOULDER.

Mr. LUTEY (without notice) asked the Minister for Mines: Have the Government come to any decision with regard to the independent inquiry it is intended to hold in connection with the creep in the Great Boulder mine?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: Yes, the Government have arranged with the Minister for Mines in New South Wales to permit of the Chief Mining Inspector of that State to make an investigation and report upon the subject. The gentleman appointed is Mr. Jaquet, and he will arrive in Kalgoorlie on Thursday next and proceed at once with the investigation.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Third Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. TEESDALE (Roebourne) [11.7]: After the gas attack by the leader of the Opposition last evening, I am scarcely prepared to resume the debate on the Address-in-reply. But, of course, if I knew that there was to be a bombardment after that gas attack, I would leave the matter where it is. If the whole thing were left in my hands I would cut it all out. The debate on the Address-in-reply is a positive farce, and nothing else but a waste of time day after day. I recently had the opportunity of renewing my acquaintance with some of the Parliaments in other States, and the consensus of opinion appears to be that the debate on the Address-in-reply is always a waste of time and a scandal, because it amounts to merely a weary reiteration on the part of hon. members. The leader of the Opposition and the Premier, who spoke last night, said all that it is necessary to say; they covered positively all the ground and everything expressed in the Speech, and God knows that is long enough. I feel that we would make a name for ourselves if we abolished this debate on the Address-in-reply, or at any rate confined it to a speech on the part of the leader of the Opposition and a reply from the Premier. It would be a splendid idea to do that, and possibly it would be found that the other States would emulate our example. When I was in the other States I saw a great number of things which made me feel proud to belong to the Western Australian Parliament, and, if we adopted the suggestion I have made with regard to the Address-in-reply, it would top them all. I will not mention the names of the States, the sittings of the Parliaments of which I attended, but on several occasions, and in two

or three places, I could not but be struck by the fact that the Parliaments were more like polling booths or back bars than anything else, and I was very proud to think that I was returning to a House, the proceedings in which were always conducted in a dignified way. Compared to the manner in which the proceedings are carried on in some of the Houses I visited, we maintain some decency: There is no sprawling about, as I saw over there, members do not throw their hats and correspondence all over the place, and more than anything else we treat our Speaker with deference and respect, which is not the case in some of the Parliaments I visited. In one instance I saw a Premier sprawling across the Speaker's desk enjoying a joke perhaps about the previous night's pictures, while an unfortunate member was endeavouring to address the House. In fact, there seemed to be three or four debates going on at the same time. I thought to myself that that kind of thing would never do in our House because our Speaker would call us up with a round turn. However, all this has nothing to do with the Address-in-reply, and it is no use my advocating the abolition of the debate on the Address if I continue. I will, therefore, end my remarks.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [11.13]: I do not intend to dwell at any length on the Address-in-reply, but there are three points in the Speech that I would like to say a few words about. First and foremost I should like to make a few remarks on the financial position of the State, and more especially as it bears on our relationship to the Federal Government. I consider, and a great many other members as well as many people in the state do so as well, that the chief cause of our financial embarrassment at the present time is our relationship to the Federal Government. Speaking on financial matters last evening, the leader of the Opposition said he considered that question transcended all others, and should be debated by all. Towards the conclusion of last session I asked certain questions in this House, and with your permission I should like to repeat those questions and give the answers which were supplied. The first was, are the following figures supplied to the questioner by the Under Treasurer correct. The total amount received by this State from the Federal Treasurer for the year ended 30th June, 1917, was £893,135, made up as follows:—Under Surplus Revenue Act, including the 25s. per head, £569,982; on account of old age pensions (approximate), £138,528; on account of maternity bonus, £184,625; total, £893,135. Since I asked those questions I have learnt that the Under Treasurer made a mistake so far as the maternity bonus is concerned. The amount he received on that account was £41,735, and not £184,625. This makes the total which we received for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1917, £750,245. We are indebted to the "West Australian" for having discovered that mistake. On the other side, the total drawn from this State during the same period in direct and indirect taxation amounted to £1,696,915, showing that the difference between receipts and payments was £803,780 to the disadvantage of Western

Australia. In his reply the acting leader made out that the amount we received was £1,550,000 and not £1,696,915, because he pointed out that on the per capita customs receipts throughout the State, when the Under Treasurer and I were fixing these amounts we allowed 10s. for the difference in this State. The "West Australian," in a leading article, shortly afterwards considered that we should have been credited with a far greater sum, because they recognised that this State must be importing considerably more per capita than any other State in the Commonwealth. On these figures, then, the position boils itself down to this: for those twelve months we received £750,245 and we paid to the Federal Government £1,696,915, making a difference to our disadvantage of £946,670 in one year. This is brought about, I think, by the loss of our Customs. The State has put itself into the position of an hotel. It has given away its bar trade, the very part of the business that brings in the revenue, and it is now being run on the boarders. Unless something is done to get a better financial arrangement between the States and the Commonwealth it will be impossible for the State ever to get right again. I quite agree with all necessary retrenchment and with all production; those two heads of policy should be developed to their utmost. But I consider the Government should not lose sight of the terrible burden imposed upon us by Federation. I am not the only one who thinks this, for in the Council last session the Colonial Secretary, practically delivering the Budget Speech of the Government, made the following remarks:—

My attitude on this question is that Australia as a whole can prosper only by the successful development of all the Australian States, and that the present interpretation of the Commonwealth Constitution is such as to make the successful development of Western Australia almost impossible.

Later on he said—

I do wish to impress upon members of the House, upon the Press, and upon the people of Western Australia, the imminent importance of at once taking up with vigour and purpose this question of the financial relationship of the State and the Commonwealth. No intelligent consideration of our public finances is possible without a thorough understanding of this matter.

He went on to suggest that some better financial arrangement should be insisted upon, and he said—

If the alteration is made on equitable lines, giving full recognition to the spirit of the Commonwealth Constitution, the resources of Western Australia, aided by sound government, should enable us to retrieve our position. If the third alteration is to follow the lines adopted in the two alterations already made, if Western Australia is to be still further prejudiced, then it seems to me that threatened State bankruptcy may well drive us into one or other of the two desperate alternatives, separation or unification.

We all realise that Federation has done considerable harm to Western Australia. What few industries we have are gradually falling

away, and the numbers of men employed in our secondary industries are rapidly decreasing. One of the first things that strikes a new arrival in Western Australia is the absence of factories. Later on we shall have to pay our share of the defence expenditure, but I ask what does this defence expenditure mean to Western Australia? Our quota of the coming war loan is £1,000,000. If we raise that million we are going to lose a considerable amount in taxation. Even so, one would not grumble if we had our fair proportion of the expenditure of that loan money. As a matter of fact nearly the whole of the money raised for defence purposes is being spent in the Eastern States, where our very soldiers are being sent to train. Even our interned aliens were taken from us and sent to the Eastern States.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Nearly all the West Australian representatives in the Federal Parliament are Nationalists. Surely they can use their influence.

Mr. ANGELO: It seems to me they have forgotten about Western Australia, and are pleasantly spending their time in the Eastern States. It is another reason why we should insist upon a better arrangement. I think we realise that Federation has not delivered the goods to Western Australia. At every chance the Federal authorities are invading our avenues of taxation, even in the paltry matter of taxing our few entertainments. When Federation was entered into it was never contemplated that the central authority would impose a land tax, notwithstanding which they have done it. The Colonial Treasurer told us at the close of last session that he was afraid to impose any more taxation on the people of Western Australia because he knew the Federal Government were coming down with much heavier taxation. Population is leaving us every day, being attracted to the Eastern States. There are but three ways of bringing about an improvement, namely, separation, unification, or a better financial arrangement. Unification should be the last recourse.

Mr. Munsie: It all depends upon what brand is proposed.

Mr. ANGELO: According to the Colonial Secretary, the question will crop up again within two years, and then what is the State going to do? Is it going for separation or for unification? Within two years this State must consider the question of whether we are to separate or go in for unification. Why, then, should we not get on to the question right now? We are told that during the coming year there will be a deficit of some £700,000, and I suppose it will be £800,000 next year. Thus, by 1920, we shall be a million and a half worse off than we are to-day. Federation is costing us £900,000 a year. For what? For sentiment. Is sentiment worth it? If we had that money with which to develop our industries we should be able to meet the deficit and have a little to boot as well.

Mr. Lambert: It is not the fault of Federation.

Mr. ANGELO: Undoubtedly it is. Federation has not delivered the goods promised to

us by the Constitution. The Commonwealth are taking advantage of every loophole to treat us as a poor relative. If in two years' time we have to go in for separation we shall have four millions to catch up instead of the two and a half millions of to-day, and if we go for unification they will take us over exactly as a poor relative.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Those people are the same as ourselves, are they not? They are not aliens in the Eastern States.

Mr. ANGELO: Judging by the voting at the last referendum I do not think our sentiments are quite the same as theirs.

Mr. Munsie: It's a godsend for Australia that they are not.

Mr. ANGELO: Here is another little point showing how Federation is treating us: At the beginning of the year we were told that our share of developing the Northern Territory amounted to 25s. per head of the population, or £375,000. To-day it amounts to £400,000. What were our members in the Federal Parliament thinking of to allow Western Australia to be called upon for £400,000 for the development of the Northern Territory, seeing that we have a better northern territory of our own? Think what would be the position of our northern territory with £400,000 expended on it. It should be pointed out to the Federal Government that, seeing that we have our own northern territory, we certainly should not be expending our money on their Northern Territory.

Mr. Maley: Are they not going to take over our Northern territory?

Mr. ANGELO: No. When it comes to that I will advocate that the North-West become a separate State altogether. The potentialities of that district are so great—

Mr. O'Loughlen: That is all right for a Governor's Speech, but you are not the Governor.

Mr. ANGELO: The Constitution Act says that it is not feasible to get separation for Western Australia. I contend that an authority capable of granting a Constitution can at any time cancel that Constitution. What we must do is try to educate the people of the State as to the best course to be taken. If they are satisfied that it should be separation, I am convinced that we could get an almost unanimous vote on it. Nearly all the business people recognise that our present troubles are due to the money we have to pay away to the Federal Government.

Mr. Lambert: A lot of their trouble is due to their fondness for buying from other people.

Mr. ANGELO: If we could save this money that we are paying away for Federation we should have something with which to develop our own State. If we could get some of our customs revenue back, we could back our industries against those in the Eastern States. When we started our jam factory here, the firm of Jones put up the price of their jam one half-penny on the other side and lowered it 2d. a tin here in order to crush the local industry. I am told this on good authority. This is one instance of how our competitors from the Eastern States are going to try and crush us and keep us down.

Mr. Pilkington: We are getting Jones' jam cheap. Is that not right?

Mr. ANGELO: It will mean the crushing of our own industry if this sort of thing goes on. I do not say we should go in for separation or unification. It is up to the Government, who promised, when they answered my questions last year, to give Parliament an opportunity of thoroughly discussing the position. I want to hear the opinions of men who are adverse to any change, and of those who are in favour of it. Let abler minds than ours point out the pros and cons of this question, and let members learn something as to what is the best course to adopt in this matter. If our position was placed before the British Government and all the disadvantages that we are meeting in connection with Federation shown, and if it were pointed out especially that this huge expenditure of £900,000 is going on yearly and increasing to our disadvantage, I think they would favourably consider the question. The other day the British Government made Ireland an offer of Home Rule in exchange for conscription. Let us put the converse position and say, "Give us back our sovereign rights, and we are prepared to have conscription."

Mr. O'Loughlen: Conscription stocks do not stand very high.

Mr. ANGELO: I urge upon the Government to give the House an opportunity of discussing the position. We are in danger, not only of losing any possible immigration which may come to these shores, but of losing our own returned men when they are due to come back. They say that through Federation these more populous centres—

Mr. Munsie: Do you think if you have separation in Western Australia in order to get conscription that these men who voted "yes" would come to this State?

Mr. ANGELO: I think so. They would be glad to come to a patriotic country.

Mr. Lambert: They would get as far from it as they could.

Mr. ANGELO: I am sorry to hear that remark from the hon. member. I think that our returned men will be attracted by the far better conditions and better ways of living than at present exist in the Eastern States. One has only to go to Melbourne and Sydney to find that those cities are teaming with population, and prosperous in every possible way. Owing to our distance from the larger centres of the Commonwealth and the seat of the Federal Government, we are not getting the fair deal we should get under the Federal Constitution.

Mr. Munsie: I am not altogether sorry that there is not too much Federal money being spent in this State. We shall recuperate much faster than the Eastern States when the change comes.

Mr. ANGELO: Out of the million that we shall raise here, how much of it will be spent in Western Australia?

Mr. Munsie: Very little.

Mr. ANGELO: Very little indeed, but we shall have to pay our share later on. Federation cost us £900,000 last year, and people may say that this is due to defence. That is not so. Expenditure on defence has to be met out

of loan money and we shall have to pay our share. I was glad to hear the leader of the Opposition shaking up the Government on the question of repatriation. We have been rather slack in the matter, and the sooner we get ahead on this vital question the better. No mention is made of any repatriation in the North-West, notwithstanding the fact that this portion of the State has sent a thousand men to the Front.

Hon. P. Collier: It is all the same, north, south, east, and west.

Mr. ANGELO: Nothing at all has been done. The other day I went to the Minister and he said, "We have no data to go on." I pointed out that within the last few years we have had four experts inquiring into the North-West, namely Messrs. Despeissis, Moody, Crawford, and Scott, the Irrigation Expert.

Hon. P. Collier: And last but not least, yourself.

Mr. ANGELO: I do not flatter myself to that extent. What little I have done, however, has been profitable, as I can prove by my balance sheet. It may be said that one or two of these men have been fools, but all four are unanimous that the North-West possesses great possibilities.

Hon. P. Collier: Sometimes four fools get together.

Mr. ANGELO: They said they were satisfied that the land was all right, but they did not know about the water. I got ahead of them there. When Mr. Tindale was going up recently I asked him to look into the question and he reported that the water difficulty was by no means unfavourable. These experts reported that there was land enough to settle half a million people on a profitable basis. I ask that this matter should be considered seriously, and that an opportunity should be given for settlement up there. I feel that a scheme could be put up for settling hundreds of men in the North-West that would be a better scheme than any yet put forward. Not one penny would have to be paid for the land. Why buy up estates at high prices when we can get land for nothing? The settlement of the North-West should also be urged for defence purposes. There is a huge territory there with a coast line of something like 2,000 miles at present populated by only 6,000 people, as compared with Queensland which carries 800,000. Past Governments have not given the consideration to the North-West that they should have given.

Hon. P. Collier: What is the Honorary Minister for the North-West doing?

Mr. ANGELO: I wish he was here. With regard to freezing works, I quite agree that the co-operative system should be applied as much as possible to the carrying out of such works within Western Australia. I would strongly urge the Government to hand over the Wyndham Freezing Works to the local pastoralists. Of course, they would not take them over at present cost, and I would suggest to the Government that they should cut their loss on these works, reduce the capital cost to say £300,000 and hand them over to the pastoralists of the North-West.

Mr. O'Loughlen: They might be like the Gascoyne pastoralists, and not pay up.

Mr. ANGELO: The Gascoyne pastoralists have never refused to pay up. Can the hon. member point to one instance in which they have not done so?

Mr. O'Loughlen: I refer to the vermin fence.

Mr. ANGELO: They are paying regularly now, and when they have finished paying they will hand over to the State, for nothing, a fence which cost something like £66,000. Compare this with what it has cost the Government to put up fences in other portions of the State! When the pastoralists have paid up, according to agreement, they will present to the Government a handsome gift in the shape of a rabbit-proof fence. The Government should cut down the capital cost of the Wyndham freezing works to the sum I have mentioned and hand it over to the pastoralists to run it on a co-operative basis. I am sorry not to see in the Speech any sympathetic remarks regarding Carnarvon and Geraldton. I suppose this matter was overlooked, as we are doing the work ourselves. From what I have heard of Geraldton, and from what I know of Carnarvon, the freezing works will be completed and placed in going order next year on a co-operative basis. If meat works are put up at Fremantle, I have no objection to this being done by private individuals or by co-operation, but when we come to storage facilities at that port I think the co-operative basis should still continue. The Government, representing the whole of the State, should control cool storage works at the only port in the State. I strongly object to the Government allowing many cool storage facilities at Fremantle to be handed over to a private party. All the other co-operative companies in Western Australia will have to look to Fremantle for the out-put of their produce. The Government should therefore control such facilities and see that they do not get into the hands of any monopoly. That, I consider, is carrying out the co-operative principle in its true sense. If there is only one port, and that port is serving the whole of the State, then the Government will be doing a truly co-operative work if they manage such works for the whole of the people. When we come to freezing works in any particular district, the people of that district should establish them on the co-operative basis. These freezing works will mean a great deal to the State. Instead of the State carrying 6¼ million sheep as at present, I feel sure we shall find, with freezing works established, that the carrying capacity of the State will in 10 years be increased to 15 million or 20 million sheep. This may be a big thing to say, but I maintain that I am not exaggerating the position in the least. Take Boolathana Station in my electorate, for instance. For years past the owners considered they were fully stocked with 40,000 sheep. During the past 15 years there has been an area of 90,000 acres of this station lying idle as a safeguard against droughts. Only once during the period have there been any sheep on that area. This 90,000 acres will carry 10,000 sheep. The manager, Mr. Butcher, assures me that if these freezing works are established this area will be stocked every year, and that the rest of the station will carry another 10,000 sheep. Instead, therefore, of this station only

carrying 40,000 sheep it will carry 60,000. This is the best improved station on the Gascoyne. If this can be done on one station a great deal more can be done on others. Instead of the Gascoyne carrying a million sheep it will be carrying two million, if works are established in the district. If this applies to the Gascoyne, it will also apply to the rest of the State. It should be the policy of the Government to turn Western Australia into a huge station, and to go in for sheep and cattle, pigs and dairy cows to the utmost possible extent. If this is done, and facilities are given for export, I feel certain that it will be a big factor in the squaring of the finances later on. At present, of course, it is impossible to get frozen mutton away. We understand that. But our object is to erect canning works immediately. It is canning works that we shall depend upon until freight space adjusts itself later. In conclusion I wish to quote a few figures from the "New Zealand Year Book" showing what freezing works have done for New Zealand. In 1896 New Zealand carried, roughly, 19,000,000 sheep. Twenty years later the Dominion carried 24,000,000 sheep. That is an increase of only 25 per cent. in 20 years. But now let us look at the other figures. The value of the frozen mutton exported by New Zealand 20 years ago was 1½ million sterling. Last year the value was just on 8 million sterling. That one fact shows what freezing works will do. With freezing works there is no loss of stock, no cutting of sheep's throats in bad seasons; but everything is used up. Although in New Zealand the increase in stock was only 25 per cent. in 20 years, the increase in exports amounted to 800 per cent. It shows that the freezing works mop up everything, leaving nothing but the bleat of the sheep. Take butter, another cool storage enterprise. Twenty years ago the value of butter exported from New Zealand was £281,000; last year it was £2,700,000—an increase of nearly 1,000 per cent. Again, cheese exported from New Zealand 20 years ago was valued at £130,000, whereas last year the Dominion exported cheese to the value of £2,730,000—an increase of nearly 2,000 per cent. These figures should, I think, perfectly satisfy us all that what has been a good thing for New Zealand should also be a good thing for Western Australia. Let us turn this State into a huge station for sheep and cattle and dairy produce. Grant us the facilities for export. If this is done with the assistance of the Government, who may be expected to sympathise with those who are assisting themselves, and if the North now and again finds itself mentioned in the policy speech, I believe that this State will continue to develop and that its financial position will shortly improve.

Mr. PILKINGTON (Perth) [11.49]: There is one subject which I think we must all admit to be paramount—the question of the finances of this State. There are other subjects of great importance. I do not in the least fail to recognise the immense importance of such subjects as repatriation and the extermination of the rabbits. Undoubtedly they are of enormous importance. But, still, they are not of the same paramount import-

ance as is the question of the finances, simply because they depend on the question of the finances. If our finances fail us, it is useless for us to talk of exterminating the rabbits; useless for us to talk even in the most patriotic terms of the repatriation of our soldiers. The finances are the first thing, and the paramount thing. I regret that the leader of the Opposition curtailed, as he told us he did, some of his remarks upon the finances. However, he did make a vigorous attack upon the lack of method which the Government are showing in dealing with that important subject. He made a vigorous and, I think, on the whole justifiable attack. And how was it dealt with? We saw last night the Premier, the leader of the Government, rise in his seat to make an answer dealing with the question of the State finances. It is useless to tell me, as I daresay I shall be told, that the finances will be dealt with by the Treasurer. If there is one matter which is paramount beyond all others, if it is the question which ought to be receiving the attention of the Government and of every member of the Government, it is futile to tell me that a Government who are doing their duty would have a leader who would come to this House and be unable to speak a single word, I might say, regarding that question. The impression produced upon my mind, and I think the impression produced upon the minds of other members, was that the Premier has not, and has not attempted to have, the slightest grasp of the financial question which ought to be receiving the full attention of the Government. It may be that in the back of his mind the Premier has successfully concealed his knowledge of the subject of the finances. But the impression conveyed to me last night was that the Premier had not a grip, and did not seek to have a grip, of the finances of this State. There were a few slipshod, hesitating sentences, such as any one of us might have spoken, as indicating what we would have expected: "The Government are fully alive, and so forth, to the importance of the question of the finances. We are effecting economies in every direction, and we hope that with careful management and so forth we shall one day find that everything is all right." That, I submit, is not the way this question should be dealt with by the leader of the Government. It is the duty of this House, I submit, to see that the subject is dealt with in a proper way, that the Government shall be made to deal with it in a proper way. That is the duty of this House—not of one member or another member, not of one side or of another side; for this is no party question. But it is not only the Premier who is concerned, for the manner in which the Premier spoke yesterday is typical of the Government, and especially typical of their attitude towards the question of the finances—an attitude of drift, of deliberate drift; the attitude of those who like to remain as they are, like to shut their eyes to obvious dangers of the future and to enjoy the present as quietly and as pleasantly as they may. That is the attitude of all Ministers with one exception.

There is the Colonial Treasurer. The Colonial Treasurer every now and then comes down here, last year in July and again on the delivery of the Budget Speech, and once more a few days ago, and delivers a dramatic address, screaming like a wounded hare, throwing his eyes up to Heaven to ask for help, and casting them down to the ground again in dramatic indication of the humility with which he is ready to accept it. He indicates his beliefs. Last year he indicated that he thought the Education Vote should be cut down. He indicated that belief here only the other day again. And what do we find? As soon as the Colonial Secretary speaks—the Colonial Secretary seems to be the master of the hounds—the Colonial Treasurer comes to heel at once and submits—welts like a withered flower. So that in this House he voted in favour of the Education Vote remaining as it was, and not being reduced. That, of course, was a vote not in accordance with the views he had indicated in this Chamber. Perhaps it will be said that he had to vote in support of the Government's Estimates. To that, I think, there are two answers. The first is that, the week before, he voted against the Government's Estimates. The other answer is that if a man is Colonial Treasurer and honestly and sincerely believes that a vote should be reduced, and, because he is Colonial Treasurer, cannot vote for its reduction, the obvious course for him to take is to cease to be Colonial Treasurer and then vote in accordance with his conscience.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The vote of the House on that question was not a warrant for a further increase of the expenditure.

Mr. PILKINGTON: No. I propose in a moment to refer briefly to the increase in the Education Vote. The Colonial Treasurer, therefore, although now and then he raises a loud voice by way of indicating the seriousness of the financial position, does not go further. He submits to that drift which represents the policy of the Government. And what is the attitude of the Colonial Secretary, who, as I have said, seems to be the master? The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) quoted the words which I had intended to quote this morning. I have not got "Hansard" before me, but the words are quite clear. In a speech delivered last year the Colonial Secretary stated that our troubles were due to the Federal Government not giving us a fair deal, not making a fair financial agreement with us. He said, further, that unless in two years' time—when the present financial agreement will have to be renewed—we succeeded in getting a better financial agreement, nothing faced us but separation or unification, or bankruptcy. And, apparently, the Colonial Secretary is prepared to drift on for two years in the hope of getting a better financial agreement. The Colonial Secretary has made many speeches; but what has he done? Where are the economies that he has made? They may be there; but, if so, we are kept in the dark. The Colonial Secretary is ready to make speeches; but is he ready to retrench? I pre-

fer the word "retrench"; it sounds more like what we are going to have whether we wish it or whether we do not wish it. The Colonial Secretary, then, would drift for two years in the hope of getting a better financial agreement. That, I submit, is not only a policy of drift, but—

Mr. O'Loghlen: A policy of despair.

Mr. PILKINGTON: It is a policy which is worse than a policy of despair, for it is a policy which amounts to holding out to the public of this State, who unfortunately do not take as keen an interest in public matters as they should, that possibly in two years an agreement may be made with the Federal people which will overcome our difficulties. Now, the Colonial Secretary knows, and I know, and every member of this Parliament knows, that although it is within the bounds of possibility, though very unlikely, that we shall get a better financial agreement at the end of two years, it is not within the bounds of possibility that we shall get an agreement which will lift us out of our financial difficulties. The Colonial Secretary knows that. He knows it, and yet he holds this out to the public in order that they may let him alone for two years to drift and drift. If he was sincere in hoping and expecting—I will not say hoping—but if he was sincere in expecting that at the end of two years we could make an agreement which would get us out of our financial difficulties, if he were really sincere in that, which it is impossible to believe, why does he not now take steps as the member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) suggested, why is he not now in negotiation for a new agreement? I shall be told this, I have no doubt, the Colonial Secretary would say "What nonsense; do you think the Federal Government would negotiate now? What will happen two years hence? They do not know where they will be." Of course they do not. That is why it is so wrong for the Colonial Secretary to hold that out as a hope that two years hence the Federal Government will be able to lift us out of our financial trouble. Two years hence we know the Federal Government will be in want of money. We know from what the Colonial Treasurer told us here the other night, that the Federal Government will be pressed financially. It is inevitable, and how, in two years time, can they take us out of our difficulties financially is the greatest absurdity. I do not believe any member places any hope in that method of getting out of the trouble. Whatever their attitude, whether sympathetic or otherwise, the Federal Government cannot give us money if they have not got it. There is no question about it, the Federal Government, and indeed the Imperial Government, are pressed in the matter of making financial arrangements. I think we should face the question, it is not a party question; we are all concerned in it because we live here. I take it every member is concerned as I am concerned. I do not put my concern on any patriotic grounds but I feel about it strongly because I am here. This is my country. I cannot make my living elsewhere, at least not so satisfactorily. I am bound up in the place. All I have is here, and the failure of the country is my failure. If this country is not prosperous, we all suffer

from the same want of prosperity. We are here and we represent others who are in the same boat, and we are entitled to look at the matter and deal with the matter in a vigorous way. We are told normal times will return and everything will then be all right. I do strongly protest against the suggestion that there are all sorts of ways and means by which we can get the finances right without going through the pain of retrenchment and taxation. I protest against it. We have got to go through it as surely as the night follows the day. If we go through with it comparatively early (it is not very early now), but the earlier we go through with it the less painful it will be; the later the more painful. I do protest against responsible Ministers suggesting that there are means other than taxation and retrenchment by which we can get rid of our financial troubles. We are told when normal times return our industries will flourish and money will roll in. I ask members to look at the thing as business men. What does a business man do? He considers the probabilities and considers the circumstances against which, as a prudent man, he must make provision. What he makes provision against may not come true, but there are certain risks to be regarded in providing for the future. I am attempting to indicate what appears to be the future—what we must expect in a few years. People sometimes talk as if as soon as the war was over, normal times will be back again at once. I want to point out that, when the war is over, then the trouble is going to begin. I am not going to labour this matter, but I would point out two things. When the war is over, or shortly after, in six months, or perhaps nine months, the war expenditure will cease. It will gradually cease over a period of a year. When that war expenditure ceases a certain superficial prosperity that exists in the State will also cease. It will hit the Eastern States like a battering ram. It will hit us also and we shall lose that when the war is over. I ask members to recollect this also. Business has been dislocated the world over. It has to be readjusted. There will be a period in which the readjustment will be slow and painful. That does not tend to prosperity, and I ask hon. members to remember that we have in Australia to-day tons, hundreds of thousands, I think I could say millions of tons, of produce, wheat and wool, that has been paid for and not exported. Now, shipping will be short after the war, but if we had as much shipping as we have ever had the removal of that produce would take a considerable time. I do not profess to know how long it may take, probably a year, it may be two or three years, but the period will arrive during which our exports will be largely exports for which already we have been paid, and we have spent the money. It all means—I am putting it with great moderation when I say it all means, looking at it with the eye of a business man—that we must provide for something not less than five years from now. Assuming the war ceases in a year, it will be not less than five years, but I think I am putting it extremely low, before we can hope that normal times will begin to come back again. To talk as though normal times were

coming back when the war is over is the greatest nonsense, and it is worse than nonsense, it is misleading. It misleads people who think Ministers can be relied on and who do not think for themselves. We know a large majority of the public do not pay attention to public affairs in that way. They leave those things to the House and to the Government, and they are justified in doing so. I submit members of the House and the Government are bound to let these things be recognised and not suggest that after the war we shall step into a period of prosperity. Our difficulties are being put down to all sorts of causes. Some say Federation, others say the last Labour Government, and I dare say other causes are given. I am not going to elaborate, but I believe I know the true reason. It is neither Federation nor the last Labour Government, although perhaps they did their bit, but what I say is we have been spending money, not for the last 10 years but 20 odd years in this country. We have been spending money with the laudable desire to increase production. But we have kept no account whatever of the proportion between the expenditure and the increase in production. The expenditure has been out of all reason compared with the production. The production has been increased. We have put the farmers on the land and urged them to grow wheat at a heavy loss, but it has increased production. We have built railways all over the place to carry that produce and it has stimulated production also at a loss. By looking at our finances we can see we have spent huge sums in endeavouring to increase production. We are burdened with an interest account every year which makes it almost impossible to make the finances balance, and I believe that is the reason. I have no doubt, for I have been in this country over 20 years, and things have been going on all that time, and have landed us in this final position. May I point this out: every Government has done the same thing, from the beginning until the present Government pulled up because they could not borrow more money. And the public have been approving parties. The fault lies with the public and those who have spent the money. Let me point out that Federation, which is blamed so much for our present misfortunes, has this advantage, that it must pull us up at this stage, instead of going on longer. If we had our customs and excise revenue, and all other taxation by which we could raise money if we had not been in the Federation, and we could have gone further and the balance sheet would have been worse. In that respect it may be that Federation has been a considerable blessing. I do not think it is justifiable for Ministers to represent to the country that there are means whereby the finances of the country can be put in order other than by the simple means of retrenchment and taxation. There is another fetish put forward just now very violently by the Minister for Industries. One would have expected that the whole of that Minister's energies would have been directed towards the financial question. All the brains of Ministers should be directed towards this vital question, yet we find the Minister for Industries engaged in doing what I understand

is called stimulating secondary industries. The leader of the Opposition spoke with respect of that process and he said he did not wish to speak on it in a sneering fashion. I would say I wish to speak on it with the utmost disrespect. What will it mean to stimulate the industries of grindstones, jams and things of that sort? What we want in this country is increased production of wealth. It does not matter a row of pins what it is so long as we can produce it. We know that there are certain things which this country can produce in enormous quantities, wool, mutton, beef, timber, and so forth. I am credibly informed that there is no difficulty in the way of increasing the number of sheep in this country to double that which we have at the present time. These great primary industries are capable of enormous expansion, and they are essential too. Therefore, we should turn our attention to them instead of to grindstones, jams, and ships. If we got 50 such industries and if they all proved successful, we would not get within a thousand miles of the production which would follow from devoting our attention and energy to the big primary industries.

Mr. Teesdale: Why cannot they progress together?

Mr. PILKINGTON: There is something to prevent them progressing together. We must turn our attention to one thing or the other, but if we turn our attention to the two the better one will not go ahead so fast. The Government have not to do this; they must leave the people alone. If they do so, the primary industries will go ahead and then we will have a natural growth of such secondary industries as will pay. That is the way in which a country can progress. But when I find the Minister for Industries—quite honestly and earnestly, of course—instead of devoting his attention to the finances of the State, giving it up to the stimulation of two-penny ha'penny, silly industries it makes me feel sorry for the attitude of the Government. The Minister for Industries is under the curious misapprehension that if he gets an industry going he must be doing something for the benefit of the country. That is not so. If he is stimulating an industry which can only be carried on at a loss he is doing something to the disadvantage of the country. Take the case of jam, about which I know nothing whatever, or perhaps no more than the man in the street knows. The Government are stimulating the production of jam. I do not know whether it is good jam or bad jam, I have not seen it.

The Attorney General: I am sorry to hear you say that you have never tasted Western Australian jam.

Mr. PILKINGTON: While I may not have tasted this particular jam, I venture to say that I use as many things which are made in Western Australia as the Minister for Industries.

The Attorney General: You said you never used Western Australian jam.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I said I have never used this jam; I have never seen it. The Government have given £5,000 to the com-

pany manufacturing it. I do not know anything about the conditions, but I do know through the Press and from what has taken place in Parliament, that the Government have advanced that sum of money, and that they are now being asked to give another £7,000, and that the Treasurer is seriously considering whether he will give it or not. The Government would be doing a foolish thing if not a brutally stupid thing, to advance money in this way, because I know the facts as we all know them. I know that a lot of jam is eaten in Western Australia every year, and I know that there are people whose business it is to know all about the Western Australian market. Jones is one of them. I know, too, that those men are experts in the production and sale of jam in the Western Australian market. The Government know nothing about it; I know nothing about it. But those people who do know all about it know also that if it would pay to make jam in Western Australia they would establish a factory here.

Mr. Teesdale: How then do you propose to utilise our fruit?

Mr. PILKINGTON: The member for Roebourne, I suppose, thinks that because we have fruit we should turn it into jam and do so at a profit. I say we cannot do that.

Mr. Teesdale: Do Jones & Co. say so?

Mr. PILKINGTON: Jones & Co. know that they can manufacture jam in the East, send it here, and sell it at a better profit than they could get if they made it here. When the experts know that jam can be manufactured in Western Australia at a profit they will make it here. Because they make it in the East and sell it here at a good profit, they do so.

Mr. Lambert: What are the conditions that obtain there which do not obtain in Western Australia?

Mr. PILKINGTON: I do not profess to know the facts on which they form their opinions, but I do know that they have formed that opinion, because they have up to now refused to make jam here.

Mr. Lambert: Because it suits their commercial interests.

Mr. PILKINGTON: Exactly, and does not the hon. member see it means that it pays them better to make it in the East and sell it here. If it pays them to do that they will wipe out any jam factory which may start here.

Mr. Pickering: We must make a start some time.

Mr. PILKINGTON: If Jones & Co. know they can make jam in Tasmania and sell it in Western Australia and make a better profit than if they made it in Western Australia, it means that any person who makes jam here and sells it here will not be able to compete against Jones.

Hon. P. Collier: That may be a bad thing for Western Australia, but it is absolutely true.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I am only saying what is absolutely true.

Mr. Teesdale: Are we to have no industries here then?

Mr. PILKINGTON: If the hon. member will listen to me, I will point out to him how we can have industries here. What I have stated is absolutely true; there is no getting out of it.

Mr. Teesdale: What obstacle is there here which does not exist in the other States?

Mr. PILKINGTON: I do not profess to know all the facts, but one of the facts, for example, is that a man who is manufacturing jam in the East is doing so at the doors of a huge market.

Hon. P. Collier: And he has cheap female labour, which he cannot get here.

Mr. Teesdale: What about our own consumption?

Mr. PILKINGTON: We cannot manufacture for our own consumption because Jones can come in and undersell us at any time. Our jam factory then goes out. When we entered Federation one of the things held up as being a great deal to our advantage, and it was one of the things which undoubtedly was the essence of the contract, was that there would be freetrade throughout Australia. This is one of the results of freetrade.

The Attorney General: Is it not true that Jones dumps his jams into Western Australia at a cheaper rate than he sells them in his own country so as to get the Western Australian trade?

Mr. PILKINGTON: I should think that would be extremely likely.

The Attorney General: Do you approve of that?

Mr. PILKINGTON: I would say, in the words of the editor of the "Economist," used a year ago, that in my opinion, dumping, whether scientific or unscientific, is always for the benefit of the dumpee. It is, however, useless to talk of that, because we are not in the position to prevent the dumping of goods here, as we have freetrade between the States.

The Attorney General: I mean selling his surplus goods in Western Australia at a lower price than he gets in the Eastern States.

Mr. PILKINGTON: The Minister is under the curious impression that if we want £100,000 worth of jam in a year and we can buy it from Jones for £100,000, and that we can make it in this country for £120,000, it will pay us to make it here. If the Minister believes that I cannot help it.

The Attorney General: You did not answer my question.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I thought I answered it in the words of the editor of the "Economist."

The Attorney General: I asked you whether you approve of it.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I thoroughly approve of it. If we can get jams from the Eastern States cheaper than we can make them ourselves we are doing well. We are not now, as two countries, fighting to put up a tariff wall. We have freetrade.

Mr. Lambert: Would the hon. member's attitude extend to the countries against whom we are at war to-day?

Mr. PILKINGTON: I am not dealing with fiscal questions as between different countries

that have the right to put up barriers, I am dealing with our own position as it is to-day, the stimulating of industries by the Minister for Industries when he should be paying attention to the finances. What I was going to speak about is that this artificial stimulation of industries is unsound, and will result not only in the loss of money but in the loss of energy. The secondary industries, or all that are fit to count, will come to us with absolute certainty if we develop our primary industries sufficiently. As the wealth of the country and population grow, and in so far as the primary industries can be advantageously carried on, the secondary industries will be bound to follow. That is the reason why they have them in the Eastern States and we have not got them here. The secondary industries will come. But it is a mistake to suppose that you are any better off in producing £100 by a secondary industry than in producing the same amount by, say, a primary industry.

Mr. Lambert: Great Britain thought that at one time.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: She was Germany's largest customer before the war.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I am not going to enter upon a discussion of British and German views on the tariff question.

Mr. O'Loughlin: An Australian protectionist, if residing in England, would become a freetrader.

Mr. PILKINGTON: What we are dealing with now is, not the question of protection versus freetrade; we are dealing with the trade between the Australian States, which is absolutely free.

Mr. Teesdale: Would you advocate the establishment of a woollen factory here?

Mr. PILKINGTON: I think that without a shadow of doubt it will come when it will pay to manufacture the wool in Western Australia. There are experts who know the last detail of the wool trade and they will know when the time comes when it will pay to manufacture it here. They will then manufacture it here, and the industry will be started.

Mr. Willcock: Would it be wrong to hasten that day?

Mr. PILKINGTON: No more wrong than it would be to hasten the millenium. All I say is that the Government are not hastening the approach of either one or the other. I have been led to talk a little more of these secondary industries than I intended to. What I intended to call attention to was that we see the Minister for Industries expending his energy in a direction worse than useless. At any rate, whether I am right or wrong, surely we are entitled to ask Ministers to turn their attention at this crisis to the question of finance, which is the beginning, middle, and end of everything in this country at present. There are certain things which I venture to think any Government would do if they were in earnest in setting about putting the finances right. We have heard a lot about economies here and there, and no doubt some small economies have been effected. I shall be glad to hear about them. Certainly the loan expenditure has been very much reduced, for the very excellent reason that there has been very little loan

money available and a large amount of that was required to make up the revenue deficit.

Hon. P. Collier: The instance quoted by the Premier last night in regard to the Agricultural Department was entirely loan money.

The Premier: Oh, no.

Mr. PILKINGTON: Certainly at a time like this it is futile to come here and point to a reduction of £2,000. Let us consider the attitude one would expect a Government who were in earnest to take up. If the Government were in earnest in cutting down expenditure in the public service, the first step would be for them to re-introduce in the Public Service Act the section which enabled them to get rid of any public servant at a moment's notice. We know what the position always is in any department of Government service. Unless the Minister can say to a public servant unfit for his job, "Get out, I do not want you," he cannot possibly effectively retrench in the public service. I spoke of this last year and I am not ashamed to return to it again. We know what takes place at the present time. Unless his office is abolished no public servant can be dismissed except after an inquiry. It used to be the law that a public servant in Western Australia, as everywhere else, could be dismissed at a moment's notice. That right was taken away by the first Public Service Act, but was re-enacted by the Act of 1902 and I submit that if the Government are in earnest and mean to reduce the service by proper retrenchment they must have that right. I am speaking particularly of getting rid of those not wanted, and not of reducing salaries, which is not a proper mode of retrenchment. If a public servant is not doing his work properly it should be in the power of the Minister to dismiss him at once. The section that was in the Act of 1902, which was an amending Act, reads as follows—

Nothing in the principal Act as from the commencement thereof shall be construed or held to abrogate or restrict the right or power of the Crown, as it existed before the passing of the said Act, to dispense with the services of any person employed in the public service.

Any Government in earnest would have re-enacted that section, and then they would have been in a position to deal with the public servant. Until the Government take such a step I for one will not believe that they are in the slightest degree in earnest about making what they call economies and what I prefer to call retrenchment. There is a provision in the Railway Act providing that a man may not be dismissed without inquiry. I notice that it is the intention of the Government for some reason yet to be explained to appoint three Railway Commissioners. I confess I do not see any reason for three; but whether there are three or one, I submit that the Commissioner or Commissioners should have absolute power to dismiss and appoint servants, exactly as the Government should have the right to do.

Hon. P. Collier: In practice he always has done so.

Mr. PILKINGTON: But in many cases it has been followed by an inquiry before a board, as provided by the Act.

Hon. P. Collier: But that section is dealing with punitive dismissals.

Mr. PILKINGTON: I think that is so. As a matter of fact cases come before the court in which it is difficult to know what the section does mean. It is difficult to draw the line between punitive dismissal and dismissal for the purposes of retrenchment. There is sometimes a very fine line between saying in prosperous times "You are no good to me now" and in saying the same thing in times that are not prosperous. The Commissioner should have absolute power.

Mr. Davies: He has it now. There is no appeal against retrenchment in the railway service.

Mr. PILKINGTON: But there is an appeal against a punitive dismissal, and the difference between that and a dismissal for retrenchment may sometimes be intensely difficult to draw, even in the mind of the Commissioner himself. There should be no occasion these times in which the Commissioner is put into the difficulty of an inquiry through dismissing a man in the course of retrenchment. I submit that these are preliminary steps that would be taken by any Government seriously intent upon economy.

Hon. P. Collier: The Government announced at the outset that they would amend any Acts standing in their way in that direction.

Mr. PILKINGTON: It would not be too much to ask the Government to carry out that portion of their policy. I do not intend to speak at any length about education. I still believe that vote could be cut down. I have been accused of holding the belief that in a community there should be some who are hewers of wood and drawers of water and who are better uneducated. Such a belief as that I have never entertained in the whole course of my life. Such a belief I can hardly understand anyone attributing to me. I believe with the most perfect conviction that if a man is only spending his life breaking stones upon the road, he will do so better and be a better citizen if he can enjoy the things of the mind, if he can read books intelligently, if he can deal with questions which are discussed in public or in private, if, in a word, he has become an intelligent man which, I take it, is the object of education. He will then be better as a citizen and better as a stone-breaker, or as a man who draws water or hews wood. I have never suggested anything that would justify anybody in imputing to me the belief that any portion of the community would be better uneducated. I believe the exact reverse. But we have not the money at the present time. We are being pressed and are going to be pressed still harder, and if we spend this money now, if we do not check the expenditure now we shall find ourselves in a worse position later on. And if the thing is allowed to drift until the expenditure is cut down, not by the Government, but by the hand of absolute necessity, then the distress that will be caused will be infinitely greater. When you retrench in times of comparative prosperity the distress caused is comparatively slight; when the re-

trenchment takes place by the hand of absolute necessity in times that are bad the distress caused is very great. It is also to be observed that the education of this country will proceed more satisfactorily for those being educated, if we pull through with our finances. If we fail to pull through with our finances, what is the use of talking about the extension of the education vote. The vote will be cut down, not by us, but by the hand of absolute necessity. I do hope that members, irrespective of party, will endeavour to do whatever can be done to help the Government if they will be helped, and to push them if they will not be helped, into taking some definite course in regard to finance. It would give me the greatest pleasure to be a supporter of, and to assist in any way, a Government that was attempting honestly and vigorously to do that which this country needs so badly, namely, to put our finances upon something like a business footing.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [12.45]: I think it will be fitting for me at this stage if I express the hope, on behalf of hon. members, that Hon. Frank Wilson, lately leader of the Government in this House, should have a speedy recovery towards good health, and say that we are in sympathy with him in his illness. He is now lying seriously ill, and I feel sure that I am only voicing the opinion of the House when I say that our sympathies are entirely with him, that we hope he will soon have recovered, and that at some future date he will be able to appear again in the House representing some portion of the State. I have listened with great interest to the debate. There is one question which has come prominently before us and which to my mind is of vital importance, and that is in regard to repatriation. I am not going to deal with that extensively just now, because I understand that the Government intend at a later date—I hope it will not be indefinitely postponed—to place before the House a measure dealing with it. The attitude of the Government towards this matter is not one which has my approval in any way. The remarks which fell from the lips of the leader of the Opposition were fully merited in every respect. The lines which he advocated for the settlement of this question are sound and reasonable. I regret that the attitude of the Premier in this regard has not been as sympathetic as it should be. When the opportunity was sought last session to have a select committee to go into this question the motion dealing with it was kept in the background, and was never brought up for discussion after it was first moved. The Premier should have afforded the House an opportunity of discussing so important a matter. Any hon. member who walks through the streets of Perth must feel heart-broken at the deplorable sight that meets him on every hand. Only yesterday in Perth I counted at least half a dozen returned men who had lost a leg or an arm. We say that the question of dealing with those men who are unsuitable for settlement on the land is entirely one for the Commonwealth. I do not altogether agree with that. If the Government find that a full measure of consideration is not being extended to these men it is their bounden duty to do their utmost to

spur on the Federal Government to greater endeavours. Although many of these men who are returned are not perhaps physically fit at the moment to go on the land, if they have that desire they should be placed in an institution such as the Brunswick State farm, where they can recuperate in health and at the same time get into touch with the life which they wish to take up. The Premier has distinctly stated that the intention of the Government is to repurchase estates which are partially improved, and are close to existing lines. This policy has my endorsement. In view, however, of the small area which may perhaps be available the State should also consider the question of opening up some of our virgin country. The State, particularly in the South-West, has been badly surveyed as indicated by the Premier last night. I agree with him when he says that it is necessary that fresh surveys should be made on rational lines. We should also take into consideration the desirability of following on the question of re-surveys by the practical development of the country that is suitable for settlement. The South-West offers one of the most difficult problems the State has to consider. Those of us who have had the misfortune to take up virgin country in the South-West have done so at the expense of all our capital, and to a certain extent at the expense of our health. The hardships and difficulties which confront settlers in virgin country are only realised by those who have been through the experience. My contention is that those men who are seeking to settle on the land should not be allowed to go through such experiences. Seeing that the Government have available many engines for pulling trees they should set to work at once on the difficult country, denude it of valueless timber, and make it ready for those whom we hope soon to settle on the land. If we do not denude the land of these valueless trees the sweetening of the soil that is necessary for its development will be postponed. This is one of the difficulties which confront new settlers on virgin country. After putting a great deal of money into their holdings, and all their energies, settlers in the past have had to wait a great many years before their land has reached the stage of being able to give them some return. I cannot understand why the Government should postpone the taking of definite and immediate action in this respect. One of the members said he hoped that immediate action would not be necessary for another 12 months. For my part, I could hope it would be required to-morrow, that the war could have been concluded by then, and that we should have our men coming back to us immediately. We know that immediately the war is over we shall be confronted with one of the greatest problems which has ever come before this Parliament, namely, the repatriation of those men who have made such huge sacrifices in our interests and on our behalf. The Government are doing absolutely nothing compared with what they should be doing. We started a repatriation office and put into it one of the most capable men, in Mr. Camm, that could be found. I have interviewed Mr. Camm on many occasions in order to ascertain his attitude towards this movement. I am satisfied

that the Government put into this position the one man suited to the work. He had his whole heart in the business, and was only struggling against the insurmountable wall which the Government had put in his way.

Hon. P. Collier: They only did that in order to cover up their own shortcomings.

Mr. PICKERING: If the Government intend to treat this proposition from the standpoint of the Agricultural Bank then it is doomed to failure. What we want is sympathetic treatment for these men, and not business treatment. The Agricultural Bank should be in just the same light to this movement as my bank is to my account. I should be able to draw upon it whatever I require. The Agricultural Bank should never have the direction of the policy of the settlement on the land of our returned men. I have made a study of this question and of the manner in which it has been dealt with by other Parliaments in Australia, and I have no hesitation in saying that the one Parliament which has been most languishing and most lacking in this movement has been the Parliament of Western Australia. A good many facetious remarks were made by the leader of the Opposition in regard to the recent conference of the Farmers and Settlers' Association.

Hon. P. Collier: That was on the lighter side.

Mr. PICKERING: The Premier also made a few remarks regarding the conference, and referred to the president of the association as a czar or a king.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not think he was far out.

Mr. PICKERING: I should be a proud man indeed if at the expiration of six years of unbroken office as president of the association I had accorded to me such a reception as was accorded to Mr. Monger, when he was returned to office for the sixth time. Any man would be proud to hold that position.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He knows how to work it.

Mr. PICKERING: He does not work it. I deny that absolutely. It took the utmost persuasion to keep Mr. Monger in the position of president of the Farmers and Settlers' Association. His services have been given without reward of any description, and at great personal sacrifice. I have great admiration for that gentleman in the position which he holds. He has done his duty to the farming community as few others in the State have attempted to do it.

Mr. Lambert: No doubt he has made very great sacrifices.

Mr. PICKERING: He has indeed. The conference of the Farmers and Settlers' Association differed from that of the recent Labour party inasmuch as we threw open to the world our doors, and welcomed in anyone who desired to hear us, without fear or favour. Everyone was shut out from the Labour Conference except the labour representatives.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You are wrong there.

Mr. PICKERING: I am right, and the hon. member knows it. In spite of misrepresentation, which has found its way into the papers and in spite of the attitude of the "West

Australian," we hope to continue the policy of the open door in regard to our conferences. Whether we make successes or failures we shall still welcome the light of day upon our doings. There is nothing that is brought forward at our conferences inimical to the best interests of the State or the Empire.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The one thing you forgot was to ask the Treasurer to give you the Treasury.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not think we are very anxious for that at present. A great deal has been made over the incident of the reconciliation of the Honorary Minister (Hon. C. F. Baxter) and Mr. Murray. As I happen to have been the acting secretary of the conference, hon. members will admit that I know something about this matter. Mr. Baxter attended the conference in order to make a statement regarding the working of the Wheat Pool. He made the statement. At the conclusion of the heated controversy which took place between Mr. Murray and the Honorary Minister, Mr. Murray, who was sitting on my right and had to pass at the back of me to get to Mr. Baxter, shook hands with that gentleman as he went out.

Hon. P. Collier: That is a matter of grave national importance.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not say it is, but as the matter has been referred to by the leader of the Opposition I think I am justified in speaking about it. This act was recognised by the delegates as being an advance towards a reconciliation.

Hon. P. Collier: Was there a dramatic pause?

Mr. PICKERING: There was none that I am aware of.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you agree with the interpretation?

Mr. PICKERING: My interpretation was that the handshake was a sign that good fellowship existed between the two. I consider myself a sportsman, and after I have had a fight here with hon. members opposite, I am quite ready to go out of the Chamber and shake hands with them, or have a cup of tea with them. Now, a few words about the attitude of the Press towards the Government. It seems to me that the "West Australian" is arrogating to itself the right of forming Governments. By that journal two or three Governments have been suggested recently. The very last recommendation submitted to the consideration of the people of this State was the making of Mr. Colebatch Premier, and Mr. Kingsmill, I think, Colonial Secretary. A few remarks have been made about Mr. Colebatch's ability by the leader of the Opposition and by the member for Perth; and I am in accord with the expressions of opinion uttered by those gentlemen. I should greatly regret it if we had Mr. Colebatch as Premier. Much has been said against our present Premier, whom I find a very reasonable man and one who does his utmost to serve the State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Good intentions!

Mr. PICKERING: He is full of good intentions. Like other men in the position of Premier, he may have made some mistakes; but I prefer seeing the present Premier in

that position, to the change advocated by the "West Australian."

Mr. Johnston: And so say all of us.

Mr. PICKERING: Now, I am trying to find the prominent Nationalist who advocated that proposal in the "West Australian."

Mr. O'Loughlen: He is there all right.

Mr. Johnston: He is not prominent when one is looking for him.

Mr. PICKERING: I should like to place my hand upon him.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What would happen if you did?

Mr. PICKERING: We would have a little amusement out of him.

Hon. P. Collier: There is nothing at all in it, then?

Mr. PICKERING: Perhaps I might be able to fall into line with a suggestion of the "West Australian" if that newspaper decided that I ought to have a portfolio; but so long as I am excluded from these possible Governments of our morning daily, I must oppose all of them. An aspect of the wheat marketing scheme was animadverted upon by the leader of the Opposition. The matter is one which, naturally, appeals strongly to members of the Country party. I assure the House that when a measure dealing with the subject comes down, I shall not hesitate to take the stand I took last time, and advocate the placing of that business in the hands of the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.

Mr. Lambert: Who expected otherwise?

Hon. P. Collier: You have had instructions to do that; you have no choice.

Mr. PICKERING: I shall state why I favour that course.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Suppose £15,000, or £20,000, can be saved if the wheat is handled by the State; what then?

Mr. PICKERING: Then I would support co-operative handling. I consider that all the profit made out of the wheat should be returned to the man who grew the wheat.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Now the profit goes to the few.

Mr. PICKERING: Though the leader of the Opposition said that we should watch this movement with care, and be very suspicious of it—

Hon. P. Collier: No; not suspicious.

Mr. Green: Vigilant.

Hon. P. Collier: Watch it with great anxiety.

Mr. PICKERING: I think that at heart the leader of the Opposition and members on his side of the House are in sympathy with the co-operative movement.

Hon. P. Collier: I strongly support co-operation.

Mr. PICKERING: I am very glad to hear it. The Honorary Minister said that, taking into consideration the circumstances, the wheat had been well and capably handled by the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., during the past year. The Government, having had the experience of two or three systems of handling, should be in a position to know what the work is actually worth. If the Government are prepared to fix a price—it is only fairness that we want—I am quite sure the Westralian

Farmers, Ltd., would be prepared to undertake the work at that price.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I suppose you know that the Farmers' Mercantile Union have 4,000 or 5,000 shareholders?

Mr. PICKERING: I believe that is so, but they are not a co-operative company like the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., which is one of the most truly co-operative enterprises existing in Australia to-day. That being so, I think the Government should place the handling of the wheat with the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.

Hon. P. Collier: All things being equal.

Mr. PICKERING: All things being equal. If the price is an equitable one, there will be no injustice in giving the work to the Westralian Farmers. I now propose to quote to the House some particulars of co-operative movements in other countries—

The Royal Commission appointed by the Saskatchewan Government recommended co-operation backed by Government guarantees as the solution of the farmers' problem. The observations of the Commission from investigations in Europe were—

(1) There is in all European countries a frank and universal recognition of the supreme importance of agriculture as an industry as shown by (a) Government co-operation in education, facilitating credit, promoting co-operative institutions for production and distribution of products. (b) Sympathetic attitude of urban communities towards agriculture. (c) Active participation in agricultural affairs by public-spirited citizens and national leaders. The Canadian Government recently purchased 1,000 Ford tractors, and they were distributed by the Department of Agriculture at cost. The Canadian Government has made a grant of £400,000 per year for 10 years to promote the development of co-operative marketing and marketing of all agricultural produce and to assist in bringing about better business methods in farming. It is recognised that better farming means better business to the community, and better conditions for the workers. One of the most remarkable developments in present day agricultural America is the county agent. He is the development of the last decade. He is an appointee of the Department of Agriculture, and there are in the United States 1,400 men and 500 women employed as county agents, and the Agricultural Department is increasing the number as fast as men and women with proper training can be secured. Their duties are to organise and conduct or assist in conducting co-operative buying associations, co-operative selling or shipping associations, co-operative credit associations, labour exchange bureau, egg circles, etc., etc. The county agent has been described as the Deputy Minister of Agriculture for his particular district. The county agent system is also being introduced in Canada. The 1914 Federal finance law and its farm loan scheme has been a great success, and it is estimated to have saved the farmers of the U.S.A. £12,000,000 per annum. The

U.S.A. Government has been teaching the farmers the necessity of co-operation in every field of effort. About 30 years ago Italy's farmers were practically bankrupt and universally dissatisfied. Stock was deteriorating and land degenerating. To-day Italy is progressing more rapidly agriculturally than even the United States. This improvement has been effected by co-operative institutions. There are some 1,800 rural banks in Italy. They enjoy certain rights from the Government as exemption from taxation, etc. The study of Italian co-operation shows the power of co-operation to increase the farmer's business judgment and to encourage thrift. It demonstrates that co-operation, far from weakening the individuality of the farmer, develops to keener competition and places a premium upon trustworthiness and progressiveness. In Ireland, France, Belgium, and Germany the co-operative movement is subsidised, some countries have been going to the extreme and over-capitalising co-operative institutions, while in Denmark co-operation is compulsory.

I have brought those few points before hon. members in order to illustrate my reason for supporting the handling of the wheat by the Westralian Farmers, Ltd., when the measure dealing with the matter comes before the House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But the co-operative societies in the country do the handling at the sidings.

Mr. PICKERING: They are included in the Westralian Farmers.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not at all.

Mr. PICKERING: We have heard a great deal from the Premier of his desire to assist the South-West; but when we get his policy on the question, we find it consists more of platitudes than of anything else. From the member for Perth we heard to-day a condemnation of the principle of establishing jam factories. Whilst I have always been a revenue tariff man, I have never been a secker after the establishment of secondary industries on a false basis by protection. But I do consider that, when the possibility arrives of establishing a jam factory by means of a State loan, we are justified in availing ourselves of that opportunity.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The loan will never be repaid.

Mr. PICKERING: We hope it will be.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Such a loan has never yet been repaid.

The Premier: The Government hold ample security.

Mr. PICKERING: The jam factory started with what was thought to be a good manager. He ultimately turned out to have come from Jones & Co.'s factory. Our local jam enterprise made a considerable quantity of jam, and that jam was all spoilt by burning. Possibly the spoiling might have been attributable to intention. At all events, it caused the company a heavy loss and a setback; though I understand they have now as much work as they can possibly do. Their business requires extensions, which they cannot make

except with the assistance of the Government. Are we to allow an industry, which has been prosperously established, to be wiped out in the interests of Jones & Co.? The member for Perth gave us a lot of those doctrines to which we are already accustomed, and which we highly appreciate; but we have to bear in mind that if we allow Jones & Co., because they come here temporarily, by dumping, to swamp all our secondary industries—

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government find the money, the Government should be in control.

Mr. PICKERING: I do not think there will be objection raised to that. Is the member for North-East Fremantle desirous of killing this industry?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not at all; but let the Government control it.

Mr. PICKERING: I am perfectly certain that the company would be willing to have an appointee of the Government on their committee of management. However, I am strongly opposed to any attempt to kill out this young industry, which may save our orchardists. When I asked what the Government were going to do with the fruit industry this year, I was laughed at. On this question the Governor's Speech says—

The fruit industry, though suffering severely from restricted markets, on account of lack of shipping facilities, is developing satisfactorily; and when normal conditions return, the greatly increased yield of prime fruits will mean much added wealth to the State. Last season's fruit yield reached the fine total of nearly 1,400,000 bushels, being an increase of about 600,000 bushels as compared with the output of four years ago.

That is very interesting, but it does not say what is to be done with the unfortunate growers who are producing the fruit.

Sitting suspended from 1.15 to 2.30 p.m.

Mr. PICKERING: Before lunch I was dealing with the difficulties which concern the fruit industry. These difficulties are generally considered to be almost impossible of solution. The growers have had under consideration the possibility of adopting a pool scheme as a way out, but unfortunately they are disunited, the obstacles are so great, and the experiences of last season go far towards convincing me of the futility of this proposal. There are possibly directions in which the Government could assist, for instance, in the way of supplying cases at a reduced cost. We have the assurance of the Minister for Lands that the orchard tax will not be reimposed, but I hope the Minister in charge of this industry will take into consideration the advisability of using his expert fruit officer to formulate some scheme to dispose of the fruit, and if this is done some good will result. The development of the South-West involves another aspect, and that is, a bacon factory. It will be remembered that the Minister for Industries produced in this House a plan showing a bacon factory which was to cost £3,000, but the Minister did

not say what would be the possible amount of capital required for the flotation of a factory. Seeing that the amount estimated is not to exceed £3,000, a further £3,000 if found by the co-operative company should be sufficient capital to place such a factory on a workable basis. With a view to starting a factory at Busselton, I made application to the Minister for Industries, and as a result of certain correspondence I am told by the Minister in charge that it requires £12,000 to start a co-operative bacon factory at Busselton.

The Attorney General: You were not told that by me.

Mr. PICKERING: If this is the sort of delusion that is to be held up to the people it is a disgrace to the Government. We offered to put up money on the pound for pound basis as suggested by the Minister for Industries. At Busselton there happens to be located the original butter factory which is now vacant, and I placed the suggestion before the Minister that this factory might be made available at the lowest possible cost for utilisation as a bacon factory. But I am assured by the Minister that it would be cheaper to put up a new building rather than alter the old building to suit the requirements of the bacon factory. But, seeing that it is so costly to put up new buildings, and I speak with knowledge, and I believe the butter factory having been designed somewhat on the lines of a bacon factory could be so altered at a sum which would be far below that estimated by the Minister. I am not going to be downhearted on the subject because of the opinions of the member for Perth in regard to secondary industries. I hope the Minister for Industries will go carefully into this question of the old factory being made available for the purpose of a bacon factory at Busselton. I am assured by the Works Department that the building is to be pulled down, and the material utilised in other directions. I think that the building should be reported on by officers of the department and if found possible of adaptation it could surely be utilised for the purpose which I have indicated. Coming to the development of the South-West, I am in accord with the cutting up of the country on the lines advocated by the Country party. This policy was formulated shortly after its advent and consists, in so far as the South-West is concerned, of small farms in group areas improved before selection. The member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) is of opinion that he was the father of this particular policy. He may have been, but I am not cognisant of it. But the first policy of the Country party was in this direction, and the Government should make the land available at the lowest possible price on long dated terms. I would suggest for very careful consideration that as soon as possible the introduction of pure bred dairy stock under a capable manager. At the present time we have a capable manager at the Brunswick State Farm, which is eminently suited for a stud dairy farm, and I am sure if he was placed in charge of pure bred stock, good would result. I hope the Government will not look on it as a scheme for breeding stud stock for sale to those who can afford to purchase elsewhere. What I want

to do is to have the stock sold out to the small dairy farmers at the lowest possible price on favourable terms, it being at the same time worked on such lines as to make it a payable proposition to the Government. Coming to the question of finance, I should say I approach this matter with much trepidation. We have had a very capable address from the leader of the Opposition and a brilliant oration from the member for Perth, and one must view with a certain amount of diffidence handling a question of this nature. I am in accord with what the member for Perth stated as to the outlook immediately confronting the State, but I do not altogether take such a hopeless view as he did. If we refer to the past history of the world we find that there have been dark times at all periods of war, but that the recovery from its dire effects has been speedier than was anticipated by the most optimistic. I have, therefore, not that hopeless outlook for Western Australia with our magnificent resources, and I believe when the war is over there will be a general demand for all that we are able to produce, and it will force the development of shipping and the utilisation of ensuing tonnage to carry to the markets all that we produce. Germany, Austria, and all the central powers of Europe have their resources somewhat depleted, and they are not doing anything with their country in the way of production and harvest, which must necessarily increase the demand. And although we may be fighting them tooth and nail at this moment, at the end of the war we shall not be able to refuse to supply them with produce necessary for sustenance. Those countries that have shipping will probably use it in taking to the market the things which we wish to dispose of. I believe we should exercise the utmost possible retrenchment and impose additional taxation if inevitable, but I believe it is absolutely essential that there should be an opportunity afforded the House at the earliest possible date to discuss our relations with the Federal Government, more especially the financial relations. Although we are not able to guess what may happen in two years, we might get in readiness for it. The losses we sustained through Federation are incalculable, and we should do our best to bring into being a scheme which is more satisfactory to the State. When the Estimates come before the House I hope the Government will be prepared to make a straight-out statement as to what they intend to do, and in what direction taxation will lie. That is the time to discuss the serious financial outlook of Western Australia. I should like to touch briefly on the Vermin Bill. There are boards in my district which are not included as vermin boards, and I should like to know if the powers contained in the Bill allow boards to be so included before the Bill becomes law in the Legislative Council. There are several boards in my district which are free from the dingo, and they protest against being included in vermin boards. There are other boards outside the district which are infested with dingoes and which are not included in vermin boards, and they naturally object whilst free from dingoes to pay rates for their extinction whilst infested boards are exempt. There should be

united action in this regard. The boards in the South-West should be prepared to assist those that are better able to fight the rabbits in their brother's territory than in their own. There is a readiness throughout the district I represent to fall into line, provided the Government bring in a truly national view of the matter, and make every roads board a compulsory vermin board. If that is done the position will be relieved and the rates will be reduced. I am glad to note from the Premier that he is introducing a Bill to deal with the forests of Western Australia. It is a Bill which is coming from the hands of the Conservator of Forests. Whilst every member is prepared to concede that the Conservator is a very able man, they must also concede that his experience in Western Australia is limited. There are conditions pertaining to Western Australia that do not pertain to such places as Sierra Leone or other countries where he has performed such duties. I hope the Premier will see that the measure is broad-minded, and if he does not I shall be one of those to oppose the measure. Another question which is of vital importance to the State is that of the oil industry. The prospects of finding oil in Western Australia, I am convinced from what I have read recently in a report, are more favourable than in any part of Australia, and that at Busselton, Pingelly, and Esperance, it is demonstrated we have in Western Australia the best prospects for petroleum.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Mr. English did not say so.

Mr. PICKERING: No, but other gentlemen of authority have said so. If oil really does exist, it is worth the Government's while to do something to develop it. If we did find petroleum in Western Australia, it would lift the debt from our shoulders in a very short space of time. Therefore, the Government should be prepared to give some assistance to prospect for it. Considerable help has been given to the mining industry, but the discovery of gold could never do what the discovery of oil would do for Western Australia. Another question I desire to touch upon is that of the railway grades in the south-western part of the State. It is very evident that one of the contributory causes of the losses sustained by our railways is the impossible grades which exist in the South-West, and to some extent in other parts of the State. When Mr. Eddy was appointed Commissioner of Railways in New South Wales he insisted upon the Government finding a sum of money for the re-grading of the railway line. This work was carried out and the result was that from being a losing proposition, the railway system there was made a remunerative one. The haulage along our South-Western line is nothing like what it should be under normal conditions; it is costing much more to haul small loads than it would cost to haul larger loads. This is a vital question and should be attended to promptly by the Government with a view of enabling the railways to become a payable proposition. With regard to the question of the management of the railways, I do not know whether I am to welcome or not the suggestion that three commissioners should be appointed. If they are appointed, however, the appointments should not be on the lines suggested by the

member for Guildford (Mr. Davies). That would certainly be a calamity. If it is decided to have three commissioners, the appointment should be made on sound lines. A good deal has been said against the present Commissioner of Railways. I have never met this official, but I say that if any person can make two railways of the State pay, he is worth £20,000 a year. We have had railways built all over the country irrespective of requirements and then we blame a man because he cannot do what is impossible. The man is not born who can make our railway system pay. A good deal of injustice has been done to the present Commissioner in that respect. I consider that we should devote some attention to developing the unused lands adjacent to existing railways. There are miles of land close to railway lines which should be opened up, and so that they might be utilised I would suggest the imposition of an unimproved land tax to force the owners to bring that land into occupation. It is a disgrace to see so much territory unused and we would be justified in imposing such a tax. Another matter to which I wish to allude is the existing price of leather. This commodity is used to a considerable extent in connection with farming and I do not think there is any justification, in view of the great quantity of leather which is in Australia to-day, for the price to be as high as it is. The Government should take a hand in this direction and see whether an alteration can be brought about. The price of Australian brandy also is one of those things for which there does not appear to be any justification. Can anyone tell me why the price should have advanced 100 per cent.? It has had a better market since the war and there does not appear to be any good reason for advancing the price. The question of prohibition should have been referred to by the Government.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Have they not enough troubles?

Mr. PICKERING: What I object to is having these things forced on individual members of Parliament. The proper scheme would be to have a referendum of the people and see what they have to say about it. Prohibition would not affect me in the least because I never consume liquor here.

Mr. Brown: How much outside?

Mr. PICKERING: Very little outside, and I defy the hon. member to prove anything to the contrary. I am prepared to accept the voice of the people on this question. Another matter too, about which I would like some information is in regard to the question of the property of enemy subjects. What is happening to the property of the Strolitz Bros. and others?

Hon. P. Collier: It is in a state of suspension.

Mr. PICKERING: Who is drawing the revenue from these properties? It may be said that this is a Federal matter, but when the Government have these things brought before them they should investigate them and report to the Federal Government. I would

intern every German and all who are of German descent and confiscate their property until we saw what Germany intended to do with the property we have in Germany, and the rents which we derived could be used to pay the costs of internment.

Hon. P. Collier: How does Fritz Lange come to be at large?

Mr. PICKERING: I hope the opportunity will be given to hon. members to discuss this subject by way of motion during the session. I think I have touched briefly upon all matters to which I intended to refer, though I had overlooked one matter when speaking on the political situation as commented on by the "West Australian." That newspaper suggested that Mr. Kingsmill should be Colonial Secretary and that Mr. Mitchell should be Minister for Lands. Much as I esteem Mr. Kingsmill and Mr. Mitchell, I do not know that we would be justified in thrusting these honours upon those gentlemen. It seems to me that judging from the publication of correspondence with regard to the appointment of a Minister for Lands, the gentleman concerned, Mr. Mitchell, must have given his consent to that publication, and it looks as if it were possible that the gentleman concerned had something to do with the leading Nationalist who gave all the information.

Mr. Thomson: Do not suggest anything like that, it is impossible.

Mr. PICKERING: There are others to be considered besides the "West Australian" in the formation of a Government of the nature suggested and if any hon. member thinks he is going to force matters by using the columns of the "West Australian," he is making a wrong calculation.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN (Forrest) [2.55]: I suppose it is the customary practice to devote a little time to the consideration of the Address-in-reply. Some reformers are advocating the abolition of this practice and there is no doubt that there are many matters discussed and brought under the notice of members and Ministers which by the very fact of their discussion tends towards progress. We have to-day listened to a particularly able speech delivered by the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington). We may not agree with all his deductions, but at any rate he has focussed attention on what is Western Australia's most pressing problem. It is difficult to arouse interest in the Address-in-reply debate. This very session opened in an atmosphere of gloom. You, Mr. Speaker, have been here something like two decades. I have been here for a period of 10 years and I do not think that either you or I have ever known such a lack of interest in the opening proceedings. We had dozens of empty chairs which before had always been filled by curious people anxious to see how Parliament was being carried on. The atmosphere of depression noticeable here on the opening day exists throughout the State. It can be traced to the one thing, finance. I am not going to join the member for Gascoyne and others in blaming Federation for the whole of the

ills from which the body politic is suffering at the present time. Federation has played a fairly prominent part, but we would be shirking our responsibility if we were to say that Federation is wholly responsible for our troubles. Again, we are not doing a fair thing if we cling to the hope that we are going to get a better deal from the Federal authorities. I am quite convinced that the per capita arrangement will go by the board when the time expires. The Commonwealth to-day, as well as the State, is in a desperate financial position with its appalling National debt which is being built up and it is almost impossible to comprehend how that debt is to be paid. Look at the war expenditure. To that, there can be no valid objection. But I want to make a protest against the costs of administration which are daily increasing. There are no attempts being made at economy by the Federal authorities. I have here a statement which was given to me by one of our Federal members only a few days ago to the effect that the war loans raised in Australia, including War Savings certificates amount to £149,000,000, the war loans raised in England £47,000,000 and the deferred pay to 30th June, 1917, to £9,370,000, a total of £205,870,000. Up to the 30th June, 1918, interest and sinking fund on war loans amounted to £15,960,000 and for war pensions £4,050,000. These figures represent the expenditure in previous years and, of course, are annual and increasing charges. The amount paid out of revenue for repatriation up to the present is £450,000. That only represents the commencement of what will ultimately prove to be an expenditure running into a great many millions. As can be imagined it is difficult to say at any moment what the war has cost particularly in respect of the maintenance of troops in the field, which cost in the first place has been borne by the British Government and accounts have yet to be rendered. It shows that the total war expenditure has reached the sum of £205,000,000 and still there is a very large account to be rendered by the British Government. The Federal Government will be at their wits' end to devise ways and means of meeting the annual interest charges. It also reacts on the State. The State Government are faced with increasing responsibilities and no loophole of escape, because even if the present Treasurer cuts everything to the bone and imposes additional taxation I believe the cost of the upkeep of Western Australia will be so great as to lead inevitably to unification. Members hold up their hands in holy horror at the prospect, but the position is getting so desperate that some radical change will have to be brought about, and personally I think the time is not far distant when the Federal Government will be obliged to step in unless we can show our ability to maintain ourselves by putting into practice a policy that will bring about the desired alteration.

Mr. Pickering: Only just now you were declaiming against the policy of the Federal Government.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am not enamoured of their policy, and I would be reluctant to give additional power to a Government that, per-

haps, have not always used their power wisely, but I am sorely afraid that there is no alternative to that course. If hon. members persist in saying that we are going to recuperate to so marked an extent and that the potentialities of the country—which successive Governors in their official speeches are so fond of referring to—are so great that we are going to pull ourselves out of the financial mud, I say we should be childish to attach too much importance to such statements. Our position in Western Australia is that we have too small a population and there are great difficulties in the way of increasing it at any marked rate owing to the fact that our industries cannot absorb the men. In other words we have not so rich a State as some of us thought a few years ago. The Commonwealth are preparing to go on the market for another big loan, and no doubt the patriotism of Australian money-lenders will be such that the amount required will be subscribed. I wish to refer to the lack of patriotism evinced in some quarters in respect of the last loan. Subscribers were offered the alternative of taking up stock at five per cent. subject to taxation or at $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. free from income tax. It was noticeable that a very small proportion went in for that portion of the loan subject to taxation, which shows that they had a good deal of foresight if not of patriotism. But what can we think of some of the big Australian journals such as the Sydney "Morning Herald" and the Sydney "Daily Telegraph" which were asked to give the loan a boost and which responded by charging the Government 27s. per inch for advertising space? It is as well to ask what spirit of patriotism prompted the proprietors of those big journals to charge the people of the country 27s. per inch for advertising space? Coming to our own position, the great trouble lies in getting our lands satisfactorily settled. We have heard a good deal about the difficulty of getting soldiers on to our land, the enormous expenditure necessary in order to settle what the Premier describes as a prosperous yeomanry.

The Premier: That is Lord Forrest's term, not mine.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Well let it pass. The difficulty is that in Western Australia we have not the variety of resources nor the uniformity of land which they have in the Eastern States. One is not decrying Western Australia when he says that the soil here is particularly patchy and that we have to gridiron the country with railways in order to secure a small proportion of settlement. Much of the land which the member for Sussex referred to just now as not being utilised along the railways, is absolutely barren and will remain so until the chemist can find a solution. We were told that there are on the hands of the Agricultural Bank 793 abandoned farms, and the report of the inspector indicates that only 35 of those can be recommended for soldier settlement.

The Attorney General: That is mainly on account of remoteness from railway lines. One qualification is that they must be within a certain radius of the railway.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I take it that a fairly large number of them are in close proximity to the railways. Although in the South-West

we have a great many patches of excellent land we have also down there considerable stretches of inferior country. In Western Australia, as the member for Perth has pointed out, we are dependant on four or five principal primary industries, wheat, gold, wool and timber, and of course our local coal, which has been of considerable use and which will be a permanent asset. Although not of the same quality as that mined in other States, it is there in unlimited quantities. It has helped the State through many a difficulty and will do so again in the future. Coming to those industries which have been the source of our prosperity in the past we find, as the member for Perth pointed out, that wheat-growing has not been altogether profitable from the State point of view. The Department of Agriculture has been obliged to literally shovel money into the agricultural districts to get the industry established. Providence has taken a hand, we have had bad years, and at the present juncture it is difficult to know exactly what the wheat market will be in the future. The British Government are not enthusiastic about purchasing the supplies that have been produced, and none of us can forecast what the future has in store.

Mr. Maley: I do not believe the statement that the British Government will not purchase the wheat.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Coming, as it does, from the Treasurer I must believe it.

The Minister for Mines: They may require the wheat and still may not be enthusiastic about buying it just now.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Even if they require the wheat now, the point is to be considered whether in the years to come, seeing that we are so far remote from markets, we can compete with other countries who also have gone in for wheat production. There are big possibilities to be opened up in the eastern countries, such as Java and other places with their teeming populations, and if we can popularise the consumption of our flour so there we occupy an exceptionally advantageous position geographically. I believe we could do something in that direction. But wheat at present is not offering any great promise of getting the Government out of their difficulty. We are told in the Governor's Speech that mining is fairly satisfactory at present. I do not think any hon. member can agree with that. Mining to-day is under a cloud. Many of the promising fields of a few years ago are now deserted. There is nothing more disheartening than an abandoned mining field with its evidences of decay. Personally I believe that more depends on the administration of the Minister for Mines than that of any other Minister. In the past, gold was the magnet that attracted the world to Western Australia, and gold and oil will do it again. We know we have the gold. Oil has not yet been definitely discovered as a commercial proposition within our borders, but I believe that the opening up of another goldfield would entirely solve our difficulties. That gold, I believe, is in the country, and no effort should be spared to locate it, because it would again attract people from all parts of the world. We have the mineral belt, and by wise adminis-

tration of public funds it would tend to help us out of our difficulty.

Mr. Maley: Then there is the lead mining.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Gold mining has been the principal industry in this State in the past. Lead mining will do something, but not on the same scale as gold. Apart from the mining prospects, the pastoral industry to-day is in a prosperous condition. Timber is another primary industry that has been under a cloud. Owing to lack of shipping the export trade was given a knock-out blow. There are now signs of a revival, and the £70,000 or £80,000 per annum lost to the railways through the collapse of the timber industry should soon begin to return; because the demand for our timber is so keen in the Eastern States, where they have practically no suitable timber, that provided a little shipping could be secured the men operating in our timber forests would soon be on a good financial wicket. Some criticism has been levelled at the Minister for Industries because of his zeal in establishing new industries. The member for Perth took him to task, I think, rather severely, and pointed out that he was doing no good and even some harm. No matter whether this is viewed from the point of the fiscal atheist, the rabid freetrader, or the fanatical protectionist, although we are in a country dependent on primary production, primary production does not offer sufficient scope for our State to build itself up any great place in the Commonwealth. Primary production does not offer employment to the 25,000 ex-service men the Agent General was speaking about. I admit it will do wonders provided the seasons are good and other circumstances not adverse, but if we can develop secondary industries, all honour to the Government or to the individual Minister endeavouring to do it. However, difficulties are cropping up and should be met. The member for Perth referred to jam. I have a vivid recollection of the starting of a jam factory in the South-West. We had the fruit, we had the men and we had the money, and with Government assistance a start was made at Donnybrook, and attempts were made elsewhere also. The difficulty was that as a commercial proposition it could not compete against Jones & Co. of Hobart. The people of Western Australia are not so patriotic that they will pay 2d. per lb. more for Western Australian jam than they will for Jones & Co.'s production. The whole of the difficulty can be traced back to Federation and to the lack of co-ordination in the industrial system in Australia. Some of us who have given attention to this subject have been contending for a considerable time that the Federal Arbitration Court should not be limited in its jurisdiction, that it should be given power to make awards in various parts of Australia, beyond the boundaries of any one State. That would then bring the conditions into harmony with those existing elsewhere. It is a weakness in the American system just as it is in ours. There the manufacturers rule. If anything is in the road it is bought out. If a man stands in the road he is put out of the road. But in America the States compete for industries, and the State that has the lowest standard of industrial order is the State that gets

the capitalist to come along and start industries. The bad employer does not want to be troubled with organisations, arbitration courts, or trades unions. He only wants to be left alone, like the burglar. In Australia that same condition has cropped up, but not quite to the same extent as in America. We have kept our Federal Constitution on the American model. I do not blame any of those brilliant intellects which drafted that Constitution. They could not see too far ahead of themselves, though they did well. We have noticed the difficulties of the system, and have been trying to alter it. Until we alter it Western Australia will be permanently at a disadvantage. We have no uniform industrial laws. In Tasmania there was no standard fixed at all. They have had a hybrid system of wages boards in operation there, and up to two years ago able-bodied men in Tasmania were working in the timber industry at 5s. 6d. a day. When we come to compete with Tasmania in the jam industry, for instance, we find that three men can be employed there for what it takes to employ one in Western Australia. We are not able to compete with them because our standard is higher. What is the remedy? Does the remedy lie in reducing our standard to that of Tasmania, or in giving power to some tribunal to bring the Tasmanian standard up to ours? It is true that the sea freight operates against Jones & Co. of Tasmania, for they have to pay freight on all jams that are sent to this State. That in itself affords us some protection. When inter-State freetrade was brought about as a barrier, and the border line of the different States was swept away, it meant that Western Australia, being comparatively speaking a new State, and not having any secondary industries, was all the time under the domination, and subject to the dumping of Eastern manufacturers. That might give us cheaper commodities in some ways. Unless we can establish local industries as a check upon this the time is not far distant when jams and other things will be forced up to an inordinate extent. Our suggestion has been for the last few years, ever since we detected this weakness, that one big industrial tribunal of Australia should be given power to say to the employer, or manufacturer, in Tasmania, "Your standard is low in comparison with Western Australia. You must improve that standard and your conditions so as to give the struggling industries in that State a fighting chance of getting on their feet." The position can be overcome. If we are going to fix our standard and take a pride in its being comparatively high we are not going to get people patriotic enough to consume our local product at a higher cost than those produced by Jones & Co. and others. I do not know that any amount of Government subsidy will permanently overcome the difficulty. We were unfortunate in Western Australia in that, when Federation came about, we had not felt our feet as a manufacturing State. It is questionable whether we shall feel our feet for a long time, despite the zeal and energy of the Minister for Industries.

Mr. Troy: We have had boot factories in this State.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: But owing to the same conditions we have not been able to hold them.

Mr. Troy: Why?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We have not been able to hold them largely on account of the better equipment of the older established factories in the Eastern States, and because, in some cases, the lower wages and worse conditions, which have absolutely annihilated our industries here.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Some of our industries have held out because of the better quality of goods produced.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am afraid that quality has gone by the board of late. It is difficult for us to put timber on the market in the Eastern States at anything like the same price it can be put on the market from Tasmania. Our standard is comparatively high, and we want to keep it high rather than go down to the lower standard of the other States. If the workers ask for a little advance in wages, they are immediately told that they are not taking a patriotic stand. There is no State in Australia which has stood still to the same extent as Western Australia. In every industry in the Eastern States the employees have secured an increase to compensate for the higher cost of living. The Minister for Industries a few days ago made a suggestion regarding the establishment of woollen mills. I brought under the notice of the Government the best site for such a mill. My constituents, for the time being, in Collie pointed out that they had all the natural advantages which would lend success to the venture. I suppose the matter is largely in the clouds at present. I notice from the Minister's observations in the paper this morning—and they are significant—that even if he was prepared to launch out in woollen mills to-day, the machinery could not be secured. Machinery can be obtained for Japan but not for Australia. I put this to the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington). It will not be long before we in Australia awaken to the fact that it is difficult for us to hold any industry.

The Attorney General: And Jones' jams will be made in Japan.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I know that many commodities in daily use in Australia will be put on the market by means of labour which has cost 2d. a day, against which our Australian workers cannot possibly compete. Twenty years ago Japan was an insignificant country and comparatively unknown in the industrial world, but since that time she has been copying Western methods and sat at the foot of the Western World, so to speak. To-day Japan is equipped industrially and in this awful conflict, which is deluging Europe, there has been no sacrifice of man power from that country. She is conserving her manpower and building factories, and making a bid for the world's trade. She is practically in control of the Pacific, and if our statesmen could tell the public what they know, they would awaken to the seriousness of the position. At all events that would be a good thing for the people of Australia to know. Our friends to-day may be our foes to-morrow. That Eastern nation has nothing

in common with us, in ideals or in any other way, and if they do not come in as a belligerent power, they can, by a peaceful penetration, cripple our industries unless the tariff wall, which is objected to by the member for Perth, is raised a little higher.

Hon. P. Collier: You will be getting "Hansard" raided for a remark like that.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: There is nothing objectionable in those remarks.

Hon. P. Collier: The authorities will not allow them.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Federal Government for the last two years, if not reluctant to do so, have, at all events, been prevented from making any alteration in the tariff. I put it to the Minister for Industries, who is starting industries here, that unless there is some shelter and protection given for the goods manufactured in Australia, the existence of many of our industries will be threatened. It is impossible for us to successfully compete against a country which has no particular standard of wages, or any standard of living as we understand it.

Mr. Troy: Can we not effect changes in the Federal Parliament?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We are hopeful that the Federal Government will come to the rescue of Western Australian finances and give us a good agreement. My opinion is that they will take what we are getting now. I do not think there is any hope of getting better concessions. I am prepared to hope that the Federal Government will stand up for the interests of Australian factories and industries when the crisis comes. It is remarkable that Japan should be capturing the trade in Australia that Germany had previously.

Mr. Troy: And which Britain had previously.

Hon. P. Collier: She is opening banks with capital from the Eastern States.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We hear a lot about the visits of commercial men to Australia. I do not strongly object to the presence of a few pack men, but I do object to seeing commodities brought into Australian homes to the detriment of those who are employed in Australian industries, and every one knows that, in the building up of the Commonwealth, this is going to be a big problem. To overcome that to a certain extent the Minister for Industries is about to launch out in the ship-building trade. I have no particular objection to that. We have built wooden ships in the past and there is no reason why we should not do so again. Objection has been taken to private individuals being fortified with Government money, and, if a profit is made, to the fact that it is going to be made largely on the expenditure of £30,000 of Government money. If we get the industry I suppose we can overlook that. I object to the method by which the Federal Government are controlling this particular contract. Mr. Hughes has drawn up a hard and fast agreement, an unalterable one, in which he provides for certain conditions which will not be accepted to-day by many of the skilled trades. The agreement provides for the dilution of labour and piece work, and contains

many other provisions which are foreign to our various agreements and arbitration awards, instead of the Commonwealth Government allowing the company to do the negotiating. That company got a higher price for the building of those ships on the ground that the wages were higher and the conditions better in Western Australia. That was the argument advanced for the higher price. Had the employees of the various trades been allowed to negotiate with the company, everything would have been satisfactorily fixed up. I do not know why the Prime Minister's department should send a man specially over here, who was not well equipped for the mission, with the object of trying to get the men to sign the new agreement, and to set up one body of workers against another. The whole arrangement could have been satisfactorily made with the employers here, and I am hopeful that it will be fixed before long. I wish success to the venture. To a great extent we have the materials here, but I understand the cost will be slightly added to through the importation of a great deal of the machinery required. Judging by the success attending upon the despatch of wooden ships from America to Australia, this ship-building site should become a permanent one. Wooden ships have gone to the Eastern States recently from San Francisco, and have carried the goods at a remarkably low rate. One ship recently made a record trip for that type of vessel, and the indications are that the industry in this State will become a permanent one. Reference has been made to the open door of the Farmers and Settlers' Association. The leader of the Opposition said he believed them to be an unsophisticated lot. The open door is all right in its way. Many things happened at a conference which it is, perhaps, unwise for the public to know about. I am not ashamed of anything I have ever done at any conference I have attended. There is some distinction between the Labour conference and the Association conference. The conference, which was referred to as having been held behind closed doors, was so held because we have a hostile Press against us. Three of our members, including the leader of the Opposition, were fined, the fine in the case of the leader of the Opposition being £25, for saying something. We had not this £25 to pay and have to be very careful.

Mr. Teesdale: You admit you were saying things?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We have to say some things, and it would be wise if the Prime Minister would allow the people of Australia to say a little more. It would certainly lead to a better position in Australia.

Mr. Munsie: We do not admit that anything the leader of the Opposition said justified this fine.

Mr. Teesdale: You do not agree, surely, with what the Queensland Minister for Justice said?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I do not say that I agree with this man or with that man. At times it is necessary for people to discuss delicate questions.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The doors were not closed to representatives only.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: They were open to supporters of the movement and others who were interested. The Employers' Federation will not allow us into their meetings to find out their plans. It would be remarkable if they did. What surprises me is that those men who at one time were with the Labour party, have raised the most objection. They know, with their experience of industrial and political history in Australia, that it is never wise to let the opposition Press get hold of all one's plans and proposals. I read in a Kalgoorlie paper the other day that the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) said that we met in the Savoy hotel because Mr. Ryan refused to sit anywhere else than in a good hotel. What is it? I have the newspaper cutting dealing with the subject. Mr. Ryan had nothing to do with the arrangement. At some gatherings the open door may be all right, but I believe there are times in the history of every party and every movement when it is not wise that the whole of the plans and discussions should be made public. However, each party can take the responsibility for themselves. The Forestry Bill outlined by the Minister for Industries has been wanted for many years past. On that subject I desire merely to express the same opinion as the member for Sussex has uttered, that if certain of the ideas which Mr. Lane-Poole advocates are given effect in that Bill, it will meet with strenuous opposition. Mr. Lane-Poole is a very capable man and highly efficient in his calling, but he is not yet acclimatised here. Subject to the elimination of the provisions I have in view, the Bill may get a fairly easy passage. I do not make that remark by way of a threat, but I speak from my knowledge of what the conservative thinks about the hewing of timber, and I speak as one representing 2,000 timber hewers, 1,500 of whom have left the industry in order to go to the Front. They will want to take up the broad axe again on their return. The broad axe represents their only calling; they will not work for a boss; they will not work for wages; and those hewers have as much right to resume their calling of timber hewing as a lawyer has to follow his particular profession. If any such attempt is made in the Bill—and I understand the attempt is to be made—it will meet with strenuous opposition from some of us. In other respects, I believe the Bill will be fought by some of the timber companies. The measure means another drain on the Treasury, but the ultimate benefits to be secured from the timber industry will justify the expenditure, especially in view of the fact that for the past 25 years the whole of the money derived from the industry has gone into revenue, not a penny of it being put back into the forests. I have spoken so often on this subject that I need not dwell on it now. I wish to say a few words on the price fixing boards of the Federal and State Governments, partly because it seems to delight certain members whenever those bodies are mentioned in this House. If ever there was a

time in the history of Western Australia when there should be some authority to fix the prices of commodities, that time is now. In times of war and stress some of the worst passions of human nature, rapacity and greed and extortion, come to the surface. It is an unhappy truth that some men are to-day making profits bigger than any ever made by them in normal times. The Federal and the States Governments decided that profiteering must end. I am glad to say that the Scaddan Government were the first Government in the British Empire to establish an authority for fixing prices. The Scaddan Government's board did not fix many prices, but the very fact of the existence of that board was a sort of policeman to the importers and merchants and traders; and the position was entirely satisfactory during the whole of the period the board existed. When another place refused to sanction the re-appointment of the members of that board, prices of goods in Western Australia went up. There is no denying the fact that to-day they are still high.

Mr. Teesdale: They are the lowest in Australia.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I can take the hon. member to dozens of Perth establishments where traders are putting up prices, with no authority to curb them. I know of an instance in which, only a couple of weeks ago, a saw which had been five months in stock, jumped 5s. in three days. Axe handles are now costing 3s. 6d. each. Was ever such a price known in the history of the timber industry before? It is impossible for workmen who have to buy their tools to obtain them to-day.

Hon. P. Collier: What about starting the industry of making axe handles?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Axe handles are already being made on the goldfields, I believe. Axe handles may be only a small item, but the item is one which has caused the stoppage of work, because men are not able to earn sufficient to-day at the rates fixed years ago, to provide for the cost of the tools with which to ply their calling. It is the same thing on almost every hand. If one goes into a store to-day, one finds not only the quality altogether gone but the article increased in price. The member for Roebourne knows it, and every man who moves about the country knows it.

Mr. Teesdale: I know that it applies to foodstuffs.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It applies also to drapery, and to the various commodities of daily household use. Prices have risen beyond all reason. If a price fixing commission were appointed, and were given a free hand, and allowed to publish the whole of the evidence they took, we would have some history. But what happened in the case of the price fixing board here? Before the traders would give evidence they had to be given a pledge that the evidence to be submitted by them would not be published. The result is that the evidence is on record to-day, but that none of us know what it is. All we know is that the employers, or the Government representatives, sent in a report recommending the shutting down of the Commission. No commission are in existence now. The Federal Parliament is in a similar

quandary. A commission reported on the price of meat. The commission consisted of three men, not one of them a Labour man, but each of them an expert in his particular line. They put up a report stating that the working people of Australia were not getting sufficient nutriment owing to short supplies and high price of meat. Mr. Hughes took no action, but I met the stock raisers, who put up what they termed fresh evidence. That evidence was referred to the commission, and the commission with greater emphasis than on the previous occasion, submitted that the stock raisers must lower their prices. Mr. Massey Green fixed the prices of meat prior to meeting any deputation of stock growers. However, seven special trains brought the stock growers to the Federal Parliament House; and although the Minister said he would not see all the stock growers in attendance, but only their spokesmen, they all crowded the Queen's Hall and made such a row that the president of the Senate said they never again would a deputation be admitted into the Queen's Hall. Seven special trains I wonder how many special trains would be needed to bring the suffering consumers into the city. When the consumers did make an effort to protest, they were not admitted into the Queen's Hall, but had to stand in the rain in the streets of Melbourne.

Mr. Green: And the police were turned out the women.

Mr. Troy: The women were put in gaol.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The result was that the Minister fixed the prices of meat higher than those ruling in this State. And yet that was not satisfactory to the stock raisers. They have gone on a kind of sympathetic strike and have refused to send their stock to market. Mr. Massey Green is in a terrible predicament because he represents a stock growing district. As soon as he gave his decision, his constituents approached the three State members to see whether they would stand at the next Federal election in opposition to Mr. Massey Green. Those constituents of Mr. Green practically said to him, "Agree to our term or off goes your political head at the first opportunity." Mr. Massey Green does not want to lose his head any more than does the member for Roebourne.

Mr. Teesdale: Massey Green is standing firm.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Massey Green got sick and went away. He may have been sick. There was enough in the business to make him sick. But the consumers have not obtained much relief.

Mr. Munsie: None.

Hon. P. Collier: There is a genuine shortage of stock, though. The stock raisers are not holding back supplies deliberately. Mr. Jowett says not, anyway.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Knibbs's figures show there are more sheep and cattle now in Australia than there were in 1914. Mr. Jowett is one of the men controlling the Federal Government. I regret the composition of the Federal Government just as much as I regret the composition of our State Governments. Each of these Governments contain so many discordant elements that continuity of policy is impossible. Mr. Jowett controls big business; and

Mr. Jowett, in common with the representatives of other firms, was largely instrumental in putting into power the Government of which Mr. Massey Green is a member. We on this side are said to have bowed down to a junto. I say there never was the pressure applied by a big controlling interest in Australia, an interest unsympathetic towards the people who are having a desperate struggle to live. It might be said that price fixing has from its very inception been a farce.

Mr. Munsie: It is a farce still.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: In England they are dealing effectively with the persons who force up prices to an inordinate extent; but in Australia, I do not know for what reason—it may be due to the fact that such persons have friends—while we see an attempt made, no actual relief is given by the Federal authorities. Here in Western Australia no action at all is taken. I understand that the Commonwealth Price Fixing Commissioner here has sent reports from time to time to the Federal Government, without any action resulting. What is the position? Are we to expect the people to remain quiet indefinitely?

Hon. P. Collier: Billy is away teaching them in England.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I do not know that he will make much progress there. There has been a remarkable change of front on the part of Mr. Hughes with regard to the fiscal question. A few years ago, when I was trying to get a grip of that question, I remember reading the most magnificent speeches delivered by Mr. Max Hirsch and Mr. Hughes, who were then touring Victoria and New South Wales in the freetrade interest.

Mr. Teesdale: Hirsch was a German.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Mr. Hughes is now at home telling the people of the old country to discard all their former principles, and adopt an entirely different fiscal policy. I do not think he is likely to succeed. In my opinion, it is quite consistent for a man in England to be a rabid freetrader, and for the same man to be a protectionist in a young country which needs the shelter of a tariff in order to establish industries. From my point of view, that is logical and fair reasoning. Mr. Hughes many years ago was prominent on the free-trade question; to-day he finds himself in a little difficulty in the old country. Whilst our Government are at their wit's end to find money, the Commonwealth apparently can find sufficient money to send political ambassadors, commercial agents, and scientists of all descriptions to various parts of the world.

Hon. P. Collier: And political bounders.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The Commonwealth can even find money to pay Mr. Hughes's costs of the Merton libel action. It is a most remarkable thing that the people of Australia should have to pay for the utterances of a politician when those utterances were made outside the Australian House of Parliament.

Mr. Teesdale: We do not regret paying to down those swine, anyhow.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The hon. member may call the firm of Merton swine. I do not know anything about them. But Mr. Lloyd George evidently does not consider them swine, or he would not have given them Government con-

tracts. The interjection of the member for Roebourne is offensive to Mr. Lloyd George.

Mr. Teesdale: We know about them.

Hon. P. Collier: Is Lloyd George a pro-German?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I hope that the Commonwealth, if they have so much money to throw away, may think fit to show our unfortunate Treasurer and his Ministers a little more generosity in the future. The leader of the Opposition referred to the repatriation of returned soldiers, and the figures given by the Premier indicate that we in Western Australia are making less headway than the people of any other State in this matter. I realise that only a small percentage of returned men will want to go on the land. Even those who have been on the land before will have been unsettled by the excitement of a couple of years of war. To get them to take to rural occupations will be an extremely difficult task. One of the biggest problems facing us is the fact that owing to the attractions of the cities before the war, and their enhanced attractions since the war, the urban areas have been and are becoming congested and the rural areas becoming depleted. A recent report of Knibbs shows a drift in Victoria from the country to the towns which is truly alarming.

Mr. Maley: But you do not believe Knibbs?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I do on that matter, and on others. But Knibbs is not in a position to get the particulars obtainable tomorrow in the city of Perth by anyone wishing to ascertain the facts.

Mr. Munsie: According to Knibbs, one can rent a four-roomed house in Perth for 11s. Neither Knibbs nor anyone else can do that.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Knibbs is not in a position to obtain the cost of commodities accurately here in Perth, or say at Geraldton, or say in Brisbane. But he should be in a position to give the vital statistics of the city of Melbourne and of the country of Victoria. We know the same thing operates here to-day in Western Australia: Perth is bloated, Perth is living on the country. That cannot go on for too long. No State can stand it. What are the Government doing to make the country more attractive than it is. The problem is a big one and an old one. They solved it in the Eastern countries by providing free picture shows for the native employees on the mines. In that case Mahomet would not go to the mountain so they had to take the mountain to Mahomet. I am not suggesting that the Government should start picture shows; they are a picture show enough in themselves, but they must liberalise the conditions of country life by providing more liberal railway fares or concessions for those who are on the land. That is the only way by which we can induce people to remain in the country. The position to-day is that we seem to be going about things in a most inconsistent fashion. It was mentioned here last night that our Agent General is endeavouring to get 25,000 ex service men to come here. God knows

what will happen to them if they do come here. In many instances men have been going to Harvey to look at the blocks there, and they have gone at their own expense, too. They wanted the blocks but the conditions were such that they could not get them unless they took up in addition similarly sized areas a mile and a half away. The men pointed out that they were not physically fit to clear forest land, but that they could make a living on cleared blocks, and when they found that they were obliged to take the uncleared land a mile and a half away, they gave up the idea of settlement in disgust. It appears that at Harvey now the Government have authorised the expenditure of a sum of money to drain the country before soldiers can be settled on it. The Avondale and Yandanooka estates were bought at a big price.

Hon. P. Collier: We were not to blame for Avondale.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: No, but I take my share of the responsibility for the Yandanooka purchase because I did not enter a protest. The Avondale estate was bought from a Liberal member of this House for £50,000 at a time when there was a mild land boom. Now the Government will have to cut a great deal of their loss if they want this property settled.

Mr. Troy: What is it being offered at now?

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Four pounds an acre.

Mr. Troy: If Avondale is not worth £4 an acre, other land is not worth 10s.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The hon. member will surely agree that the Avondale estate was not worth the money paid for it. In the district where I was born in South Australia 15 farms were lately bought by the Government of that State at an average price of £7 5s. per acre, and every settler was desperately anxious to sell his property to the Government. When a farmer is anxious to go off his property, that is not a good time for a soldier to come in. It seems to me paradoxical that the Government should be purchasing farms and advertising at the same time in the "British Australasian" that millions of acres of Crown lands are available for settlement. Why tell the British public that we have all this country available when we know that returned men cannot get blocks that they have any hope of making a living on. It seems to me that there should be a live spirit behind the Government to acquaint them of the circumstances. A number of matters have been discussed by other speakers and I have no idea as to how long the debate will last. I only desire to say that the policy outlined by the Government will have my strongest condemnation so far as it applies to the re-purchase of estates. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) said that this policy would have his approval if the Government purchased estates in close proximity to railway lines for the settlement of returned soldiers. If the Government in their financial plight attempt to repurchase more estates, they will deserve the severest condemnation at the hands of the House. We have spent half a million in buying 25 estates and we have hawked those estates from one end of the country to the other without being able to

get settlers for them. Yet, the Premier says that we will be obliged to buy more estates. I claim that the Avondale estate is as good as any in Western Australia, and having spent half a million in repurchasing 25 estates without being able to get settlers for them, if the Government persist in buying more estates, the policy should not be endorsed by the House.

Mr. Mahey: They will buy them at a fair price.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: If the Government want to buy estates, we must not let the Agent General make a fool of himself in England by looking for 25,000 men.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He is acting under instructions.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is putting the Agent General in a false position, because he is inducing people to come out here at the rate of 25,000 annually and telling them that we have millions of acres of land available for settlement. On the other hand we have the Premier announcing that he proposes to buy more estates. Is it the intention of the Government to buy more estates?

Hon. P. Collier: It is in the policy speech.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I thought it might have crept in to the policy speech without serious consideration. I cannot conceive that the Government would attempt to do it. The Premier took charge of this department himself and he has not been able to get settlers for Avondale at the price fixed. It has not even been possible to get settlers for Yandanooka.

The Premier: Oh yes, it has nearly all been taken up.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: What is the area of Yandanooka?

Mr. Mahey: It is 140,000 acres.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): And of that 90,000 is pastoral lease.

The Premier: The survey work has only just been completed.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Would you settle returned soldiers on poor sand-plain country? We have to provide water and build houses.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: We realise that these preparations have to be made. What is the price being asked for this land?

Mr. Mahey: They wanted £4 10s. an acre for it.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): The price has been reduced.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Not one Minister knows the price. If the Government are making progress in the direction of settling men at Yandanooka, I am particularly pleased.

Hon. P. Collier: Surprised.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: I am surprised, and astounded at the suggestion that the Government will be obliged to buy land.

Hon. P. Collier: And at the same time telling people that we have millions of acres awaiting settlement.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: You cannot tell me that the Yandanooka and Avondale estates have all been disposed of. We also have 780 abandoned farms.

Mr. Mahey: Returned soldiers will want improved properties.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: That may be all right in some cases.

Mr. Maley: In all cases.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Surely we have enough land without buying any more.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): We will want railways and money to build them.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: What is to become of the 700 or 800 abandoned farms? If we are to repurchase more estates, does that not mean that we have no land available?

Mr. Troy: There is land available along existing railway lines, too.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Everyone will want to sell land for the settlement of returned soldiers. I have had letters on this subject and I have replied stating that I did not think there was any possible hope of the Government purchasing any more land.

Mr. Davies: All are offering land at a low price.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: Of course they are anxious to get rid of it. There are hon. members here who, could they get three parts of the money they have put into their holdings in this State, would be the happiest men in Western Australia to-day. There will be ample opportunity to further discuss this matter as the Estimates come down and as the Government policy is developed. I merely want to express the opinion now that unless Ministers get together and endeavour to improve the financial position, the outlook for us will be a sorry one. Some of our best citizens are leaving the State.

Mr. Maley: It is no use crying stinking fish.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: It is no use burying our heads in the sand or shutting our eyes to the real position. Dozens of good citizens are leaving this State and going to Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria where there is prosperity—it may be artificial prosperity, but it is there. All this is bad for Western Australia. As the member for Perth pointed out, there is a home in this State for all. Those who are leaving Western Australia are leaving it for good and we do not want that to happen. There is no reason why the Eastern States should be bloated with prosperity. I think that the conditions here will eventually be better than those existing in the Eastern States. Of course it is useless saying that the whole of the prosperity in the East is due to military expenditure, because we have to remember the new industries which are launching out, industries such as the manufacture of steel by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company.

Mr. Munsie: They are engaged on war work.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: They have not put up works of that magnitude solely for the period of the war.

Mr. Maley: But the war established them.

Mr. Troy: The works were being established before the war.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN: The war has brought about these works but they will continue after the war is over, as long as development goes ahead in Australia. And if one goes to the Eastern States to-day one cannot help being struck by the remarkable contrast between the East and the West. I say the expenditure in

the East is not all military money. It is largely due to the fact that they have a bigger variety of industries, that they have been established so much longer than have we. In consequence everything there seems to be flourishing. I agree with the member for Gascoyne that our handicaps are not all of our own making. We federated too soon, except perhaps from the point of view of defence. In this respect it was a good thing, but from the point of view of our material prosperity we have been dragging very sadly since Federation. Our Eastern competitors have the advantage of us, and we can only do the best we can with the material available. Ministers will have to recognise the importance of establishing industries and developing to the fullest extent what resources we have. And they must realise at the same time that we are in a pretty sorry plight financially and will have to rely on ourselves to get out of it to save the Commonwealth taking us over. I fully appreciate the difficulty. When you give an individual power he becomes an autocrat, and when you give power to a group of individuals they become intolerant. Our representatives in the Federal Parliament apparently do not realise our troubles. Perhaps it is that they are too far away from us, that it is due to their environment. I would not like to see all the power concentrated, but I recognise that unless some proposal is forthcoming to get us out of our financial difficulties, there is no alternative to it.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. T. Robinson—Canning) [4.3]: I have to thank the member for Forrest for the kindly way in which he has referred to any efforts I have put forward in the Industries Department. I regret that I cannot thank other members for having taken the same broad outlook as the member for Forrest has done. Of some people it is expected that their superior education and training and the high position they occupy should enable them to take in all that they see, and more beyond, but I am afraid that the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) when he looks beyond that which he can see close at hand has to put up the telescope; but he always looks through the wrong end, and so the object which he is viewing becomes smaller and smaller. No one that I know has suggested that as soon as the war is over normal times will return immediately. It would be a very stupid thing to say. But what we do say is that when the war is over normal times will start to come round again; he who can say when they will have completed their return is wiser than any amongst us. It may take years; indeed, normal times, as we have known them, may never return. I remember that in May last I told hon. members that one of the greatest factors in the deficit was the failure of the Railway Department. During this year the railways will receive by way of revenue \$400,000 less than they received in 1913. This is mainly made up of the carriage of timber and wheat and products that we sent to other places, timber alone representing £220,000 odd. It surely requires no argu-

ment of mine to convince hon. members that as soon as ships are free, one by one they will be getting into commission again and we shall be able to resume, in small degree at first, but gradually to the full, our export of timber. As soon as we can do that the railways will carry it, and that great factor in our deficit will have been eliminated.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You did not say that in 1916.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Perhaps I was not aware of it then. Certainly the older I get the more I see I can learn. Following on that, the balance of the deficit is made up of that which we have to pay by way of interest and sinking fund for the money which has been spent, an increased amount of £450,000. Those two items make up the deficit. Hon. members opposite will say, "You should not take into account the interest, but only the sinking fund." If we do that I venture to say that the shortage of revenue in the railways and the sinking fund itself in round figures amounts to our deficit. How are we going to get over this difficulty? Although I occupy the position of Minister for Industries I give place to no man in my desire to see the primary industries of Western Australia progress. To our gold, our wool, our wheat, our timber, our coal, our pearlshell and the like there is no question whatever we owe our very existence. Without those primary industries there could be no Western Australia at all as an inhabited country. In fact to gold itself we owe the start Western Australia made on the road to prosperity, and it may be to gold, or to oil, or to another mineral that we may owe our re-entrance on that same road. I further agree with the hon. member opposite who referred to our gold-mining industry that the attention of the Government should be given, and I believe is being given by the present Minister for Mines, to further that to its fullest extent, to make the conditions attractive, to help men in their endeavour to find the gold and so make a turn in the tide of gold production. Our wheat is progressing satisfactorily. If the season turns out as anticipated we shall have a very good harvest. Our wool could not be better. Western Australian sheep and wool are growing well and we are getting rich in that direction. Timber, of course, cannot be touched until the war is over. Coal also is held up, partly on account of the war and partly from other causes. But these primary industries of ours must in the first instance be fostered in the most sympathetic way, because we are entirely dependant on them. Many a man says, "What a huge public debt you have. Look at the amount per head of the population it represents." Double the population and the debt per head would be halved. But we cannot double the population without finding work for the newcomers. How is it to be done? I can see no better way of finding work for increased population than by establishing secondary industries and making all those products which we now receive from other countries. At no time in the history of Western Australia were we given a clearer

insight as to what was holding us back than when a strike took place in the Eastern States, in consequence of which shipping was held up. We then found that almost everything we used came from Victoria and New South Wales, and we became aware that we were importing over £4,000,000 worth of goods per annum, most of which could be easily and profitably produced in Western Australia. The member for Perth has said that the only cure for our ills is violent retrenchment and intense taxation. I am suggesting for our ills a cure which leads us on the path to prosperity. I am suggesting that we should make in this country many things that we import from other countries. Some people have been good enough to say that I am on the right lines. At all events I believe I am on the right lines, and I am going right along those lines until Parliament stops me. The member for Perth has said that he looks on the Industries Department with the utmost disrespect, that the industries I am seeking to establish are twopenny-halfpenny industries and silly industries. The industries I am seeking to establish, and which are referred to in this scathing way by the member for Perth include that of shipbuilding. That has been referred to so much by the member for Forrest that I need not worry the House with it again. It will be an accomplished fact, I hope, in the course of a few days. But I want to say that whilst many people stand aloof and declare that it will be a failure—and I almost think that the wish is father to the thought with them, that those people would be glad to see it a failure—I have received encouragement in this regard not only from political supporters but from gentlemen politically opposed to me, and I do not know anybody whose opinion is worth having who does not think that the establishment of a shipbuilding industry here is a good thing. We have been accustomed in the old days to sailing ships or steamers. The tramp steamer came across the ocean with its staff of officers and crew and many firemen. Many of the new auxiliary sailing ships have already been constructed to the order of the Commonwealth Government and have come down from the United States or from Canada. My friend the Treasurer was able to tell me he had seen one. I was unfortunate enough to miss it when I was in Melbourne. Mr. Law not only saw one, but boarded it, talked to the captain and officers and was shown over the ship. The ship came from Vancouver to Melbourne in 30 days under a power generated by her 500 h.p. engines. The consumption of oil was seven tons a day. She had a crew, all told, including her officers, of only 14, as many as would have been in the stoke-hold of an ordinary tramp. She had a captain, three officers, and three engineers in the engine room, and the remainder of her company made up the crew. The captain said, if he could have done away with his masts, for they were not of very much use to him, he could have got rid of two or three more of his crew. The ship travelled at seven or eight knots an hour.

I venture to say there is no better type of ship for conveying goods, which need not be moved quickly, than such a type. For conveying our wheat and our timber such a type is highly suitable. These vessels can go reasonably quickly, but they do not travel at a speed which means an enormous consumption of fuel or an inordinate amount of labour to work them.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Why go to America for a type, and why not take the "Kangaroo?"

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: She is a steel vessel, and therefore more expensive to construct.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: She is cheap enough in running.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not so well acquainted with the details of the "Kangaroo," although I am a great admirer of her, as I am acquainted with the details regarding these wooden vessels. The "Kangaroo" is made of steel, and cost a lot more money to construct than these particular vessels. If these vessels can be constructed for that trade, I venture to say they will not be the last to be constructed. Adjacent countries want our timber and our flour, and when the war is over goods of that description can best be carried in a ship of that class. Of course, all these things are proved better in actual practice, and when the ships have been a longer time afloat and we see how they compare with the ordinary tramp we shall know better where we are. The Commonwealth Government, having made these inquiries, are satisfied to go on with the building of these vessels, and we are fortunate in Western Australia in having an order to build six of them. I hope it will mean that not only shall we build these ships, but that this will be the beginning of a large and long lived industry in the port of Fremantle. Is that a twopenny-halfpenny, silly industry? For a long time past I have been talking about the by-products from our local timbers. In the days gone by a sawmiller has turned our trees into what is known as marketable timber. The hewer has extracted the wealth of the forest in the form of a solid article. The member for Forrest gave us some figures on the subject to show what has been done. Western Australia has produced something like 25 or 26 million pounds worth of timber. Nothing so far has been done in regard to the production of tannin. We know that we are possessed in Western Australia of enough tannin with which to supply the whole world. The Eastern States have not the tanning material, so I am not afraid of the tannin agents of the Eastern States coming along to compete with us. Two or three years before war broke out we exported mallet bark to Germany of a value of one and a half million pounds. That mallet bark was despised in Australia, but to-day it is being used in the factories of the Eastern States for the production of tanning agents, which are required for leather.

Mr. Munsie: It is a great pity they do not tan some boot leather in Australia.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is improving.

Mr. Munsie: They are not getting the hides to tan.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: In addition to that mallet bark there is another tree which we possess in this State—I refer to the red gum—which produces from the gum which exudes, known as kino, one of the richest tanning materials in the world. Kino contains no less than 50 per cent. of active tannin agent. It has never been used much—although many of our old settlers have made use of it—in the trade because it is red, and difficult to handle.

Hon. P. Collier: Pass it on to Don.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: With regard to these two particular products, and there are others, we are at present conducting investigations. A leather chemist is being engaged in America. He will start his operations here. He is being paid for partly by the Commonwealth Government, and he made a bargain with them for one year only. When we were sending to America to have the engagement fixed up, the other day along came a telegram from the Commonwealth Government to say, "Make that engagement for three years." That was their responsibility and we shall, therefore, have that post filled for three years. Even before this gentleman arrives we may solve the question. When the expert does arrive and devotes the whole of his time to the tannin business, I feel sure that we shall establish in Western Australia the manufacture of tannins and the export of tannins, which will go throughout the length and breadth of the world. Is this a twopenny-halfpenny industry and a silly industry? I suppose the hon. member, who looks through the wrong end of the telescope, will say that it is, but I leave the matter to the people of this country. Another question to which we have devoted a great deal of attention is that of the establishment of the alkali industry. At present, and throughout the period of the war, Australia has been importing 40,000 tons per annum of soda ash or alkali, as it is called. Alkali, or soda ash, is used in almost every industry we possess in Western Australia. There is no house that is without soda in some form, and there is no industry which can do without soda. In fact, if we took soda out of Australia three-quarters of our industries would be shut up, unless some substitute could be found which is not now known. At present our alkali all comes from the Old Country. No doubt it can be more cheaply produced there, and it will cost a great deal more to produce it in Australia, but the Commonwealth Government have now realised that unless they can produce soda ash or alkali in Australia, we cannot be independent of the outside world, as we ought to be in case we were cut off. The Commonwealth Government have, therefore, appointed an alkali committee to investigate the various resources of each of the Australian States with a view to the establishment of an alkali factory in that State where it can be manufactured most economically and to the greatest commercial advantage. I had the privilege of meeting the members of the Council of Science and Industry in Melbourne the other day, and afterwards the members of the alkali committee. They had examined every

State in Australia except Western Australia. I was able to tell them of many of the factors that we have here that go to make an alkali industry, and I invited them to come here and inspect them. Alkali is produced from a number of common substances which we have here in great extent. Lime or limestone, salt or salt water, fresh water, and coal are required. In order to make a factory that will operate as a commercial success these elements must be in close proximity to it. The factory itself must be in close proximity to a port of shipment, which in itself must be an easy distributing centre. Reports have been received and examinations have been made of every State in the Commonwealth. We have exhibited our own wares to these men. We have shown them our coal, our lime, our salt, and the position where the factory could be placed, and if we are successful in having the works established here they will cost no less than half a million of money.

Mr. Pilkington: Have these people not turned down the proposition?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Nothing of the kind.

Mr. Pilkington: I thought so.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: On the contrary—I do not know from what source the hon. member gets his information—I had a telegram from Mr. Grimwade, the chairman of the committee, about two days ago, saying that he had cabled the whole of our Western Australian information to London, and asked us to be good enough to instruct the Agent General to give certain persons in London information about Western Australia. The hon. member would, no doubt, be glad to see the proposition turned down.

Hon. P. Collier: Oh, no.

Mr. Pilkington: I was told it was turned down, by one of the members who is here.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Could this be called a twopenny-halfpenny industry or a silly industry?

Mr. Pilkington: Is it not entirely a private enterprise, and, if so, will it not want a subsidy?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is entirely a private enterprise.

Hon. T. Walker: It is not yet established?

Mr. Pilkington: It can only be established if Mr. Hughes carries out his promise to protect it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This is one of the silly industries to which I am devoting so much energy, time, and attention. I do not care for the gibes of the hon. gentleman. I am going to try my level best to get that industry established in Western Australia. If I fail, it will be because we have not the constituent parts here, and not for any want of showing our resources. Will that have any competition from Mr. Jones of Tasmania? It will want no subsidy. The people who are interested in this require no assistance from anyone. There is only one factory in England, and that same factory also conducts operations in Canada, and largely controls the output which is used in the whole of the English-speaking world. If a factory is established here the money will be found without any

Government assistance. Beyond an intelligent courtesy and the placing of the resources of the country in a proper aspect before these people, nothing further need be done by the Government. Nor is this all. We have been wasting, if it can be so said, a lot of time and energy in the establishment of what I call wool scouring, fellmongering and the leather and textile business. It is not far off completion. It is indeed within a measurable distance of being successful. To-day we are producing more wool each year in Western Australia, and the thing is growing very rapidly. That wool is being sold and the return comes back to our squatters. It is not, therefore, an awkward question for me to ask them, "Will you, Mr. Primary Producer, assist me with the money in establishing a company which will turn your primary products into a secondary industry for the opening up of your own country, and for the increase of the money to your own pockets?" My overtures have been received very favourably by the people concerned. We have been negotiating with a company which is about to be formed for the establishment of wool scouring works. At the present time we are sending thousands of bales of wool to the Eastern States to be scoured. No one can tell me that the cost of transit of that wool with 60 per cent. of impurities in it pays the Western Australian when his wool is scoured and the wool is here, and sending it away occupying half the space. There is no doubt wool scouring can be established and will be in the near future in Western Australia. Is that a silly business; is that a two-penny half-penny industry? I have been taking a lot of time and spending a lot of energy in another direction. Until the other day I noticed that all the tiles on the houses about Perth in Western Australia were imported from Marseilles, and even after the war started there were such large stocks of these tiles here that people continued to use them despite the high price. I wondered why these tiles could not be made in Western Australia, and I have taken the time and trouble to look into the matter. Mr. Simpson is experimenting with 140 samples of clay, which comes from all parts of Western Australia in a special laboratory in Museum-street. We were fortunate in picking up a very skilled man here who had been foreman in a pottery works in Lancashire, and he is assisting us in our investigations. The result generally is that Mr. Simpson tells me the clays of Western Australia are as good as any that can be found for tile making anywhere, and for general pottery work. We have been able by advice and otherwise to assist many of those making tiles in Western Australia, with the result that to-day there is quite a respectable tile being turned out by several companies in Perth, and in the near future we shall go on improving the business and never again have the foreign article even from good old France. Is that a two-halfpenny, trumpery, silly business? I believe the ordinary person will say it is not a silly business. If we can help to establish industries in Western Australia that will find work for our people and retain money that we send to the Eastern States in Western Australia it is a good thing for our community. We shall be more self-reliant and more self-content.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Can you tell me why they cannot make tiles here even with the high cost of shipping to compete with New South Wales?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have told the tile people that unless they are prepared and can make a tile at the original cost of the tiles before the war they cannot compete with outsiders. If the people here cannot make as good a tile as New South Wales here at a cheaper rate, we will not go on making tiles, but I feel sure that an article like that we have and with the handicap of the water transit and the handling at both ends, as well as the breakages in transit, while our tile man has only to put his tiles in a cart and there are no breaks—if we cannot make tiles against New South Wales I have told our tile men to give up the job. I believe our tile men have enough go in them. They have such handicaps that they will win. One tile manufacturer came to me and said, "What do you think of this tile." I said, "It looks quite a nice tile," and I asked, "All made from Western Australian clay?" He said, "No, I import the main constituents of that clay from Victoria." I said, "That tile is no good to me. Will you give me three lbs. of the Victorian clay you use and I will replace it with three lbs. of Western Australian clay suitable for the purpose?" The job has been done. Any people who come along we are able to give them advice. Is that a silly business? Answering my friend the member for Sussex, I do not think he referred to me when he said he had been told that a bacon factory will cost £12,000. The Agricultural Department contains the experts in connection with bacon matters and we have to look largely to them, but when it comes to the establishment of a new industry, I take a hand in it even at the risk of ridicule by certain people in high positions.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Shall we be able to continue to make bacon?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Bacon has been placed on the third priority list. Let me tell members this. The plan I have had drawn and prepared from information supplied by those available in Western Australia, is recognised by many bacon men as a very good plan, and this particular factory will cost £3,500. Although the country people are told the factory is going to cost them £3,000 or £4,000 they must remember that unless they are prepared to supply their pigs and wait for their money until it is turned into bacon, the co-operative companies running the factory must be prepared to pay for its bacon if they turn out 100 a week. A pig say is worth £2 10s. It takes 6 weeks to turn the pig into bacon and 6 weeks further for credit sales. Consequently a factory of the type I have mentioned will require £6,000 or £7,000 capital unless the farmers are willing to say, "You can have my pigs, turn them into bacon and then we can get our money." The bacon curers of Victoria saw that the State of Western Australia was waking up. They said, "We have been supplying Western Australia with £250,000 worth of bacon per year, we cannot afford to lose that trade." What did they do? They dropped their price. The long established factories in the Eastern States may crush our small establishments here, but if we can hold out until the local establishments are going, and can turn out as good a bacon as they can in the Eastern States, the matter will equalise itself. If we are going to be content for all time to eat Jones's jam and Hutton's bacon, of course, there is no use for me and there will be very little use

for the rest of us. We cannot afford to continue to be a mere appendage of the State of Victoria. I believe in being up and doing. I have also, probably very foolishly, spent a lot of time and energy in endeavouring to establish here what is called a forest products laboratory by which we can investigate the wealth of the forests and tell those engaged in commerce and trade how best to make use of that which is no use to us now. Resin, gums, perfumes, tannins—investigation in any scientific way of the goods and products of the forests. In this regard the Commonwealth Government through the council of science and industry, very much to my astonishment, listened to the arguments I put forward and told us that if we were prepared to find the land and a certain sum, say, £5,000 towards a building, they would consider the proposition to permanently run such an institution in Western Australia. It must cost to run such an institution close on £10,000 a year. All up-to-date countries have similar institutions. I had thought that the predominating influence of the Eastern States would have planted such a laboratory in one of the Eastern capitals, but, as it proves, they have been very good to us and recognised that our timber resources are large and varied, and that we are entitled to have it here. I have the authority of the director for saying that the laboratory will be established in due course. Is that a silly business, a twopenny-halfpenny concern? To the man with the reversed telescope it is; but these things will be worth millions to the country and, rather than violent retrenchment and intensive taxation, will land Western Australia on the straight road to prosperity. The Government have not been confining their attention to these matters only, but have been watching the requirements of the meat producers, and sometime ago, came to the conclusion that there must be established here proper, large and efficient freezing works.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was decided upon before we went out of office.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: At all events, what the Government have done has been to get the advice of a gentleman reputed to be one of the leading experts in the line in Australia. He has spent a month in Western Australia and his report, I am advised, should be available within the next few days.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I hope he will do better than previous experts, who have cost this country a lot of money.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The next thing is, what is to be done when that report arrives? The Government are determined that there shall be works of proper dimensions in the proper place. If this can be carried out by private enterprise, the Government are prepared to let private enterprise do it, but if private enterprise is not willing to come forward the Government will do it themselves. My efforts towards helping industries in this State are not everywhere sneered at. Amongst the men in the Chamber of Manufacturers, the men who have industries of their own, many have received my suggestions and proposals with acclamation and they are applauding me and telling me to continue the work. I value the opinion of practical men rather than the opinion of the gentleman who looks through the wrong end of the telescope. An illustration has been made of our jam factory. Everybody will admit that the establishment of a jam factory here, whether at Donnybrook, at Perth, or at Fremantle, is a

difficult undertaking in face of such huge and well organised opposition as can be put up by a firm like Jones & Co. of Tasmania. But are we to sit down and wring our hands and go in for violent retrenchment and intensive taxation, or shall we try to see that jam is made in Western Australia? What is the failure of the local jam? Why is it that it has not been successful? Because households such as that of the member for Perth never taste it. I use it in my household and I urge everybody else to use it.

Hon. P. Collier: Let us all eat our way through jam into prosperity.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: And if the people of Western Australia made up their minds to patronise the local industries, this jam is just as good as Jones's jam.

Mr. Teesdale: It is better.

Hon. P. Collier: Let us gorge ourselves with local jam.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, be reasonable. Tread on the ordinary, common ground of mortals and eat those things produced in Western Australia if as well made and the same price as the things which come from the Eastern States. I understand that in the past there has been some bad management in connection with this company. I am not familiar with the terms of this concession, but I would like in the next few days to assist to investigate the affairs of that company and see how it can be pulled out of the mess into which it has got, whether it should be closed down, or whether there is any chance of helping it to success. Until one can look at it from the commercial point of view and investigate its affairs, I do not propose to say anything definite about it.

Mr. Pilkington: It would have been as well to investigate the commercial point of view before lending the money.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Complaint has been made at the Government not taking any steps in connection with the price fixing of meat and the man appointed by the Federal Government in connection therewith. As soon as the appointment was made by the Federal Government this Government immediately took exception, and not only sent their objections to the Federal Government, but Ministers interviewed Federal Ministers and expressed their opinions in unmeasured terms.

Mr. Troy: What opinions did they express?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That Lange should never have been appointed.

Hon. P. Collier: Who recommended him?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know. We did not. We condemned him. I have to thank hon. members opposite, and also the member for Sussex, for kindly reference to the proposed Forests Bill. I will take occasion, when introducing the measure, to refer to the noble part played by the leader of the Opposition in connection with it. That Bill was not conceived on narrow lines. It is framed on very broad lines. We have not confined ourselves to the advice of the Conservator of Forests, who, it is alleged, is not yet acclimatised, but I have taken the opportunity to get advice from every forester in Australia. We have not been beyond talking to the sawmillers themselves and to the member for Forrest and the leader of the Opposition, who understand a great deal about the subject. We want to produce a Bill founded on broad lines, to form a continuous forest policy without which the forests of Western Australia

would very soon be exterminated. At the risk of being told by somebody that axe handles should be beneath the notice of the Minister for Industries, let me assure hon. members that attention has been given to the subject for a long time past, because a number of axe handles and tool handles are used in Western Australia, and we in the Forestry Department thought that the production of such handles might be entered upon as a light occupation by returned soldiers. There is now a little machine in the Darling Ranges turning out handles of all patterns, and handles are also being made in the South-West and on the goldfields. I am hopeful that in future West Australians will use their own timber for the making of axe and tool handles. It will all depend upon whether the new axe or pick handles are approved by the men using them. If the men using them in the mines or in the forest say that the handles hurt the hands, or militate against the output of work, we will not meet with much success. At present we are getting good reports in all directions.

Mr. Lambert: I have had reports from experts who say that the local handle is better than the imported.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I had no intention of wearying members on the Address-in-reply debate with a description of the activities of the Industries Department, but I am of Irish temperament, and if anybody attacks from the supercilious standpoint of the member for Perth, a matter in which I am engaged, I am prepared to take the first opportunity of letting him have it back. I hope that the opportunity thus afforded me has given to the House some information on this subject which it did not possess before. I hope the House will be with me in the prosecution of these industries, and, to use a hackneyed phrase, to assist in the harnessing, or, as Dr. Gollaty prefers to put it, of the wedding, of science to industry.

Mr. GRIFFITHS (York) [5.0]: The member for Forrest referred very particularly and pointedly to the matter of price fixing, and in that connection he quoted certain lines, including leather. The member for Sussex spoke on the same subject. Being as much interested in the industrial side of the population of Western Australia as in their agricultural side, I wish to add my word in that connection. Some little time ago a resident in the back country wrote asking me whether the present retail price of leather did not represent profiteering. He stated that he had had to pay for small quantities of leather at the rate of 5s. per pound, whilst that leather was supposed to be sold wholesale at 1s. 9d. per pound. He also instanced the price of brandy, to which reference has been made by the member for Sussex. So far as the householder is concerned, brandy is absolutely necessary in certain cases of sickness. I replied to my correspondent that the Government could raise some sort of protest in regard to this and scores of other matters. As to the Federal treatment of this State, I do not know whether hon. members are aware of the conditions under which telephone connections are made in the outback districts. If a distant settler wants to obtain telephone communication in order to remove the isolation of the bush, he has to guarantee the department against any loss. Hon. members may be impressed to learn what the Melbourne "Age" has to say about the latest freak of the Postmaster General, Mr. Webster—

If there is any sincerity at all in the Federal Government's professions of economic policy, the Federal Treasurer should immediately take steps to restrain the Postmaster General from proceeding with this costly project for the creation of luxurious free clubs, which are to come into existence under the camouflage of "postal institutes." A hand-bill just issued, setting out the "advantages" of these institutes, draws attention to the provision of "spacious smoking, lounge, and game rooms, also a billiard room with a special lounge room for ladies." There is to be a news room, a reading room, a library and a gymnasium, where boxing and wrestling may be learnt. There will be a special gymnasium for ladies; in fact members and their wives and families are to be catered for in every possible manner. According to the prospectus they may "obtain a wash, clean towels, boots and brushes, and a brush up." Then again there are to be dress-making and millinery classes for the wives, sisters and daughters of members, and in addition an orchestra, a vocal society and a dramatic club. All classes in the numerous postal duties are to be free to members for 5s. a year for those receiving less than £156 a year. Who is to pay for the upkeep of these attractive clubs? The Minister will not say (if he knows) what it is to cost, but since one is to be established in each capital city, it is obvious that thousands of pounds must come out of the peoples' pockets at a time when they are groaning under the burden of taxation. If the Federal Treasurer cannot stop Mr. Webster in his ill-timed and ill-advised scheme for spending much needed money, surely Parliament will apply the brake and block the item when it appears in the estimates.

Hon. P. Collier: We have not any of those things in this State.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That is so. The project of the Postmaster General is altogether ill-timed, and in fact represents a shameful waste of money.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The postal officials are paying for that institution themselves.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: Will 5s. a head pay for this institution? Let the hon. member tell me something a little bit easier. The Federal authorities have now instituted a new underground telephone service. Even in Northam the telephone wires have been placed underground at great expense. But if telephone communication is desired in order to remove the isolation of remote centres the settlers have to guarantee that they will make up to the department any deficiency involved in the extension. Backing up what has been urged by various members, I contend that our Government can do something by entering a protest. An hon. member sniffs. But certain hon. members are great advocates of co-operation and organisation. Then why not let the individual States co-operate in bringing pressure to bear on Federal members in order to obtain a measure of justice for remote districts? With reference to repatriation and immigration, I heard the Premier say that he thought the time was not ripe, and that we should be ill-advised in spending money in Great Britain just now, to encourage immigration. In a broad sense that view of the Premier may be right. But I do not know that members of this Chamber are aware that in the huts at the back of the line to-day Canada is making all sorts of efforts in a quiet and insidious, peaceful-penetration, style to impress upon the minds of the soldiers, who are probably thinking what is to be the solution

of their problem after the war, the advantages of Canada. Canada is seized with the idea that our men at the Front have made such a name for themselves that they have written the name of Australia not merely on the map but all over the world. Consequently the Canadians think that a great deal more attention is being attracted to Australia than to Canada. The Canadians therefore are pushing immigration for all they are worth in a quiet, systematic, scientific fashion. In this connection I regret that more prominence has not been given to the report of the Hon. J. D. Connolly in regard to child immigration, which was laid on the Table of this House last session. Canada has had a monopoly of child immigration, and has found it so much to her advantage that for every child brought into Canada there are six applicants. Even while the war is on, Canada is doing everything possible to induce that form of immigration.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But there are eight million Canadians, and we are only 300,000 Western Australians.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That is right. I say we should copy anybody's good points and utilise them to our advantage.

Hon. P. Collier: Our trouble is not to get immigrants. Our trouble is to place them after we have got them.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: I quite agree with all that. While the Canadians are preparing for after the war immigration, we shall be ill advised if we relax our efforts altogether. The trouble to-day is that we cannot keep on the land men who are there already. We want the rural conditions made such that people on the land will enjoy a measure of prosperity and something like decent social life. Their isolation must be removed. That is why I emphasise the need for telephone communication to outback districts. The telephone is one of the greatest means of remedying the isolation of the bush. The people in Melbourne should be made to recognise that fact. I have persistently asked the Premier what were the intentions of the Government as to the formation of a permanent board of agriculture in accordance with the recommendation of the Agricultural Royal Commission. I have pointed out that not only is such a body being asked for in Western Australia, but representatives of all the States at a conference of the Federated Farmers' Organisation held during last March passed a resolution that the present disconnected, lack-of-continuity style of carrying on the agricultural policy of Australia was wrong, and should be remedied. In that particular I say that a board of agriculture is necessary in this country. Let hon. members look a little beyond the city. There is need for a complete reorganisation of the agricultural industry. There is no use in talking glibly about repatriation. How can we say to a returned soldier "go on the land young man, and you will make good"? One cannot say that to-day. In one small portion of my electorate, within a very short radius, there are 17 farms, representing 20,000 acres, which have been vacated since the outbreak of war. What does that proportion mean for the country at large? Let hon. members ask the Agricultural Bank and the Industries Assistance Board, and they will find that those institutions have about 700 or 800 vacated farms on their hands. Indeed, vacated farms are common throughout the wheat belt. Something must be done to make the living conditions of

the man on the land decent and profitable, and free from isolation. Moreover, it is essential that he should be furnished with decent medical facilities. Otherwise, instead of our having to think about getting immigrants to settle on our lands, we shall have our time and energies fully occupied by the task of keeping on the land those men who are already there. I wish to emphasise this matter because I shall not have an opportunity of speaking here for the next two or three weeks. Next, with regard to Saskatchewan and co-operation. There has been much comment on the Premier's Mooré speech. My view is that the Premier appreciates the difficulties of the farming population and realises that through co-operation lies the farmer's one way out. The hon. gentleman realises that fact as the people of Canada have realised it long ago. That country has in its Agricultural Department a "Co-operative Organisation Branch," which encourages the co-operative movement among farmers not only by cash and advice but by sending lecturers out into the country to expound the benefits of co-operation, and organise the farmers. The outcome has been that, when the handling of wheat fell into the hands of elevator trusts, a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the matter and make recommendations, with the result that the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevators Act was passed, providing that 85 per cent. of the amount required for the construction of, say, a country elevator should be provided by the Government, the farmers finding 15 per cent. cash down and undertaking to pay the other 85 per cent. in 20 annual instalments. They took a lesson from Manitoba and other places, and provided that those farmers or shareholders should have for every 10,000 bushel capacity in the proposed elevator, a crop acreage of 2,000 must be provided to ensure the success of the elevators financially. Whereas in 1911 they started with 46 elevators and handled over 3,000,000 bushels of wheat, in 1915-16 they had 230 elevators handling over 43,000,000 bushels of wheat.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: If the Government would do the same here it would save many thousands of pounds.

Mr. GRIFFITHS: That is what I have in my mind. I want hon. members to look into this thing, and before anything drastic is done they will see that a great success has been made of it in Saskatchewan. I have heard a good deal said about the rabbit question and I want to tell the House that it has been said by certain members that so far as wire netting is concerned, it will not be a business proposition to use it. I have been told that it will be a good business proposition, and I have gone to a little trouble to get information which will assist me when I arrive at Newcastle and see what is being done there by the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. That company I understand is to engage in the manufacture of wire netting from Australian ore, and if I can learn anything which will be of value to this House I shall be only too glad to get all the information I can and place it at the disposal of hon. members. We are a country of primary producers. There is a general renaissance going

on throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire and it remains for us to see whether we cannot do our little bit in helping towards that renaissance. When the war started we were hopelessly eclipsed but we have now awakened. The Attorney General is deserving of the highest commendation for his efforts to establish industries, even though they be in the direction of the manufacture of grindstones or tiles. The member for Coolgardie too is to be commended for valuable scientific information which he has given us at times. He has told us that kelp which is obtained on our sea shores has been proved to contain 20 to 25 per cent. of potash which to-day is retailed at 2s. per pound, while the wholesale price is 1s. per pound. Our trouble throughout has been a lack of vision. Where there is no vision the people perish, and if the member for Coolgardie can bring scientific knowledge to bear it will help in the utilisation of these natural things which we have at our feet. If he does that he will be deserving of the highest commendation. I did not intend to speak, but as I am leaving the State for a little while I thought I would be pardoned for making these few remarks.

On motion by Mr. Mullany debate adjourned.

BILL—SUPPLY (£1,431,000).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 5.20 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 3rd September, 1918.

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

[For "Questions on Notice" and "Papers Presented" see "Minutes of Proceedings."]

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Hon. J. A. GREIG leave of absence for six consecutive sittings granted to Hon. H. Stewart, on the ground of ill-health.

On motion by Hon. J. E. DODD leave of absence for the remainder of the session granted to Hon. J. C. Cornell, on the ground of absence from Australia on military duty.

On motion by Hon. J. DUFFELL leave of absence granted to Hon. A. J. H. Saw, for the remainder of the session, on the ground of absence from the State on active service.

THE MOTION OF WANT OF CONFIDENCE AND THE DEBATE ON ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East) [4.35]: With your permission, Mr. President, I should like to mention a matter with regard to the procedure of the House. It is probably within the knowledge of hon. members unofficially that an amendment has been moved to the Address—