

think to supply explanations to members so far as I am in a position to furnish them and to the best of my ability, and to remove misconceptions which may have misled hon. members and caused them to draw wrong conclusions.

Question put and passed: Address adopted.

### ADJOURNMENT—SPECIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. M. Drew): I move—

*That the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 28th July, at 4.30 p.m.*

Question passed.

*House adjourned at 10.3 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Thursday, 16th July, 1914.*

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED

By the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin): 1, By-law No. 15 of the Municipality of Geraldton, 2, By-law No. 112a of the Metropolitan Water Supply.

### QUESTION—FREMANTLE HARBOUR FACILITIES.

Mr. CARPENTER asked the Minister for Works: 1, Are the Government aware that the Fremantle harbour was taxed to its utmost capacity during the recent wheat season? 2, In view of the natural

increase expected this year, what steps are being taken to provide adequate accommodation and facilities for handling the next wheat harvest? 3, What is the total number of men now employed in connection with works to provide such increased accommodation?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, On rare occasions there were more ships awaiting berths at Fremantle than there was accommodation for, but this is by no means an uncommon circumstance in the ports of the world. 2, An amount of £20,000 has been authorised to be expended on alterations to the railway lines on the North Quay and the provision of stacking areas. Orders have been placed with the Agricultural Implement Works for the manufacture of four (4) additional wheat loaders, and quotations are being obtained for six (6) additional pedestal loaders. A small commencement has been made with alterations to lines. The scheme provides for the handling of 48,000 bags of wheat a day. 3, About 20 men at present besides those employed by the manufacturers of machinery. In addition to the above, some 233 men are employed in extending the North Quay westwards and in dredging the harbour, which form a material part of the extension of the harbour.

### QUESTION—LAND TAXATION, VALUATIONS.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Premier: 1, Can information relative to valuations for land taxation purposes be obtained from the Commissioner for Taxation on payment of a fee? 2, If so, what is the fee and the usual procedure to obtain this?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Land Tax Assessments are, by Section 45 of the Land and Income Tax Assessment Act, 1907, open to inspection on payment of the prescribed fee. 2, The fee prescribed by Regulation 49 is one shilling for the inspection of entries relating to any one taxpayer. On payment of this fee the documents are produced for inspection.

### QUESTION—CONDITIONAL PURCHASE LAND.

Mr. MONGER asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What was the area of land held under conditional purchase conditions on 30th September, 1911? 2, What was the area held on 30th June last? 3, What area was applied for and approved between 30th September, 1911, and 30th June, 1914?

The ACTING MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin)—for the Minister for Lands—replied: This question has been altered in accordance with the hon. member's desire. 1, The area held under conditional purchase conditions on the 30th June, 1911, was 11,721,436 acres. 2, 13,731,830 acres. 3, The area applied for and approved between the 30th June, 1911, and 30th June, 1914, was 4,380,529 acres.

### QUESTION—LAND SURVEYING, COST.

Mr. WISDOM asked the Minister for Lands: 1, What is the estimated cost of carrying out the instructions at present held by each contract surveyor employed by the Lands and Surveys Department? 2, How many surveyors were employed in July, 1911? 3, What was the total amount spent on land surveys in 1910-11 and 1913-14 respectively?

The ACTING MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. W. C. Angwin)—for the Minister for Lands—replied: 1, £2,370. 2, 68, exclusive of the six district surveyors. 3, £74,784 and £33,871 respectively.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

#### *Sixth Day—Conclusion.*

Debate resumed from the 9th July.

Mr. LEWIS (Canning): I desire in the first place to take this opportunity to congratulate the Treasurer on his forecast in connection with his Estimates for the financial year which has just closed, and more especially in regard to the totals. His Estimates show that the

Treasurer has a masterly grip of his department and that he accurately gauged the revenue and expenditure for the financial year, a fact which I consider supplies proof that he revealed the true position of the state of the finances. In the Budget Speech of last year, he estimated that the shortage would be £135,000, and the actual shortage at the close of the year amounted to £142,000, or a mere difference of £7,000. Certain taxation proposals which were carried in this Chamber and afterwards rejected in another place, would have had a great effect on the revenue. It was estimated that if these proposals had been agreed to in another place, an additional £16,000 would have been realised. The Treasurer also estimated that the accumulated deficit would amount to £446,000, and the actual amount of the deficit at the close of the financial year was £454,000. I think this gauging of the Estimates establishes a record for any Treasurer. There have been Treasurers in the past who have been over £100,000 out in their Estimates for the year. The Treasurer was met with this difficulty, that during the last two months of the closing financial year he was faced with industrial troubles which considerably reduced the amount of revenue that would have been received during those two months. For instance, we have had the industrial trouble at Kalgoorlie on the Trans-Australian Railway. Sleepers, rails, and material were lying at Fremantle waiting to be carried by the Railway Department. Since that trouble has ended, the Railway Department have been putting on special trains in order to convey those goods. Had the trouble not occurred, the Treasurer's estimate would have been more than realised. In addition, we have had an industrial trouble throughout the metropolitan area, again considerably reducing the forecast made by the Treasurer in his last Budget speech. Had the trouble in the building trade not occurred, the Railway Department would have been carrying building material, and instead of a period of stagnation during the last six weeks or two months, which the Treasurer could

not have foreseen, we should have had the usual traffic. I think the Treasurer is deserving of congratulation on so accurately having gauged his receipts so far as the totals are concerned. No doubt there is a good deal of variation among the different departments, but still we can congratulate the Treasurer on the fact of having revealed the true position to the people of the State, and on having put up a record for accuracy so far as framing estimates is concerned. Another matter I wish to refer to was dealt with in the speech of the leader of the Opposition. In point of fact, however, there is a good deal of difference existing between the speeches made by members on the Opposition side, so far as State enterprises are concerned. Later on I intend to refer more fully to that feature. At present I wish to point out that the leader of the Opposition in his speech opposed all State enterprises.

Mr. Male: Hear, hear!

Mr. LEWIS: He was very emphatic in his opposition to the State steamers. He has no regard for the people of the North-West, or for the development of that great portion of the State, which needs development. As has been pointed out by the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood), the State steamers are performing for the people of the North-West the same service as the railways perform throughout the agricultural areas.

Mr. Male: Had not the North-West got the steamship service before?

Mr. LEWIS: I know we shall have to listen to wails from members of the Opposition during the course of this debate; however, I do not intend to take too much notice of that lamentable wailing. We have also had adverse criticism from members on the Opposition side in connection with the State meat shops. The leader of the Opposition has definitely asserted that there has been no reduction in the price of meat. However, I contend that had it not been for the State meat shops, the price of meat would have been 1s. a lb. in the metropolitan area to-day—1s. a lb. all round. It is the effect of the State meat shops in keeping down the price of meat—and that despite the fact that

there has been a shortage of supplies—which undoubtedly has enabled a large number of consumers in the metropolitan area to obtain meat at something like reasonable prices. The leader of the Opposition also opposed the State Implement Works. This is the point at which the break occurs, so far as Opposition members are concerned. The leader of the Opposition enthusiastically opposed State Implement Works, while, on the other hand, the member for Pingelly (Mr. Harper) and the member for Northam (Mr. Mitchell) advocated the State Implement Works, and further supported State enterprise in the direction of State flour mills, State agricultural railways, and other State activities; showing that, so far as the Opposition are concerned, they have nothing like a definite policy to put before the people of the State. Next, we have the leader of the Opposition claiming a great deal of credit for having first of all introduced the scheme of workers' homes, though at the same time he opposed the leasehold provision. I contend that if there is one specially admirable feature of that policy of workers' homes, it is the leasehold provision, for the reason that the poorer classes of the community, who are bringing up large families and are doing their share in bearing the responsibility of increasing the population of the State, are unable to put up a sufficient deposit to purchase a block of land. In my electorate there are families of eight or nine who were paying to the rack-renting landlord, extracting the last possible penny from them, as much as 11s. and 12s. 6d. a week for a mere weatherboard place which was not properly lined and had only a stove-pipe chimney. These families were enabled to obtain workers' homes under the leasehold provision, and to obtain comfortable homes, at an initial outlay of £5 6s.—5s. application fee, 1s. stamp duty, and £5 deposit. Under the leasehold provision of the Workers' Homes Act they have been able to obtain a comfortable dwelling and are not paying any higher rental, while at the same time they are securing the home for themselves. As the home is acknowledged to be the most

sacred place to humanity, those workers are encouraged to develop their dwelling places, to cultivate gardens, and obtain a real interest in life in this respect; whereas, under previous conditions, they were absolutely under the thumb of the rack-renting landlord, who took every advantage of their need of a home by charging them the highest possible rental he could extract. In fact, I regret to say that in Maylands, a district which I represent, and which was originally cut up into something like quarter-acre blocks, there have been cases of prominent civil servants, in some instances drawing large salaries, who have subdivided their blocks with a view to making two quarter-acre blocks carry four houses. For an expenditure of something like £120 they build a jarral shanty that is not properly lined, and that has rooms of about 12ft. by 12ft., and has not a proper chimney; and for such places those civil servants are enabled to receive something like 16s. to 17s. 6d. a week rent. The poorer people, in order to secure homes, have been forced to pay those rents. By means of the leasehold provision we have been enabled to relieve that situation to a certain extent, and I only regret the fact that the Government have not more land available in the metropolitan area, because if such were the case there are scores of people who would avail themselves of the leasehold provision and secure a home of their own under it. In Maylands, a large, populous, and growing district, there is no land available for the workers to take up under the leasehold provision. The leader of the Opposition saw fit to refer to the South Perth ferries in the course of his speech, and he stated that no better service had been provided for the people of South Perth as the result of the nationalisation of the ferries, and that it would have been better if the State had left the ferry service severely alone. I wish to disprove that statement. First of all, I am prepared to challenge the leader of the Opposition to come to South Perth and advocate that the nationalised ferry service should be handed back to private control. I can promise that if he is prepared to do that, he will have a

very bad time indeed. The leader of the Opposition also stated that no improvements had been effected since the Government took over the ferry service. Now, I have a publication here bearing on that question. It is not a publication emanating from a Labour organisation, but it is the report of the mayor of the municipality of South Perth for the year ended June, 1913. The mayor makes some reference to the fact that the Government have taken over the South Perth ferries. He states in his report—

Two lines of ferries, namely those between Mends-street and Perth, and Queen-street and Perth, are now conducted by the Government, and an improvement in many directions has been obtained.

In connection with this subject, I also desire to congratulate the Government on the fact that as from the 1st October next they will nationalise the whole of the ferry services, including those between Perth and Coode-street, between Perth and Como, and Applecross and Canning Bridge. I venture to say that if the Government get sufficient boats, the result will be, not only to develop that very desirable residential suburb of South Perth, but at the same time to return a handsome profit at the end of the financial year. First of all there is the Como service. Land is being cut up and subdivided there, and people have bought blocks, but owing to the fact that there has been nothing like a decent service, and that no proper transit facilities have existed so far, the Como district has not developed as it will develop when the State provides a service that can be relied upon. The want of a reliable service has also been experienced in connection with holiday traffic. On holidays the people desire to get to the seaside as much as possible, especially during the summer months; and it has been found that large numbers of people have been carried by private enterprise to Como, Applecross, and Canning Bridge, throughout the day, and that at night those people have not been able to return, because there were not sufficient boats to carry them. The result has been that, as holiday resorts, those locali-

ties have been retarded in their development. Naturally, that has been the case, because the people have not been able to get anything like reasonable facilities for travelling to those localities, and, further, have been kept there to all hours of the night. The result has been that after such an experience they have gone somewhere else on their next holiday.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Who is selling the land down there?

Mr. LEWIS: Various people are cutting up and subdividing their land.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Who owns that big estate there?

Mr. LEWIS: During the coming summer, with a proper service, capable of dealing with the traffic, and running at something like reasonable fares, it will be found that thousands of people will visit those resorts. In fact, at Como there is one of the finest beaches for children in Australia—a clean beach with shallow water, where children can paddle without any fear of being overthrown by waves, such as come in on the ocean beach. Further, the leader of the Opposition stated that no improvements had been effected in the ferry service. In the first place, I wish to emphasise the fact that since the Government took over the service the employees have received an all-round increase.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Where?

Mr. LEWIS: On the ferries.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Have they?

Mr. LEWIS: They have received an all-round increase, and their industrial conditions have been considerably improved. Next, I want to point out that from a commercial point of view the results have been handsome. For the current year the receipts have been £5,837. The expenditure was £3,691. From the very inception, when the Government took over the ferries—I think it was in March, 1912—the receipts have been £12,634.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Where did you get those figures from?

Mr. Male: Who audited them?

Mr. LEWIS: I got the figures from the proper source.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What is the proper source?

Mr. LEWIS: There is another 10 days to be added in order to complete the financial year, and up to the end of June the expenditure totalled £8,032. That shows a profit, an excess of receipts over working expenses, of £4,602.

Mr. George: What about depreciation?

Mr. LEWIS: I am pleased to have that interjection, because it will prove my case. The capital cost of the South Perth ferries has been £7,000, and an allowance of 5 per cent. on that for interest and sinking fund would amount to £350. After allowing for that, and for departmental deductions, and for everything that can possibly be debited to the working of the South Perth ferries, those ferries show a return for the year of over £4,000.

Mr. George: But what about the depreciation?

Mr. LEWIS: It is no use for the Opposition to try and make out a case against the nationalisation of these particular utilities. The trams and ferries were a burning question during my election campaign, and I advocated the nationalisation of these services from every platform I spoke on; and the people of my electorate thoroughly endorsed the action of the Government. I challenge the leader of the Opposition, or any member of the Opposition, to visit South Perth and advocate handing back those services to private control.

Mr. George: Where do you get the figures from?

Mr. LEWIS: We do not know what you do want. That is the difficulty. We cannot get any definite answer from the members of the Opposition. In the characteristic manner of the member for Northam, he said every few minutes the other night, "I want to know this, and I want to know the other."

Hon. Frank Wilson: Where did you obtain your figures from?

Mr. LEWIS: from the right source, and I challenge the leader of the Opposition to disprove the figures, and if the

figures are not accurate you can get up and show where they are wrong.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must address the Chair.

Mr. LEWIS: I want to get an answer from the Opposition. Are they prepared in their next policy speech to advocate the handing of the various State enterprises back to private people?

Mr. George: I will give you an answer in one minute if you will sit down.

Mr. LEWIS: We find that while the members of the Opposition will criticise the present Government for what they have done we can show the glorious inconsistencies of the hon. members opposite. I have before me a copy of an extraordinary edition of the *Bunbury Herald* which at the last election declared the Liberal policy as announced by the then Premier (Mr. Wilson) at Busselton, and it is a remarkable thing to-day to see that the members of the Opposition are now condemning all State enterprises, but so far as Busselton was concerned on that occasion, the hon. member declared in favour of many State enterprises and socialistic ventures. We find the same thing in regard to the member for Murray-Wellington. He supported State brickworks. The member for Northam supported the extension of State agricultural railways, State flour mills, water supplies to settlers, and the member for Pingelly also adopted the same attitude. They believe in socialism as far as the boundaries of their own electorates are concerned. I will give the head lines of the leader of the Opposition's policy speech, as reported in the newspaper to which I have referred—

The Liberal Government's Intentions Regarding Bunbury and the South-West—Inner Harbour for Bunbury—Roelands-Bunbury Water Scheme—Wagin-Darkin Line to be introduced Next Session—More Railways for the South-West—Practical Support for Dairying—Liberal Government pledged to the Rapid Development of the South-West.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What have you done for the South-West?

Mr. LEWIS: Just reading out the outlines of the speech, so far as the South-West is concerned, we find the leader of the Opposition stating that they would repeal the Arbitration Act and introduce wages boards. There was the Roelands-Bunbury water scheme, a Bill for compulsory insurance was to be introduced if the measure before the Home Parliament was a success. There was to be a State endowed insurance scheme—a form of socialism. We also find that the hon. member proposed to encourage the dairying industry. He was prepared to settle people on 150 acres of suitable land in the South-West and to provide them with cows. Is that not a sort of socialism? The hon. member only outlined this, but the present Government have made a success of many State enterprises, and it will only be a matter of time when they will make a success of the lot. For instance, the late hon. member for Fremantle stated that he thought a State peanut stall would be a good thing. No doubt in the initial stages of establishing a peanut stall there would be some outlay, and in the first few years we might suffer a loss on a State peanut stall, but the national party is doing all it can for the North-West and the South-West and every other portion of the State; they are doing all they can for the benefit of the whole of the State. Another thing the hon. member in his policy speech advocated was a line from Busselton to the Margaret River. This is mentioned in connection with the speech delivered at Busselton on that memorable occasion. An extension of the Nannup railway was proposed. Then there was to be the opening up of the Nornalup Inlet. I understand from the speech made the other day by the Premier that the population of Nornalup Inlet is very limited indeed, yet the leader of the Opposition is prepared to advocate its State endowment. The hon. member was a State socialist then because it was within his own electorate.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You are opposed to opening up the South-West then?

Mr. LEWIS: I am not prepared to adopt the dog-in-the-manger policy of members opposite. We find on this side

the goldfields representatives are prepared to support State tramways, State ferries and all other State enterprises, and the metropolitan representatives are prepared to support State enterprises to develop the great North-West, but what do we find is the miserable policy of the members sitting on the Opposition side? So long as they are within their own electorates they are prepared to adopt any sort of socialism. The individualist oppositionist will walk along the municipal paths lighted by municipal gas, cleansed by municipal brooms. He will look at the municipal clock in the municipal town hall and ring up on the national telephone to tell his children, who are attending the State school, that he cannot meet them, but that they are to come along in the State tramways and he will meet them by the side of the State endowed hospital close to the State endowed library and museum and art gallery, where he will go in order to consult the library in the National Public Library in order to prepare a speech to deliver before a Liberal rally on agricultural railways, water supplies to farmers and reduced freights. All this sort of thing he will advocate before the Liberal rally, and then turn round and say, "we want to fight the common enemy, the socialist." He will deliver a speech over an hour and a half condemning the Government giving effect to the true policy which we advocated, and no humbug and hypocrisy, and then he will say, "Mr. Chairman, it is not State endowment, not State socialism that has helped to build up the State, but only self-help," while the same gentleman who has made such a speech will come here and advocate State endowment as far as his own particular electorate is concerned. It is, as I said before, humbug and hypocrisy. The Labour party have a national policy. They do not confine the encouragement of State enterprises to the boundaries of their own electorates, but they support a policy for the general advancement of the State. In connection with the State ferries, I would like to point out to the leader of the Opposition that I can absolutely prove that since the Government took over the ferry service

we have a cleaner and better service. It is better lighted. There is a reduction in the monthly fares from 10s. to 8s. a month, apprentices receive some consideration.

Mr. George: Where do you get your figures from?

Mr. LEWIS: If I were to give the hon. member the figures he would not understand them. There is only one little anomaly I would like to bring under the notice of the Premier in connection with the ferries, and that is that children to-day on the ferries are being charged 10s. 3d. a quarter, while apprentices who earn something have a concession of 6s. 3d. a quarter. There are a number of residents in South Perth with large families doing their best to educate their sons and daughters, and I contend that although they live in South Perth they have a water space to span each day, and that they should have the same concession as is given to those who live along the railways. This is a handicap to the district. A man with a family if he desires to live in South Perth has to compare the ferry service with the service rendered by the railways, and if he finds that he can live alongside the railway line and send his children to school on payment of a nominal sum, then if he were to live in South Perth, he is handicapped, and this particular policy is hindering the advancement of South Perth. I would like to see some uniformity. The same consideration should be given to children on the nationalised ferry as is given to them on the nationalised railway. The leader of the Opposition also criticised the State tramways. He stated that no improvements had been effected in connection with the trams.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Not a bit.

Mr. LEWIS: Of course. First of all the mileage has been considerably increased. The member for Kalgoorlie in moving the adoption of the Address-in-reply gave the figures as far as the mileage is concerned. Several new cars have been put on the system. A power house is now well under way, and the workers have been enabled lately to return by any tram, if they purchase a worker's ticket

in the morning. The receipts somewhat surprised members on the other side. I believe the estimate was £115,000, but on the close of the year the trams had realised £116,000 and some odd pounds. In my opinion, the State has a great asset in the tramways. I advocated this at the last election from every platform, and it was endorsed by the people, because they realised that under private monopoly they could not receive the extensions needed. In addition, the company was looking for profit, and would not give the people the concessions which have now been given under the nationalised system. I desire to advocate in connection with the extensions, first of all, the Beaufort-street service out to Maylands. There is a large and growing population along that particular route, and once the tramway is extended the Government would reap an increased revenue, because there are already a large number of dwellings there. We have the experience of the Eastern States, so far as South Australia is concerned. The tram was extended to Henley Beach to enable people to take a trip down to the sea side and a huge settlement sprung up, almost in a night. I also desire to advocate a proposal to connect up the north and south sides of the river. When the redistribution of seats took place, the Canning electorate had included in its boundaries Maylands, which is separated by the river from the rest of the electorate. In order to bring about that community of interest so much emphasised on that occasion, it is necessary to have a bridge connecting up Maylands or Bayswater with the other side of the river. People from Victoria Park have at the present time to come to Perth and make a detour of some six miles to reach the suburbs on the north side. By extending the Lord Street tramline along Guildford-road and across the river, connecting up Bayswater, and also going back from Guildford-road through Belmont, we would shorten the route to Kalamunda by two miles, and would be able to cater for the race traffic, which at the present time causes the Railway Department a good deal of anxiety. On a big race day congestion takes place and the other services are disorganised, because the roll-

ing stock is taken from the ordinary passenger services in an attempt to cater for the extraordinary race traffic. By this proposal, under a system of tramways we would be able to carry the people from both ends, that is from the Victoria Park end over the Causeway and also from Maylands, we would be able to carry the people to the racecourse. The revenue brought to the Railways by the race traffic is approximately £10,000 a year. Under the proposed system of tramways the traffic could be more expeditiously and economically handled, because one car could follow another, whereas a train has to clear a section before another train can depart. It would also bring about a development of a large suburban area within a four miles radius of the city, an area in which land could be cheaply obtained for workers' homes. The result would be that suburbs would spring up, almost in a night. Moreover, it would link up the north and south sides of the river, and would provide a cheaper rate of travelling. At the present time we have the Causeway, and the next bridge is at Guildford, a long distance off, leaving Maylands, Bayswater, and Belmont unserved. By this proposal we would be able to carry the race traffic, which would provide the necessary amount for interest and sinking fund, while the developments which would ensue from these facilities would represent a profit in connection with the service. The people at Queen's Park, realising what transit facilities would do for that district, are anxious for an extension of the tram service. I proposed to them the levying of a betterment tax, as is so often done in New Zealand. The local authorities took up the matter enthusiastically and secured the signatures of a large majority of the ratepayers to a petition in favour of the extension. They have submitted a business-like proposition, guaranteeing the interest and sinking fund during the early developmental stages of the extension. They desire to place before the Government the need for an extension of the tramway to Nicholson-road within the boundaries of Queen's Park. The people are willing to pay, through the local council, five per cent. on the capital cost of such exten-



sion to cover interest and sinking fund until such time as the revenue shall be in excess of the expenditure, when such excess shall be used in reduction of the amount paid by those property-owners. They also desire to ask the Government to give power to the local council to levy a special rate on land in and around Queen's Park, such property to be rated in the following manner:—Land within a quarter of a mile of the Albany-road, having approximately a value of £31,470, to pay 1¼d. in the pound, from which it is estimated to receive £163 18s.; land beyond a quarter of a mile of Albany-road and within half a mile thereof, having approximately an unimproved capital value of £21,170, and land, excluding Location 37, between the Canning River and over half a mile from Albany-road having an approximate capital value of £17,570 at a penny in the pound, estimated to produce £161 8s. 4d.; land over half a mile from Albany-road and south-west and contiguous to the railway line, having an approximate capital value of £6,000, at a farthing in the pound, estimated to realise £18 15s.; Location 37, and all land north-east of the railway line, having an approximate capital unimproved value of £58,180, at a farthing in the pound, estimated to realise £60 12s. 1d.; land within half a mile of the proposed terminus situated in Gosnells and Jandakot road board districts, and land from Welshpool-road to Queen's Park boundary for half a mile south-west of Albany-road and situated in Victoria Park, at a penny in the pound, estimated to produce £50, or an approximate total of £454 13s. 5d. When these people are prepared to bear that burden and guarantee the interest and sinking fund during the first three or four years of the running of the line it is a business-like proposition, and the Government should be prepared to make that extension to Queen's Park. If this were done then undoubtedly in the near future as the result of having these travelling facilities the suburb would become a very popular one. For the purpose of rating, those pieces of land which are in two different rateable areas shall be taken to be in that area having the highest rateable value. Provided that no allotment or separate

portion of rateable land shall be valued at a capital value of less than £30. When the revenue from the extension shall have exceeded the expenditure by such an amount as will allow for a reduction in rating, or the capital unimproved value shall have so increased that a reduction in rating can be made, the rates shall be reduced by a farthing in the pound; and when further reductions can be made each reduction shall be a farthing in the pound until such time as the excess of revenue from the extension scheme over and above expenditure shall be sufficient to pay all interest and sinking fund on the capital cost of the extension.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): What is the population?

Mr. LEWIS: Approximately 3,000, but several estates are now being subdivided, which in the near future will materially increase the population. Travelling facilities, as we know, create traffic. The moment we give those people decent transit facilities their district will advance by leaps and bounds. To take an instance: Recently we had a railway platform erected at Victoria Park. Since the people have had an opportunity of joining the train at that point, 51 new houses have gone up in the immediate vicinity, and where five persons used to join the train at Victoria Park to-day over a hundred join it at that platform, clearly proving, as I say, that travelling facilities create traffic. By giving such facilities we induce the people to go out where they can get fresh air and live under their own vine and fig tree. Given the opportunity, they will certainly go out to those localities. In this proposition which I have submitted the people are prepared to take the responsibility of guaranteeing the interest and sinking fund during the developmental years of the extension. I contend the Government should assist people who are prepared to help themselves in this manner. Another matter mentioned in His Excellency's Speech was that of the filter beds. We were told that four new filter beds will shortly be in full operation on Burswood Island with the result that effective treatment of the effluent from the septic tanks is confidently anticipated. I can-

not share in that confident anticipation. First of all I realise that had a public works committee been in existence when those beds were first thought of, some £40,000 would have been saved to the State. The late Government put down four filter beds in a slushy, swampy situation, no test was made of their foundations, and after they were constructed they sank in the centre and did not perform the work for which they were constructed. We also have an evidence for the necessity of a public works committee in the fact that over £200,000 was sunk in the dock at Fremantle. Had a public works committee been in existence to take evidence on the question, and submit a report for the guidance of members, this expenditure would have been saved to the taxpayer. Moreover, had a public works committee been in existence at that time, the filter beds would never have been constructed where they were. This is a burning question in my electorate, and the complaints that come from the residents living along the river bank at Maylands, Bayswater, Belmont, and Victoria Park are loud and luminous.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Are the new beds working satisfactorily?

Mr. LEWIS: I am coming to that. People travelling over the railway bridge, and others travelling along the Causeway, in trams and vehicles, have termed the portion of the river between the Causeway and the railway bridge "the devil in solution," because it is responsible for a lot of bad language when passengers are passing along those particular avenues; and I must say I think the place is rightly termed. I recognise that the present Government were faced with this proposition: that the development of the district and the health of the people living along the banks of the river were being seriously impaired. To bring about a better state of affairs they have erected the new beds on a spot where the foundations were thoroughly tested and found to be satisfactory. The beds are a great improvement on the old ones; they are on higher land, and the effluent coming away from them certainly shows a vast improvement on that from the original beds. I think that the time will soon arrive

when the Government will have to seriously tackle this question. I would like to see them procure some experts to get out the costs of an outfall system, one by which we could connect our sewerage and storm water together, and carry both out into the ocean. This is a question which affects my district very materially. At the same time I want to congratulate the Government on having effected considerable improvements, but I am not convinced that the filter bed or the septic tank system will prove satisfactory for a large population. I know it is said by experts that in Glasgow and other portions of the world, this system has proved satisfactory, but as against that we can get the evidence of experts in Germany showing that this system is not a success, that it pollutes the river, that there has been a large public agitation, that people have left their villages and that the authorities have had to go into the question of doing something to bring about a better state of affairs by adopting the outfall system. It is not so much the particular system as the handling of the output. So far as the output from the filter bed and septic tank system is concerned, in this instance at East Perth the flow goes on to swamp land, which is often flooded, and the effluent flows into the river. The ebb and flow of the tide takes this effluent to and fro, and, especially in the summer time, it is absolutely polluting the river. It is also a fact that the effluent is carried up as far as Maylands and around the Maylands jetty, and in the summer time millions of flies congregate around the jetty on the scum which is thrown up by the filter beds. This scum has been analysed by analysts, and they point out that the sickness which has been caused in and around Maylands and the locality is caused by nothing else than the effluent and the scum which travels up that way. It travels to and fro by the tide because there is no proper outlet for it. The Government can do a great deal in the way of improving the state of affairs, especially in the way of deepening the channel. The channel is something like three feet in depth, and boats which draw three feet have the greatest difficulty in going to and fro. By deep-

ening the channel and reclaiming the swamp land much could be done in the way of remedying the evil. In the Swan River we have one of the finest assets that it is possible to have in the State, and it would be deeply to be deplored if anything were done to permanently affect the value of that asset. In my opinion it is only a question of time when these filter beds will bring about pollution of the river. I recognise that this question has much that is difficult about it, and that it will have to be gone into most carefully. The present Government have certainly done a great deal, and have been to a great deal of expense in the improvements which they have effected. At the same time it would be unwise to waste any further money, and better to go on at once with an entirely new scheme. No doubt this would be a heavy tax upon the metropolitan population. The outfall system might possibly run into a quarter of a million pounds, but I believe the people of the metropolitan area would be prepared to carry that burden rather than run the risk of the river being polluted. There is no doubt that that pollution exists. The people are complaining, and they urge that something should be done. In my opinion we should devise some other method of dealing with the sewerage and storm water without expending any further money on existing works.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do you not think the other people would have cause for complaint?

Mr. LEWIS: In my opinion we should link up the storm water drainage with the sewerage system, and take the lot to the ocean. This probably would not necessitate more than a couple of pumping stations, and by running the storm water in the same channel this would have the effect of cleansing the channels, and then the whole lot would go out into the ocean.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The people on the beaches would then complain.

Mr. LEWIS: Not if the effluent were carried right out into the ocean. It is carried out into the ocean in other parts

of the world, and this system gives every satisfaction.

Mr. S. Stubbs: Why not have a sewerage farm?

Mr. LEWIS: Personally, I am doubtful about the success of that.

Mr. S. Stubbs: They are successful in the Eastern States.

Mr. LEWIS: I have been told that in Victoria they have a sewerage farm at Werribee, where the sewerage from Melbourne is received, and that it renders settlement within an area of 10 or 15 miles absolutely prohibitive.

Mr. George: Why, they have a sewerage farm absolutely adjoining Birmingham.

Mr. LEWIS: This is a matter which, in my opinion, experts would have to deal with. I just desire to emphasise the trouble which is existing at the present time. It is well worth the attention of the Government to try to bring about a better system of dealing with this sewerage. I am satisfied that the residents of the metropolitan area would not tolerate the possible risk of pollution of the Swan River.

Mr. S. Stubbs: The effluent ought never to have been turned into the Swan River.

Mr. LEWIS: I heartily endorse that remark. Another matter upon which I desire to congratulate the Government is in connection with the maternity hospital. It is a great necessity, in order to provide a training ground for our midwives. I regret that the Honorary Minister did not have a coronial inquiry into the life which was recently sacrificed owing to the fact that there were no proper facilities available for a maternity case when the emergency arose.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I have had an inquiry.

Mr. LEWIS: The reports put up present different points of view. I contend that a woman who is going through that experience and the husband of the woman who accompanied her, must naturally relate the true circumstances that have transpired to their friends. In my opinion a good deal of indifference has been displayed in connection with the case, and

too much emphasis altogether has been placed upon the word "indigent." If this woman had not been poor no doubt she would have received far more prompt attention.

Mr. George: No matter whether she was indigent or not, if she needed attention she should have received it.

Mr. LEWIS: It seems to me that officials in many instances rather look upon this sort of case as though the patient were trying to avoid paying something for the attention bestowed upon her. I regret that the child should have lost the best friend in the world, a mother, and that the husband should have lost a wife through the indifference, which, in my opinion, has been displayed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I do not think the hospital doctor was to blame in any way.

Mr. LEWIS: There is this fact which remains: the unfortunate woman arrived at the hospital at 11.30 and she did not arrive according to the reports, at the Home of Mercy until 2.30 during which time a period of three hours had elapsed. The doctor states in his own report that the husband was anxious. No one can tell me that a man who has gone through that particular experience would not truthfully relate the circumstances of it. That should be sufficient in itself for a medical man to know that nature was not performing its proper functions, and that something should be done to assist nature, so that the life of the woman might be saved. The life of a woman was in this case, I say, sacrificed through indifference, and through emphasis on the word "indigent." I desire now to congratulate the Minister for Education upon the success of our educational system. I think that he has done great work in connection with that system. A large sum of money, something like £1 per head of the population, is being spent on education, but we must realise that the money has been spent in the direction from which it should return twenty-fold the value of the money invested. What has been the experience in the Eastern States? I desire to quote a statement made by the Minister

for Education in Victoria, in connection with the educational system in that State. He states—

One of the greatest men in our times, ex-President Roosevelt, had said, "If you are going to do anything permanent for the average man, you have to begin before he is a man. The chance of success lies in working with the boy." This was true wisdom, and the country which neglected its education would go to the wall. We had our duty to do in matters educational. The money spent in education decreased the expenditure in other departments. With the expenditure on education going up, the expenditure on gaols went down. The Kilmore gaol had now been turned into a butter factory, because there was no further use for it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I hope we shall be able to turn the Fremantle gaol into one very shortly.

Mr. LEWIS: The Minister went on—The Maryborough gaol was empty, and the Portland gaol would be closed soon. This was the result of education; it decreased crime. Therefore the expenditure in one direction was a saving in another.

I think that testimony and also the interjection of the Honorary Minister that he would turn Fremantle gaol into something similar shortly shows that the expenditure of, I think, £319,000 on education is amply justified by the results. I recently had an opportunity of visiting the Modern School in Perth. I was greatly pleased with what I saw in that institution. Boys in the manual training classes were keenly absorbed in their studies, and the work which they were performing, and the teacher informed me that when they had any initiative or idea every encouragement was given to it, so that that idea might be given practical effect to. He pointed out that the method employed there made a boy self-reliant, and did a great deal in the way of getting out of the old methods and encouraging self-reliance in the rising generation. I also saw the domestic science classes. I was pleased to see there the

cleanliness and economy, and that a lot of the old ideas in regard to the management of the household had been completely eliminated. Much valuable knowledge was being imparted to the girls which would be of great service to them in after life. They were also teaching languages, mathematics, chemistry, physics, and drawing, and practically everything was being taught there. I was greatly pleased to see that the classes were so well conducted. In fact, I said to the gentleman who was conducting me round, "How do you deal with any student who becomes unruly?" and he replied, "They are never unruly. They are so absorbed in their studies and so anxious to learn, and they appreciate the privileges they have so much that they frequently ask to come back on Saturdays and even after school hours, in order that they may go on with them." This sort of thing shows an excellent spirit, and that we are on the right lines when we can get boys and girls of the rising generation to take such a keen interest in their studies. I regard this institution as a training ground for future teachers. I have been informed that an assistant teacher has been appointed to the Training College, who has been imported from the Eastern States from a country school there. I think this is to be regretted, if it is the case, because if we have amongst our teachers in this State persons qualified to take these positions we should encourage them to seek for promotion, and put every opportunity in their way of securing a higher position, rather than to go outside the State and bring a man in when we have already those within the State qualified to perform the duties. There are other matters in connection with the Governor's Speech I desire to mention. The Speech contains a good deal of what the Government have accomplished. The Government have certainly accomplished a great deal of good work. They have also outlined a progressive policy for the future. One of the subjects mentioned in the Speech is an old friend—the Traffic Bill. Representing as I do, one of the metropolitan

constituencies, I say that the whole of the local authorities and those existing in the metropolitan constituencies, desire to see the Traffic Bill carried through Parliament. It has been pointed out by previous speakers that the city council receive the bulk of the fees, while their vehicles pass over roads which have to be maintained by the suburban authorities. For instance, we have the road leading to the principal racecourse, which is one of the best maintained in the State. The Belmont roads board and the Victoria Park municipal council do their duty in this respect very well, but at the same time no revenue is received by them from the motors and other vehicles which travel along that road to the racecourse, and which eat it up considerably. There is another matter I desire to refer to which has been discussed in every portion of the world—I refer to the question of irrigation. In this State we have made two attempts to pass a measure through Parliament, but another place has on both occasions seen fit to reject it. I am pleased to see that the Government intend to re-submit the Bill this session, and, so far as the provisions of that Bill are concerned, I hope the Government will insist on them being carried, as they will introduce them, and as they were introduced on previous occasions. I desire to quote from "Practical Irrigation," by John McKeague, who is supported by Professor Bickerton, of Canterbury College and Professor Black, of the University, Dunedin. The writer studied the Californian laws and those of Spain, France, Italy, and nearly all the countries where irrigation is carried on, and arrived at conclusions on which our own measure is based. These are—

1. That the State ought to have the full ownership and control of the waters of the country.
2. That where the State has alienated the people's right to this full ownership and control, the public interests have greatly suffered in consequence.
3. That where the monopolist has secured a legal right to the public waters, those interested in the use of these waters have been morally plundered by the monopolist.
4. That such monopoly has invariably acted prejudicially to the interests of

irrigation. 5, That the beds of all rivers and water channels and lakes, together with their banks and shores, ought to be public property. 6, That any considerable body of water, no matter where situated, ought to be public property. 7, That the legal right must exist, subject to fair compensation for injury, to take irrigating waters by the best route across public or private property to the land to be irrigated. 8, That where the State owns the public waters and controls the irrigation works, the results to the irrigator and the public are very beneficial. 9, That the State ought to exhaustively legislate on the subject of the property of the public waters, securing this property for the sole use and benefit of the general public. 10, That it is the duty of the State to supply all information possible to be obtained concerning the public waters and their supply for irrigating purposes.

Mr. George: That is what we say at Harvey.

Mr. LEWIS: Who is responsible? The other place.

11, That while retaining the supreme control of the public waters, and the chief guidance of irrigation works, the State ought to cheerfully and vigorously co-operate with the local irrigation authorities in all directions likely to promote the welfare of the irrigators, and through them of the whole colony.

The member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) knows that what has been done in connection with Harvey, as far as the orchards are concerned, could not have been done without the agency of water.

12, That the beds of dried-up or disused water channels ought to revert, under just conditions, to the owners of the land through which they flowed. 13, That the drainage of swamps and marshes ought, if necessary, to be compulsory. 14, That legal enactments, exhaustive in their scope, ought to regulate the flow of water from one estate to the next, and secure each landholder and tenant from injury resulting from carelessly constructed irrigation works. 15, That means ought to

exist for measuring the flow of irrigating water, both in the main canal, and at the outlet to each irrigator. 16, That the State ought to control—(a) The constituting of irrigating districts. (b) The construction of national, of joint, and of district irrigation works, the water which each is entitled to take from a common and public source, and the conditions under which the water power may or must be converted into electric power and transmitted to distant places. (c) The regulations in which each local irrigation district is administered. 17, That it is the duty of the State to provide independent and impartial judicial machinery to bear and to adjudge objections and grievances made either by the local governing irrigation body, by the landowner, by the tenant, by the mortgagor, or by the irrigator. 18, That the local authority should have power to permit, under just conditions, water to be raised by irrigators to higher levels than those to which the water will naturally rise. 19, That the irrigation law ought to deal with subterranean as well as with surface water.

These are not the ideas of any Labour Administration. I have quoted from an authority who has studied the laws of the world, and the conclusions I have read are those which he arrived at, and they absolutely endorse the provisions of the Bill as it was introduced on two occasions by the Government of this State. We are faced with the fact that because it is a Labour Administration which is introducing this measure, the non-party Chamber has seen fit on both occasions to retard the development of the State by defeating the objects the Government have in view. The present Government also introduced a Public Works Committee Bill and it was rejected by another place. A similar measure was introduced on a former occasion by a Liberal Administration, and the present leader of the Opposition on that occasion eulogised it.

Mr. George: When was that?

Mr. LEWIS: In 1901. The hon. member will see it recorded in *Hansard*, that Mr. Kingsmill, when Minister for Works, submitted the measure, and the present

leader of the Opposition eulogised the Government for introducing it, and praised the measure. When the present Government introduced the Public Works Committee Bill, however, the leader of the Opposition condemned it as emphatically as he endorsed it on a previous occasion. This proves that the hon. gentleman is so blinded by party prejudices that he will not give the present Administration credit for attempting to pass a measure which he advocated on a previous occasion.

Mr. George: What was the difference between the two Bills?

Mr. LEWIS: Very little indeed. The leader of the Opposition stated, in connection with the former Bill, that the payment proposed to be given to members of the Committee was too low, but so far as the general principles of the Bill were concerned, they were precisely the same. There are one or two omissions from the the Governor's Speech, but I recognise that in a short session like the present one, it would have been impossible to introduce much legislation. One matter, which has been taken up with a good deal of enthusiasm in my electorate, is the proposal to amend the Municipalities Act, so far as to provide for rating on unimproved values. The South Perth Council sent out a circular letter to the municipalities of the State and they have received replies from a majority endorsing the principle. I regret to have to state also that that proposal was passed by this Chamber, and rejected by another place. We find it contained in the Roads Act and it is only fair and just that it should be included in the Municipalities Act as well, so that those who effect improvements should not be unduly penalised by taxes, while the absentee who contributes nothing towards the development of the country escapes taxation so far as rating on vacant lands is concerned. Most of the municipalities would like to see this provision made mandatory. There is another amendment which I would like to see made to the Municipalities Act. The Honorary Minister (Mr. Angwin) submitted this in an amending measure which he presented to the Legislative Assembly,

but the Legislative Council threw it out. The object of the amendment would be to prevent the subdivision of blocks of land into slum areas. That is going on at the present time in our midst. There are land speculators who are buying up corner blocks and shortening the blocks by taking off the depths. There are plenty of examples of the result of this kind of thing and what will happen if we allow it to continue? A Royal Commission, which was appointed in Victoria, took evidence on the question and pointed out that landlords were trying to make as much as they possibly could by subdividing land into blocks having as small a frontage as 15ft., with a depth of 50ft., and building houses with verandahs on the street, where children would have no available space at all. Hon. members must realise that that kind of thing is not conducive to the physical or moral well-being of the community. I can also cite an instance of speculators in land at Maylands, in my own electorate, buying land having a frontage to a certain street and then applying for permission to take in the right-of-way. In that instance, I am sorry to say, the permission was granted to them. That kind of thing should not be permitted. The local authority gave their consent to this being done. In a case where land was purchased in Beaufort street, the original surveys placed the frontages in a cross street, but the owners of that land realised that if they had the frontage to Beaufort-street the property would be more valuable, and a survey was made and the blocks were, so to speak, turned round, and a right-of-way was placed extending from Walecott street to Tenth avenue. A certain firm which had five blocks between the two cross streets applied to the local authority for permission to take in that right-of-way, and permission was given to them, although the man who had the corner block behind the right-of-way had already paid a deposit on it and had, as a matter of fact, purchased it because he wanted to have the use of that right-of-way. He was not consulted because it appeared that he had entered into an agreement which made it possible

to close this right-of-way. The land behind belonged to a syndicate. They were consulted and gave their approval and the local authority acceded to the request to close the right-of-way. This right-of-way is being used to shorten the depths of certain blocks and give frontages to side streets. This, I contend, is introducing into Western Australia an undesirable state of affairs.

Mr. GEORGE: The man to whom you refer has a remedy.

Mr. LEWIS: He has no remedy. Legislation should be introduced to prevent the possibility of any local authority giving approval to such proposals as these.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): These subdivisions have to be submitted to the local authorities.

Mr. LEWIS: Then the local authorities do not use their power. I feel inclined to move that the file be laid on the Table. This is not the only instance. The time has arrived when legislation should be passed to prevent subdivisions in our area from developing into slum areas. We have the example of the Eastern States, where the greedy landlord and speculator have been allowed to do this sort of thing. Last summer it was difficult to secure an adequate supply of water in the higher levels of the metropolitan area, and I am pleased that steps have been taken in the direction of building reservoirs so that this difficulty will not recur during the coming summer. Another matter which must be dealt with is the proper licensing of registry offices. There are some of these institutions the proprietors of which I consider are parasites on the community. They undertake to secure employment for girls, especially in the hotel business, and the employers are in league with the proprietors. The latter accept a fee of half a week's wages, and after the girls have been in their places for a week or two they are put off and another batch are sent along. This state of affairs should not be tolerated, and the time has arrived when legislation should be introduced to license registry offices and prevent such parasites from playing on the necessities of people who are forced to seek employment.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): I listened to the hon. member for Canning with considerable attention and I congratulate him on having given to the House some very interesting information. But when he quoted the figures in connection with several undertakings, on the accuracy of which figures he is prepared to stake his reputation, which is great, he should at least have been prepared to tell the House the source from which he derived them. There can be but one source whence accurate figures dealing with State enterprises can be obtained, and that is the Government offices. Why the hon. gentleman should have been so desirous of hiding the source from which he obtained them can be accounted for by only one reason, that he is aware that members of the Opposition are unable to obtain from Government departments even the simplest information upon matters which are not controversial and are not party questions, but which concern the whole State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It all depends on what they want.

Mr. GEORGE: I have been in public life for a number of years, and it is only recently that members of Parliament who asked in a legitimate way for information have experienced any difficulty in obtaining it. What Government have a right to constitute themselves the sole judges as to whether information should be given to members of Parliament? They are simply the trustees of the people for the time being charged with the administration and accountable, so far as they can be accountable, to Parliament.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The officers are in the departments to carry out their duties, and not to prepare unnecessary figures.

Mr. GEORGE: It is not a matter of questioning officers for figures, but of obtaining them from Ministers; hon. members even in this House are refused information to which they are entitled. It is generally considered that when a man evades the question he has something to hide. If he has something to hide it must be because he is ashamed. If Min-



isters issue instructions which I will endeavour to show have been issued, that information is not to be given to hon. members, it shows that there is something I will not say shameful, but something which they desire to hide. I do not know the particular position of authority occupied by the hon. member in connection with the party at present in office, but he spoke with considerable force and desired that his words should carry weight. He gave figures to show that a certain undertaking was profitable. I interjected, "What about sinking fund?" He then told us that he was allowing 5 per cent. interest, and sinking fund so much. I asked, "What about depreciation?" But I presume that the hon. member was a little hard of hearing, or that he had not been supplied with those figures, and that it had not occurred to him that it was desirable to obtain them. It is useless for a member to come here and quote figures with the mark of authority unless he is prepared to show the source from which he obtained them, so that hon. members can judge whether the figures are reliable and can be taken in earnest or not. It is not a question of party, but of the whole House representing the people being desirous of knowing how things stand. The hon. member referred to the filter beds at Burswood, and endeavoured—no doubt he considered rightly—to throw the blame for having constructed them on the previous Government. Surely neither he nor anyone else would hold members of a Ministry accountable for the design and the carrying out of that work. All that a responsible Minister has to do is to examine the matters placed before him and according to his experience and judgment give authority to the responsible officers to carry out the work. If a mistake has been made, which is evidently the case, the Minister who sanctioned the work cannot be blamed for the error in design or locality. All that can be said is that perhaps the Minister did not exercise sufficient commonsense and care.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Would you allow that to apply all round?

Mr. GEORGE: The present Government have authorised the construction of some of the filter beds. I have discussed the construction of these filter beds with Mr. Lawson, the very intelligent and competent officer who is in charge of this work, and I congratulated him on following the old English lines of making things strong enough. I confess that I never did believe in the septic tank system, and I do not believe in it now, but I have an idea that the main decision in connection with the sewerage question had to be arrived at because of the enormous cost of taking the sewage direct to the ocean in the early days. The present scheme was evolved for the purpose of meeting the situation which had grown critical and which to-day is critical. The hon. member for Canning said that possibly the effluent which was causing trouble might contaminate the ocean. It is a proposition worthy of consideration by the engineers if the funds can be provided for this work. From personal experience of the septic tank system in the railways and on my own property I can say that, take whatever care one might, there is always a certain sickly, offensive smell. The septic tanks at my home at Claremont are built on the most modern lines, and care is taken to exclude from them anything having a tendency to obstruct them, but every second or third year I find it necessary to open the sealed chamber and clean out the contents. There is likely to be more trouble in a large system. In a private house one can, with careful supervision, exclude material which would have a deleterious effect on the bacteria in the dark chamber, but in dealing with the sewage of a large city like Perth supervision over every person is impossible, and a fair proportion of the people are careless in connection with these matters. Their only trouble is to get rid of various waste materials in the quickest way possible, and the result is that they find their way into the septic tanks. The closets should be used for one purpose, and one purpose only, but we have no guarantee that foreign matters are not disposed of in this way. In Birmingham there was a large sewage

farm close to the city, and a very successful one too, but it was found that manufacturers and others were turning into the sewers waste materials which were spoiling the effect of the measures taken by that great corporation, and inspectors had to be engaged to trap these people. In Perth we have not arrived at this stage yet, but I am doubtful as to the success of the scheme, because, do what we will, issue what regulations we like, and instruct the people as we will, we cannot prevent careless, dirty people from using the get-away to dispose of rubbish and matter which should be dealt with by some other means. For the time being I believe it would be better if the effluent from these filter beds were pumped away to a considerable distance. I believe this scheme will eventually be turned into a pumping scheme, and that the whole of the sewage will be taken to the ocean. If there is any likelihood of this being done the present Government or the Government which shall succeed them, shortly I hope, will have to tackle it. There is no doubt, as the hon. member indicated, that a most offensive odour arises from the present system. I travel over the Bunbury line about twice a week, and I can say that the odour is something frightful. I do not think that even the improved filter beds will rectify the trouble. The hon. member referred to the fact that the effluent is not only liquid, but carries away with it certain desiccated sewage which forms on the banks, and becomes a breeding ground for flies, mosquitoes, and other insects.

*Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.*

Mr. GEORGE: Taking His Excellency's Speech. I find, of course, the usual matters of self-congratulation. I see that the Government congratulate themselves and the country upon the re-appointment of Sir Newton Moore, and in that I fully concur. In the congratulations on the recent judicial appointments I concur also. Mr. Justice McMillan held the position of Acting Chief Justice, and I think he is about the best

man we could have got for the appointment. So far as the elevation of Mr. Northmore to the Bench is concerned, I personally think it is a very good choice, and I congratulate the Government upon having made it. Reference is made, I observe, to the tramway system, and we are told that it has been operated by the Railway Department with satisfactory results for the year. I am sure that all members will join in hoping that those sanguine words will prove to be justified. I notice, further there is a statement made with regard to abattoirs at Fremantle. The Speech says—

Small abattoirs at North Fremantle, representing the first portion of what will ultimately be developed into large export works, have been opened . . . . I do not know that that phase of the question has yet come before the House. Naturally, there is no doubt that, whatever Ministry may be in power, the House will furnish whatever may be necessary to complete the work. The Speech mentions several other works to which I shall refer directly. With reference to harbours, it is stated—

Harbour improvements at Fremantle are being actively proceeded with. Schemes for the improvement of the harbours at Albany and Bunbury have been approved . . . . .

Only to-day I have received from one of my constituents a letter asking me to put certain questions in the House with regard to the Bunbury harbour works. It might be considered that such questions would more fittingly proceed from the hon. member who represents the town of Bunbury; but, as I have already explained to him, the questions are sent to me by one of the electors of the Murray-Wellington constituency, and I am asked to place them before the House. From the letter which I have received I gather that, although the visit of the Minister for Works to Bunbury gave satisfaction, certainly a very belated satisfaction, to the inhabitants of that enterprising town, the plans that were produced—if any were produced; I think they were only sketches—were of such a fugitive nature that there is now considerable perturbation

amongst those who at any rate think that they have a right to exercise some judgment in the matter; and those people desire that the plans in their fullest extent may be laid upon the Table of the House, and made available for examination and criticism.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Should not members have them?

Mr. GEORGE: Yes; I think it is only right members should have them. If my correspondent is correct in what he states, it appears that there was also a report produced, or some reports, by Mr. Ramsbotham, a gentleman of mature experience, and who can, with modesty, claim to be regarded as an expert upon that particular matter. We are told also that plans and reports have been prepared by Mr. Thompson, the present Engineer-in-Chief, and that there are in existence plans made by another officer of the Public Works Department which differ in a rather important degree from the plans to which I have previously referred. The people of Bunbury are desirous, and naturally desirous, of having their port placed in such a condition that any ship of reasonable tonnage may receive accommodation there. Bunbury is the outlet, the natural outlet, for the south-western district, and every one of us in the South-West is interested in the matter, and we all support the improvement of the harbour as far as we possibly can. I am sure that the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) will bear me out in saying that whatever anxiety there may be in regard to this matter is absolutely more of a practical character than in the nature of any desire to turn the question into one of party politics. The people of Bunbury know that their port deserves the fullest consideration; and while, according to the Minister for Works, a scheme of big dimensions is to be entered upon, they feel—and I think we can pardon them for that very natural feeling—that they would like at any rate to know the details of the enterprise upon which they are embarking before the department and the country are absolutely committed to it. Not that there is any desire in any shape or form to either stop

the works or check them. The only desire is that any feeling of doubt or of inquiry in this connection may be fully satisfied at the earliest possible moment. I have brought the matter forward, as I told the member for Bunbury, simply because it has been put before me by one of my constituents resident in my electorate. The other matters mentioned in the Speech are interesting, as the Speech prepared for His Excellency usually is interesting. We get a long list of things attempted, and of things some of them done and some of them not done. I presume, however, it is hardly necessary for me to go through the whole catalogue. My leader, the member for Sussex, in dealing with the Address-in-reply, gave to this Chamber—

Mr. Underwood: What about the chairman of the Country party?

Mr. GEORGE: Gave to this Chamber a speech carefully compiled, exhaustive, and full.

Mr. Underwood: He had three years to make it up.

Mr. GEORGE: My leader gave to this House and to this country figures which had been, as I say, carefully prepared, and which will repay the careful examination of any unbiassed person there may be in this State.

Mr. Underwood: The member for Caning (Mr. Lewis) gave figures, too.

Mr. GEORGE: So far as the hon. gentleman is concerned who speaks about three years for my friend the leader of the Opposition, I am exceedingly sorry, Mr. Speaker, that it does not lie in your power to give that hon. gentleman seven years without the option, and so keep him quiet. My friend the member for Sussex made the speech to which I refer—a speech which was expected from him not only by members of this House, but by the people of this country. Holding the position of leader of the Opposition, having been formerly Premier of this State, and, I hope and believe, being about soon to become Premier again—

The Premier: No hope.

Mr. GEORGE: He gave to this House the result of his experience and of his knowledge, and made a speech which was

deserving from his particular opponent, the present Premier of this State, of more than passing mention. I have examined the speech of the hon. the Premier. I believe it took something like three hours or three and a quarter hours to deliver.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is right.

Mr. GEORGE: Simply rendering that speech down by the painful process of first one riddle and then another, and then utilising a sieve of the finest mesh to catch anything there is in it, what do I find it contains? I find, first of all, it contains a most remarkable statement. My memory perhaps requires a little assistance, and if I make a mistake hon. members will no doubt correct me. The Premier said—

Is there a huge business in this State that has not had at some period or other to draw on capital for the purpose of bridging over some critical time? I doubt whether there are many members in this Chamber at the present time not working on an overdraft.

Mr. Thomas: That is, if we can get it.

The Premier: I admit that we cannot all get it, but I believe a majority—

Mr. Underwood: I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member in order in reading *Hansard*? I protest against it.

Mr. SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Mr. Underwood: That the member for Murray-Wellington was reading from *Hansard*.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member must not read from *Hansard* of this session.

Mr. GEORGE: I think I stated that my memory required a little refreshing, and I did not wish to misquote the Premier. But, at any rate, speaking now strictly from memory, although from a memory which has been refreshed, I say that the hon. the Premier stated that there was hardly a business concern in this State which at some period or other of its existence had not been compelled to draw upon its capital. That is perfectly right. The Premier made some remarks about overdrafts, but that is a question which hon. members can deal with them-

selves personally. What the Premier stated with regard to drawing on capital is perfectly true, but in his attempt to be smart the hon. gentleman failed to recognise the difference between the dealings of a private concern and those of a huge concern which belongs to the people, like the Treasury of this State. In a private concern, if a man has to draw upon his capital to tide him over the early days of starting business, he is responsible to whoever provides that capital. If it be his own money, he knows perfectly well what he is dealing with and he is careful over the expenditure of every cent. If it is money that he has borrowed, then the people who have lent it to him are careful to see that he does not go beyond the lines of careful and economical management. If it be money that he has received from his bank by way of an overdraft, then the bankers generally know how a man is conducting his business, and if he begins to step over the traces and become extravagant they very soon bring him to book. The Premier, in his desire for illustration, was very unfortunate in his analogy. He, as Treasurer of this State, draws upon what? The capital of the people, upon the money that he has wrenched out of the pockets of the people by taxation, upon the money he has fished out of the pockets of the people by unauthorised and unwarranted advance in the railway freights of this State. He draws upon cash which should have been held to assist the producers of this State in a proper manner, money which he has taken from them by raising the rates on produce. Take, for example, the fertiliser rates. I believe I am correct in saying that in New Zealand—I know it was so some few years ago, and I believe that it is so to-day—the fertilisers for the land were carried for nothing. In this State, during recent years, we were carrying fertilisers for one farthing per ton per mile. Now the rate for fertilisers has been raised to a higher sum, and that is looked upon as a business proposition. Let me tell the House that every penny that can be left in the hands of the farmer to apply in placing fertilisers on his land increases his yield, and therefore means more an

more increased weight for the railways to carry. The majority of the farmers of this State, even those in the older settled districts, are not in such a position that the difference of a few shillings per ton in the freight they have to pay on their fertilisers does not represent something material to them.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: What did you charge when you were there?

Mr. GEORGE: I am not in a position to tell the hon. member just now, but if he will refer to the rate book he will find out what it was. If he likes to go further than that, and exercise the privilege which hon. members on that side of the House have of gaining access to all the papers of the Railway Department, and of every other department, and if he will search the file, he will find the rate which I approved for the carriage of fertilisers; and I hope the hon. member will cease putting in silly, puerile interjections which have nothing whatever to do with the case as it stands to-day. Let me tell the hon. member that if I was as black as sin when I was Commissioner of Railways years ago—

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You are as white as snow now.

Mr. GEORGE: That has nothing to do with the needs of the present day, any more than the long frocks which the hon. member wore not so many years ago would be fitting for him at his present stage. If I had had to carry the hon. gentleman as fertiliser it would have been cheap indeed if I charged for him £1 per ton per mile. I would have dumped him before I carried him many miles. As I was saying, the Premier has forgotten the difference between the capital a man uses in his own business and the money raised and attempted to be raised by practically unauthorised additions to the railway freights of the State. The only other point the Premier put forward was that the leader of the Opposition had made a present to certain banks of something like £186,000. I thought that even the absurdity of the Premier would have gone far enough ere he made such a statement. Of course we know that when, as must happen occasionally, there is a

certain amount of money lying on hand in the Treasury in connection with loans, the Treasurer is not doing his duty unless he gets something for it. It is of no use having the sovereigns there if he can obtain from the banks even so low a rate of interest as one or two per cent. I will go so far with the Premier as to say that if the late Premier had had an opportunity of getting a higher rate of interest for the money left with these banks than he got from the banks he would have been failing in his duty had he not seized that opportunity.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Well, he did not.

Mr. GEORGE: It has yet to be proved that he had any such opportunity; that he did not avail himself of it is quite another matter. Since my return to the House I have made it my business to leave railway matters alone as much as I could, because I have no desire that the great institution over which I presided for five years and to which I gave such abilities and knowledge as nature endowed me with should be adversely criticised without good cause. But I and others have had occasion to complain of difficulty in obtaining any legitimate information from any of the departments since the present Government have been in power.

Mr. Lewis: Give us some evidence.

Mr. GEORGE: I would give you fourteen days if I had the chance. The other day I was asked by some delegates attending the Farmers and Settlers' Association meetings, and who are constituents and old friends of mine, to obtain for them the comparative rates of freights on fertilisers in the different States, a matter of about five minutes' work for the rates clerk in the Commissioner's office. I rang up for the Commissioner, but he was out. I then spoke to his secretary, and was by him put on to Mr. Hope, the rates clerk. I asked Mr. Hope if he would have the information ready, intimating that I would call at half-past two. I called, but I did not get the rates. Instead I got a letter, which I will read to the House.

Mr. Carpenter: You are not the Czar now.

Mr. GEORGE: No. This is the letter I received. Mind you, I was a member of this Chamber, asking for rates which any member of the public can go and get for himself.

The Attorney General: No, they cannot.

Mr. GEORGE: Yes they can.

The Attorney General: Not what you asked for.

Mr. GEORGE: Well, here is the letter—

With reference to your verbal application for information *re* rates on fertilisers in this and the other States, will you kindly apply to the Minister, as all such information must be supplied through him.

I thought we had a railway commissioner installed under the law of the land, free from political influence.

Mr. Bolton: That is why he would not give you the information.

Mr. GEORGE: And believing that to be the case I have never, since being a member of the House, sought to interview the Commissioner on any subject whatever. I have always placed my communications through the Minister, this being consistent with the policy I carried out when Commissioner of Railways. But I had the right to ask for these rates as this is not a question concerning the management of the Railways, but simply asking for information with regard to rates in this State and the other States, information which I have the right to ask for. But under the policy of hush carried on by the present Government I doubt whether any member of the Public Service in this State can call his soul his own, or whether, if he gave information like this he would not be sent out of the service.

Mr. Turvey: That information can be obtained from the rate books of each State.

Mr. GEORGE: Yes, but who has the rate books? Let the hon. gentleman be fair.

Mr. Underwood: The railway officers have them.

Mr. GEORGE: I asked the railway officers, and this is the refusal I got. The

rate books of the different States are not to be obtained in this State; and if they were, why should a member of the House have to go to all that trouble when we have a department which has the information at its fingers ends? If this is the way in which things are being conducted I think the people of the country will be able to judge, and that they will say that a Government which on a simple matter like this pursues a policy of hush, secrecy, and hide, are not fitted for their positions.

Mr. Bolton: A child could have got the information.

Mr. GEORGE: I see by His Excellency's Speech that the Irrigation Bill is to be introduced again. I am glad that is so, and I am looking forward to seeing a copy of the Bill, because I believe there will be found included important alterations as compared with the Bill of last session.

Mr. Thomas: I do not think so.

Mr. GEORGE: I believe there will be some alterations. If there be not, then the Minister for Works has not learned his lesson as well as he was supposed to have learned it at the conference held at Bunbury, and during his recent visit to Harvey. The member for Canning (Mr. Lewis) read an extract from some New Zealand book in which the question of irrigation was discussed. Of course, reading an extract like that at the pace one has to go in this Chamber, hardly gives members an opportunity to grasp the whole of it, but as far as I gathered there seemed to be very little in it but what I and others would be prepared to assent to. The hon. member read one point about compensation in the case of injury. Let him turn up the Irrigation Bill we had last session and see what provision was made for compensation in case of injury. Let us for a moment or two consider this subject of irrigation. How did the Harvey irrigation scheme start? Not with the gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches to-day. On coming into power they found the whole scheme in the pigeonholes of the previous Government.

Mr. Turvey: Together with a lot of other things.

Mr. GEORGE: I am sorry the hon. member is not in a pigeonhole too, because he would adorn it. At the request of the Harvey people I brought this question under the notice of the Moore Ministry and of the Wilson Ministry, and I am satisfied that had the Wilson Ministry continued in power the scheme would have been working two years ago. Although the present Government, and the Minister for Works in particular, have certainly worked on it, they have been on wrong lines, and have endeavoured to sandwich into the scheme the theoretical principles which belong peculiarly to the party to which they are attached. The people of Harvey did not desire any charity. The first proposition was, that not being able themselves to find the funds, if the Government would find the money the Harvey people would be prepared to give security for the money so raised and buy the scheme back so as to have it for themselves. They are prepared to do the same thing to-day, and would thank the Government to complete the scheme and let them take it over. We know perfectly well that the ideas both of the Minister for Works and of Mr. Oldham have undergone considerable change since the scheme was first proposed. At first it was to be an open channel, but now the engineer and the Minister also are debating whether those who advocated the pipe scheme were not right after all, and whether the pipe scheme should not be carried out. However, I am glad the Bill is to come forward again, and if it contains, as I hope it will, provisions that are fair all round, then I trust Parliament will not separate before the Bill passes through all stages in both Chambers. Down in that South-Western district there are several matters which have been brought under the notice of the Works department in connection with bridges destroyed by fire and which it is necessary should be replaced. For some reason or other it has been found impossible to do this, although the absence of the bridges has practically

marooned a number of old settlers in that district and rendered them unable to get to their properties. Something has been said in regard to State enterprises. I think it was attempted by the Premier to saddle upon my leader that he had made some charge of incompetency against Mr. Davies, the manager of the State implement works. I know the leader of the Opposition has given his refutation of that, but I would like to add that I have only met Mr. Davies once, when travelling in the train, and he impressed me as a capable, energetic man, with a knowledge from A to Z of his own profession. I should be very much surprised if he did not turn out to be a complete success.

Mr. Munsie: You are not opposed to that State enterprise then?

Mr. GEORGE: Do not put words into my mouth; I am trying to do an act of justice to Mr. Davies.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: A very good man, too.

Mr. GEORGE: Perhaps my word will carry a little more weight than the hon. gentleman's. I hope it will. It is very difficult indeed to make any statement in regard to these implement works which is not capable of being twisted into an attack upon the management. I have no desire in what I am about to say to attack Mr. Davies in any way. Indeed it would be unfair and unjust if I did. I know what hampering conditions are imposed upon anyone trying to manage a State concern under political supervision. I am told that this department is not merely manufacturing State implements. I am told, I know not how true it may be, that they are purchasing largely implements not only from the United States but from other countries and are re-painting these implements and, of course, putting the State brand upon them. If that is so—

Mr. Bolton: Why do you say such a silly thing?

Mr. GEORGE: If that is so, what does it argue? It simply argues that the Government are turning a manufacturing concern into a "merchandising" concern for which, so far as I am aware, this House has given no warrant whatever.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They are making machines.

Mr. GEORGE: If there are 600 men employed down there more power to them, provided they give to the State as good a day's work as they would have to give to a private employer; that they are working under the same conditions as they would have to work for a private employer; that they are getting properly paid, and that their conveniences for work are properly placed before them; then no doubt they will go on as long as the policy of State implement works continues. In connection with this it would be interesting—and with this I will deal with other trading concerns—if we could have a proper balance sheet laid before us. The Act which was passed in connection with the keeping of accounts relating to Government concerns I believe provided for the keeping of proper and complete accounts. The Minister was to cause books to be provided and kept, and true and regular accounts to be kept of all moneys received, and also there had to be shown all the assets and liabilities. The Bill certainly appeared to members on this side of the House to be intended to let the people of the State know what was being done in regard to the various trading concerns. We have no balance sheet with regard to the State steamers. We have had to wait for this. We have a belated balance sheet from the Premier covered by a minute by the Auditor General dated the 30th June last.

Mr. Underwood: You know that is not correct.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member is very incorrect. This statement by the Auditor General ought never to have been rendered necessary, and he ought not to have had to make the statement he has made. He says that "the form of submitting accounts has not been commented upon, as in the absence of any specific direction in the Act, it is considered that the matter is one for the Minister to decide; and that it is for him to interpret the meaning of "full-balance sheet, *vide* Section 19." Section 19 states that the Minister shall in every year cause a true balance-sheet of assets and liabilities of

each trading concern, together with the profit and loss account entered and such other statements as may be necessary, to be compiled from the books and submitted to the Auditor General for audit. But then, what is placed before us? We have here a statement, certainly of liabilities and assets. We have certainly what purports to be a profit and loss account, but the statement that is lacking from this account, the statement which would have to be produced under the Companies Act by any limited Company in this State, or anywhere in Australia, is a true account to show the expenditure in the business which is being carried on. There is nothing in the balance sheet to show hon. members the facts with regard to the State steamers. We know not whether one of them is making a profit, or whether one of them is making a loss. There is nothing to show whether there has been a loss or a gain, or whether one steamer is responsible for the great bulk of it and others the small portion of it. There is nothing of the kind except what the Auditor General says in regard to certain expenses and in regard to certain losses. If the Minister is to be the judge of what are to be the trading accounts submitted to the House, I suggest, with all due deference, that the sooner the Bill is repealed and matters are left entirely in the hands of the Minister without any check upon him, the better it will be for the State. I am sorry the Colonial Treasurer is not present tonight, because I know that he has been making gigantic efforts to reduce the deficit which was shown on the 30th June. I wanted to receive from him some little meed of praise and appreciation owing to the fact that I am one who has, certainly in a small way, enabled him to reduce his deficit, but none the less with solid sovereigns. There was a sale held down at Fremantle some few weeks ago of material, I believe, out of one of the State steamers, the *Western Australia*, the fire eater, and to show to what straits the Treasurer must have been forced in his desire to reduce his deficit, there was sold some ten or twelve tons weight of fittings which had been very expensively



constructed in the old country, to be used for shifting bullocks from one part of this continent of Australia to another part. Some of the fittings were of a most elaborate forging and casting, and upon which even the bloom of the iron still existed, and these fittings were put up by auction, and sold. The fittings, which must have cost the State close upon £250 or £300—I do not think they could have been obtained for very much less—were sold for the sake of providing £5 or £6 to the Treasurer to reduce his deficit. There were some other things sold also, namely, a quantity of new fire bars, for the same vessel. There was only a little rust on them, but they were sold for less than the price of pig iron. Having some knowledge of the iron industry, I know the value of these bars, and I say that they were sold for less than the cost of pig iron. One would have thought that the Treasurer, if he had been of a business turn of mind, would have endeavoured to see if there were not some implement works which could have made use of this material. But no, the deficit must be brought down at any cost, and this material which cost the State hundreds of pounds was sold for a few bawbees to enable the Treasurer to bring down his half a million deficit to just under that amount. There is another item I would like to speak about. I am sorry Mr. McLeod is not present. The other evening when the hon. member was speaking he made an error that any young member might have made, and I interjected for the purpose of giving him an opportunity of correcting what was an obvious error. I regret that the matter has been taken up in the newspapers.

Mr. Munsie: You have nothing to be sorry for, it is a good advertisement.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They were short of material to use against us.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not require any material of that sort. I can find plenty for myself. I only wished to explain to Mr. McLeod that I interjected in order to give the hon. member an opportunity of correcting what was an obvious error.

While we were speaking about State brick works some of the hon. members waxed very merry at my expense. It was said that the State brickworks at the top end of my electorate, the Roeland's quarry at the southern end, and the Harvey irrigation works in the middle would give them some 300 to 500 votes, that that would be the end of W. J. George and to the encumbrance which had been there so many years. I only mention it in this way, because it is one of the greatest compliments that has ever been paid to me. I am not worrying.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you think they regard this as of much importance?

Mr. GEORGE: I take it on the statement of the hon. member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) and of the Premier.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We have 15 members to spare.

Mr. GEORGE: Yes, and the Government can spare twenty without any loss.

Mr. O'Loughlen: That will be proved during the next few months.

Mr. GEORGE: I mention this, because we have—

Mr. Thomas: Do you positively assert this?

Mr. GEORGE: I think I should qualify it, and say that it was stated in the *Bunbury Herald* that Mr. Thomas had made the remark that when the State brickworks were put up at Beenup, he was looking forward to Mr. George having a very happy time at the next election.

Mr. Thomas: Oh, that is a correct version.

Mr. GEORGE: We heard at the last election, and have heard since, a good deal about the gerrymandering of the hon. leader of the Opposition and the Re-distribution of Seats.

Mr. Bolton: It was a champion.

Mr. GEORGE: I admit, with regard to one of the plans that was projected, that it looked more like a drunken spider crawling over a sheet of paper than anything else. If this business of placing these people in my electorate is done for the purpose of turning me out, what sort of a name have they got for it, Sir? The curious part of it is that I myself brought this locality under notice of the Govern-

ment, and you will find it on the Public Works file that I suggested that Beenup was a suitable place for the establishment of State Brick Works.

The Attorney General: Of course, that is why it was adopted.

Mr. GEORGE: I have no one else to thank for it.

Mr. McDowall: What are you growling about?

Mr. GEORGE: I am not. We have heard something with regard to State sawmills. I think it is a matter for general congratulation that at least some finality has been arrived at. It is to be regretted that the State does not supply the whole of the sleepers on account of the huge expenditure which has been incurred. All I can say in connection with it at the present time, is that the Government have the power, they have the materials there, have constructed the mills. Let them buck in now and show what sort of a success they can make of the undertaking to supply these sleepers, and if they are successful I shall be one of the first to congratulate them.

Member: You are still on the rails.

Mr. GEORGE: No, I am speaking for Western Australia, irrespective of Parliament. Certainly the Government have taken a strange action in connection with the hewers' licenses. I do think they have been rather harsh in connection with that.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Scandalous.

Mr. GEORGE: The statement given as emanating from the Premier, is that the Government have decided from the 31st July that no licenses will be issued to hewers to cut sleepers on Crown Lands except for the Government. They are probably within their rights in doing that, seeing that they have gone in for trading concerns, but there are something like two or three thousand hewers in the State.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Stretch it a bit more.

Mr. GEORGE: What number do you say?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Not over 2,000.

Mr. GEORGE: Very well, say 2,000. I daresay that is correct. It is inconceivable to suppose that the Government can have sufficient orders in hand to be able to keep that number of men going. These 2,000 hewers will turn out some

16,000 or 18,000 sleepers per day, and if they are in good forest they will probably be able to turn out 20,000 a day or something like 120,000 sleepers per week. The Government have not got their trading organisation so well established as to be able to deal with the markets of the world, and they are practically going to say to these hewers that they will have to stop work unless they can find work to do on private land. I can understand the Government saying this, if they feel that people who have private lands on which they can cut sleepers are saving that timber, and are in the meantime cutting all they can from their Crown leasehold lands.

Mr. Bolton: That is the position.

Mr. GEORGE: But to go and stop such a great body of men from working except under special conditions requires very careful consideration on the part of the Government.

Mr. Thomas: They may have some land in the Murray-Wellington electorate that they want to put them on.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not know whether they have or not—even if they have some timber lying in the hon. gentleman's head—and it is big enough for it. In this matter the Government may be waiting to see the result of the tender for 500,000 sleepers for the Federal Government, but whether that be so or not, I do not think it is right for any Government, when entering into trading concerns, to take an undue advantage of those who are taxpayers. There is another matter I want to refer to, and it is the Arbitration Act. When the measure was before us I think it was the general opinion of the House—I know it was the opinion of the Attorney General—that we would have an arbitration measure passed which would practically cure all troubles. There was hardly a contingency likely to arise which this Bill would not meet. The Attorney General will remember I stated then that I welcomed the idea that anything which would bring the parties to grips at once was far better than dragging on a matter for an indefinite time, and we thought that the Bill would carry this out. Apparently it has not done so. It has not fulfilled what was our desire, and what

this House fondly hoped would be the case, but I think that it is almost time for the Government and for the House to consider whether the Arbitration Act can be amended to meet the industrial conditions of this State, or whether it had better be abandoned. When we find there are leaders of the men who have been reported in the Press as having stated—and supported, I think, by men of authority who, in my opinion, ought to know better—that the right to strike should not be abandoned—if that idea is held, then we may just as well do away with the Act and let the matter go back to the old state in which we found it, and which would be deplorable and disastrous for the country.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Do you not think that if the Act stopped one strike it would be a good thing?

Mr. GEORGE: Of course it would be a good thing, but when arbitration was first introduced into this Assembly years ago, before the hon. member came into the House, it was fondly hoped by all that it would be a means by which strikes and industrial disputes would be settled and dealt with.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It has proved so.

Mr. GEORGE: And the Attorney General said of the Act which is now in existence—and I think at the time he must have taken a pride in it—that it would be the best Act in the world, but it has not succeeded in carrying out the objects which it was hoped it would do.

The Attorney General: You know it was not passed as it was introduced in this Chamber.

Mr. GEORGE: I am not aware whether the alterations which were made were conducive to the troubles which have happened, but for all that the situation is too serious to be tinkered with. The Government should see their way to bring in a Bill which will meet these different questions, and do away with the silly squabbles such as we have had lately in the Police and Arbitration Courts, and provide that wherever there may be industrial disputes the parties may come together quickly. In this respect the Arbitration Act has failed sadly.

The Attorney General: There is something in the administration, even by the judge.

Mr. GEORGE: I know the hon. gentleman cannot restrain the erratic views of either judges or members of Parliament, or even Ministers. At any rate there is this to be said: So far as the gentleman who has had to interpret the Act (Mr. Justice Burnside), not once or twice, but dozens of times, is concerned, that gentleman has pointed out where the Arbitration Act is lacking in clearness and where it is almost impossible of interpretation.

The Attorney General: And sometimes stupidly he has done so.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. gentleman being a legal practitioner is better able to judge than I am. All I am desirous of is that we shall have an Act which even perhaps a stupid judge, if we had one, which we have not, could not make a mistake over, an Act which will ensure industrial peace. There is another matter I want to speak about to the Attorney General, and that is in regard to the Criminal Code. I think that if the millenium has to come along in the way in which the Premier makes out, then the same number of policemen will not be required, and the same number of warders will not be needed to guard the Fremantle gaol, which will probably be turned into a dairy farm. But however far the Attorney General's feelings of compassion and of mercy go, there is one class of crime that at any rate I cannot forgive, even though I may be stigmatised as a brute. The hon. gentleman has, I understand, lately released one of those inhuman monsters who disfigure the earth and would be a disgrace to hell itself. This man, who despoiled the body of a child and polluted her mind, was sent to gaol, and after serving a very short period of his sentence, was released to pursue his evil practices. The Attorney General knows as we all know, that men of that type are practically maniacs, and although it may be desirable, from a merciful or compassionate point of view, to take such a type away from gaol, the least that could have been done would have been to confine him perhaps under happier

surroundings. There is no crime in the whole of the Code or in the Decalogue which can be compared with the defilement of a child in the way that this and other men have done, and there is no crime that at the hands of men calls for stronger condemnation, or, if necessary, taking the law into one's own hands. I think if any hon. gentleman found that a child of his or of a friend of his, had been tampered with or defiled by an inhuman brute, he would have found it difficult to restrain himself from inflicting corporeal punishment, or perhaps even ending at once the career of the individual. There are countries in the world where brutes of this description would be settled with at once. I have no desire to harrow hon. member's feelings. The Attorney General may have acted from what he thinks is a conscientious point of view, but what about consideration for the parents of the child? What about the child herself? It is all very well to have these compassionate feelings for the criminal, and so forth, but we look to the Attorney General and we look to the courts of law to protect the people from such criminals; and to let out of prison a man of this character, I think is one of the biggest blots that I know of in connection with the government of this country. My feelings are very strong on this point, and if I went further I do not know that I could restrain my language. I know of a case which occurred only a few years ago, a case of a young girl who was a playmate of one of my own children, who was assaulted and killed. What about the parents of that child? Let the Attorney General picture to himself what might have happened if the child had been his! What would I have done? What would any man have done but take the action which his nature dictated. The Attorney General no doubt will have an excuse to make. I pity him for the position he is in. I am satisfied that he knows he has made a mistake, and if any more cases of this sort occur in the State the plea will have to be made on behalf of those to whom the children belong, that they, at any rate, should receive mercy for carrying out the duty that

might be expected a parent would carry out in defence of his children.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. T. Walker): I do not know that I need pursue the hon. member in regard to anything but two matters. One is his reference to the Arbitration Act, which will not detain me long. I have so repeatedly, to use a vulgarism, had it slung at me, and at the Government, that I have uttered the expression that the Arbitration Act in this State is the best in the world, that I am absolutely tired of hearing it. I have not heard it alone from the hon. member, but other members of the community, and even a judge of the Supreme Court, whose duty it should be to respect legislation passed by this and the other Chamber, should not take every occasion open to him to belittle it and to sneer at it. It is becoming too common in some quarters for those in that other branch of the executive functions of Government, to sneer at what is done in this high tribunal of Parliament. If I were anxious to make an excuse for the imperfections of that measure—and there are imperfections and I have never denied them and never sought to conceal them—if I were to make an excuse at all, it would be that this Chamber is not the sole supreme arbitrator as to what shall become law. There is another place that deals with legislation, and very often what is introduced in this Chamber in a more or less perfected state, even before it leaves this Chamber, it is mutilated in some respects by amendments or intended amendments proposed or passed. And when it goes to another Chamber, possibly the very vitals of the measure are torn from it, and we have to take the remnants if we desire that it shall become law, and pass it in that form. That is precisely what happened in regard to the Arbitration Act. I distinctly aver that had the measure passed as it was introduced by way of a Bill into this Chamber, the trouble we have recently had in the building trade, if the law had been obeyed, would have been impossible. Provision was made, as the measure was introduced, to meet the very case that has cropped

up so recently, and if I may be permitted to say it, if the Act had passed, not as it stands, and had been properly obeyed, properly carried out, and properly interpreted, there would not have been that trouble we have seen in the late strikes and lockouts. I will say no more about arbitration because there is one matter *sub judice* and I do not want to enter upon the merits of it. But perhaps I will be pardoned for saying that the views in law which I have taken in the matter in the conflicts with Mr. Justice Burnside are not my own alone. I have the authority and testimony which if matters were not *sub judice* would set that fact beyond doubt. I have the opinions of King's Counsellors in this State, and whoever attempts to belittle them from a view expressed in one of our courts recently has to belittle some of the highest and most eminent of our legal fraternity. Now I come to the accusation of having committed the worst form of maladministration of my office which has ever taken place in this State. I regret that the hon. member did not give me some intimation that he intended to speak on this matter inasmuch as there is no reference in the Governor's Speech to anything covering it, and it seems to be a spontaneous, I will not say gratuitous attack upon me, but an attack which disarms me to this extent, that I have not the papers with me and therefore what I have to say is to be entirely trusted to memory. Let hon. members take their minds back to a few years ago when the measure was passed under which the prisoner Bennett received his sentence. I remember well the attitude that was then taken by the hon. member for Murray-Wellington. He was as passionate and inflamed at that time as he was to-night. I do not wish to deride or sneer at these feelings exhibited by the hon. member; I respect them. I would regard it as moral obliquity of the most lamentable character for any human being to be so devoid of moral instincts as not to shudder at the perpetration of villainous crimes on little children. I have every respect for them, but I want to point out that at the time this legisla-

tion was passed there was almost a panic because there had been a general delinquency in this respect. These offences at that time were becoming numerous, and it happened that Bennett was the very first one who was brought up for sentence under the new Act passed in this hysterical mood, and he received, I will not say deservedly or undeservedly, the full penalty with comments from the judicial bench which exhibited the common state of hysteria, if I may use the expression, that was then obtaining in the public mind, and which naturally brought about a state of excitement that was the outcome of the prevalence of these offences. More than three years have passed since that sentence was imposed. The calm in the public is observable, and offences are not so rampant now, though still too common. But I had to look at all the circumstances when I came to view this man's position. I had not been in my chair for more than six months before petitions came in praying for his release; I refused them. Other petitions came later and I refused them, and it was only the other day that I acceded. But from the first and in each instance I was not to rouse up my feelings and look at the individual's case through the atmosphere of hysteria or excitement. I had to look at it calmly, and ask "What was the man"? Naturally, looking at him, I was to look at any possible contributing causes, and I found that this man was habituated to drink, that it was in his drunken degradation and debauchery that this low state of moral depravity was sounded.

Mr. George: It was early in the day, about ten o'clock in the morning, was it not?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He was drunk, or was suffering from the effects of drink. If the hon. member knows anything of the effects of drink on a nervous system he knows that there is no more hellish condition than in the delirium which occurs after a long course in the indulgence in drink. But there was more. The man had received an injury to his head which had caused in him, in the opinion of at least one doctor, a state of insanity.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Then he ought to be put in the asylum.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Dr. Ferguson Stewart stated that the man was not sane; and very probably he was not.

Mr. George: Then why not put him in the asylum?

Hon. Frank Wilson: Yes, lock him up.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He was sent to gaol from the court. I found him in gaol, and I could not take him out unless I released him. If he was insane when he committed that offence, supposing the offence was a product of insanity, and the hon. member admitted in his utterance that it was a maniacal crime, such crimes can only be committed by absolute maniacs, for it is nothing short of madness to pollute youth and innocence.

Mr. George: That is right.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If he was mad when he did it, and was sent to gaol in consequence of that madness, because the madness is not regarded as such but as a crime, and for three years he has been in gaol and it is thought that that madness is not now on him, what then?

Mr. George: You take a chance with other children.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Would the hon. member kill the man?

Mr. George: By heaven I think I would!

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Would the hon. member have him put to death?

Mr. George: If I caught him at it I would, and you would too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know what I would do if I caught a man committing such an act. Let the hon. member not show any signs of insanity now. At such a time it is possible that none of us would reason calmly or take sane measures. Calm deliberation would be impossible under such circumstances. Possibly we would commit deeds which in after life we would regret. Three years have passed and are we going to for ever show vindictiveness? Is there to be everlasting flogging for this moral degradation?

Mr. George: You hang a man if he commits a murder, and this man murders a child's soul.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Not in every instance do we hang a man who commits a murder. The hon. member says this man has murdered a child's soul.

Mr. George: Yes, and polluted her body and ruined her mind.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know that any mind is so ruined that it cannot ultimately reach the highest possible altitude of purity.

Mr. George: You are more charitable than I am.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I did not do it on the ground of charity, or on the wide ground of humanity only by way of sentiment. In this matter I acted deliberately. I had to ask the question "Shall I do this man any good? Having been three years in gaol, shall I do him one iota of good if I keep him there longer?"

Mr. Male: That is not the point.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: "Shall I make him a better man, shall I exalt his character, shall I recover him from that mania—that madness—which the hon. member admits he must have been suffering from?"

Mr. George: Have you got him under surveillance now?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: "Shall I do him any good?" How is the hon. member to make himself the supreme judge in things like this? The hon. member has had trainings in his youth which perhaps I cannot claim. Is he yet opposed to those views that we associate with theology which I may have departed from? But there are old readings and old teachings that, however I may stand as to my attitude with regard to the teachings of the creeds, I still venerate, respect and cherish, and one of those old sayings and writings is "Charity never faileth." I remember the case that was illustrated in one of those old books. It was of a woman caught in the very act of degeneracy and adultery. There was the accusation of those about who had the spirit so well exhibited by some of our would-be claimants for law

and order. "Stone her to death," they cried and He who has been the Teacher for nineteen centuries since then answered—"Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." Deep in my breast as in every breast that loves human progress is this feeling. When upon the Opposition side or upon any other side of the House—and I exonerate the Opposition from sharing all the feelings expressed by the hon. member—there are those without sin, let them cast stones at a brute fallen, degraded, debased and mad though he is—cast the stones at him. Who created my friends the judge of that man's soul?

Mr. Elliott: The women will have something to say to you later on.

Mr. George: What about the child? That is the thing. This theatrical business is nothing.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am not apologising for the wrong done to the child. If the hon. member in a fit of delirium, if the member for Murray-Welington as the result of disease which gripped his brain, should be so irresponsible that in the mad fury of his fever he wronged a babe, a child, a girl—

Mr. George: Then kill me straight out; that is the best thing.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I would cure him if I could. I know it takes some little moral courage to speak in favour of a fellow-creature in the presence of those who would stone him.

Mr. George: What about the child?

Hon. Frank Wilson: What about the risk?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Have I not done something to avoid risk?

Mr. George: Tell us what you have done.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I have had these people who are calling out now for vengeance in this case, when it has been some other individual, not perhaps for the same offence but for some crime. I have had them come into my office to see me and plead for mercy for their friends. This man was friendless, a drunken man, a diseased man—I say, a diseased man—and I am asked to show the most criminal resentment, to

adopt the inhuman, barbarous treatment of a savage to one who, whatever he has done wrong in his madness, is still a human being.

Mr. Elliott: You turned him loose on society.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I did not turn him loose on society.

Mr. Elliott: You did.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: What is society's duty? It is that kind of spirit, that kind of inhuman condemnation of the weakness of others—

Hon. Frank Wilson: Yes; but your duty is to protect society and children.

Mr. Elliott: You have let him loose.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am protecting society, and this is really the only way. I say it is that kind of barbarity, that kind of savagery—

Member: You should obey the law.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That brings moral disease to our fellow creatures, that unsocialises them, that makes them brutes. That is what has caused so much of the crime and the vice and the disease that is in the world. I know that it is a most difficult task to defend anyone who is guilty of a sexual irregularity. It is the one subject in the world that neither men nor women can speak rationally on throughout.

Mr. George: Quite right.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is the one subject that calmness cannot approach. We are everlastingly raising emotion, the moment we touch sexual matters. I have to dissociate myself from that. I have to look upon the person I deal with purely as if he were a corpse, as far as I am concerned. I am to have no feelings. Now, have I taken no care for society in this respect?

Mr. Broun: How do you know but what he will commit a similar offence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: How do I know the hon. member will not commit the same offence before to-morrow? I do not know it.

Mr. Broun: Certainly not.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You do know it; you know he will not.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I know that if he keeps his moral senses he will

not, but who can predict what mad fever may cause—

Mr. George: Have you taken any precautions? If you have, what are they?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Have I taken any precautions?

Mr. Elliott: The women will talk to you.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The women will speak to me? If the women know—

Mr. Elliott: And the men too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: And the men, of course. The women will talk to me, I am told. If the women know what I am endeavouring to do, if the women knew that in the exercise of human love to my fellows—I admit, in spite of that forced exaggeration of the hon. member, that I have some regard for my fellow creatures, even for the hon. member, who needs it. I have it for all my fellow creatures; and I care not how degraded the man is, I recognise he is in the image in which I am made—one of the human family. If I am to be true to the teaching that puts me on this side of the House, instead of that side of the House, I am bound to recognise the oneness of humanity. It is that feeling—I know it is sneered at—of love for one's fellows that has enabled me to be the friend of woman, as of man, in the very act I have committed in this case.

Hon. Frank Wilson: But what about being a friend to the child?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I will embrace that child too. Can I undo that wrong?

Hon. Frank Wilson: No, but you can stop it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am going to stop it; but the throwing of stones does not stop it. If the throwing of stones would undo that crime, I would throw stones till my arms were exhausted, but that is not the way in which these things are stopped.

Mr. George: I am afraid most people think so.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: You have to go down deeper. You have to breed a healthy humanity and conserve the conditions of healthy life. Then

there will be no crime of that kind. Maintain the conditions that make a society produce moral fever and disease, and you will have these crimes as thick as ever they have been known to be.

Mr. George: Was not this man in a fairly good position? He had no distress or poverty to cause him to fall?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Was not that man's brain injured, and was he not drinking? Is that a healthy condition of society? Men have committed crimes in drink, and in the delirium after drink, that they have not even remembered the next day, even though the crimes were of the most revolting and disgusting character.

Mr. George: You have given this country the biggest shock it has ever had.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Then it is time this country learned to act humanely. I am asked what I have done. For nearly three years I have been investigating this man's case. I have been making all the inquiries I possibly could, and I have been assisted in those inquiries by Major Head of the Salvation Army. Now, no one is going in my presence to sneer at Major Head.

Mr. George: Nor in mine either.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Major Head, I know from my personal intercourse with him, is doing more genuine good and exercising more of what I believe to be the true spirit of Christianity than any other leader of religion in this State.

Mr. George: He is a good man, anyhow.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: He is a good man, and he is a good man without seeking the limelight—

Mr. George: That is right, too.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Without seeking any honour or applause or glory of any kind. He gets no thanks, but kicks and jeers, for much of the good that he does. That I know of my own knowledge. Major Head interviewed me, saw the man, inquired into the man's history, and in every possible way made himself convinced that this man was safe to be trusted, that his lesson had been learned, and that he would go out into



the world fit to be trusted. I would believe Major Head before I would believe many other men in this respect. But even then it was not desirable that the man should be let loose upon the world without any care, without any sponsor to look after him or take him in charge. It would perhaps be unwise—in my opinion it would decidedly be unwise—to let him loose amongst his old associations, amongst his old companions, amongst old sources of suggestion. Major Head visited Melbourne and saw there the leader of the Salvation Army, Colonel Hoskyns. Colonel Hoskyns undertook, if the man were released, to find him work and keep him under sufficient supervision and in charge. In order that the matter might be so arranged, that there should be no escape from that course, it was decided that the man should leave the gaol on the day that the boat was sailing, that Major Head should supervise his stepping on board, and that Colonel Hoskyns should meet the man on the arrival of the steamer in Melbourne.

Mr. George: The man was willing, I suppose?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Naturally he was.

Mr. Elliott: Do you call that a friendly action to Victoria, to turn loose such a criminal on that State?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: This horrible hate of a human creature should not exist. I am there to do justice, and I do justice. But justice is not vengeance. Justice is not savagery.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Was not this the man's second offence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Not his second offence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No.

Hon. Frank Wilson. His only offence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes.

Mr. George: Was that the only offence he committed?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am speaking on the papers I was dealing with.

Mr. George: I think you will find he had been at that game before.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If it were so, then I say distinctly that the lunatic asylum, and not the gaol, was the place for the man, and that if the man continues to be mad he will find his way into the lunatic asylum ultimately. However, I have hopes that moral strength will come back to him, and that he may yet be able to redeem the past.

Mr. George: I hope he will keep out of Western Australian, anyhow.

Mr. Elliott: You turned him loose on Victoria.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Ah, these dogs! How they howl and bark! How they sniff for blood! Are we human beings at all? Let us be manly! There are times and hours in every man's life when he does that for which he has to feel shame and regret, and if all the world poured out its venom upon him for one committing of secret or discovered offence at the moment of the commission how many would survive to look the world in the face?

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is not the point at all.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: That is the point. I ask the leader of the Opposition does he believe in creating and pursuing vengeance for ever?

Hon. Frank Wilson: No; but I believe in keeping a man of that sort in restraint, so that he will not injure others.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: But does the hon. member know that the man is not safe to be trusted amongst others? Are there not men who have committed offences and afterwards become good citizens?

Hon. Frank Wilson: For a revolting offence of that sort I would keep him in gaol.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Is it to be thought that because a man does a revolting action he is to be given no chance in life ever after? Is that the argument of hon. members?

Mr. Elliott: Our argument is that you should carry out the sentence of the law.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do carry out the sentence of the law. The sentence of the law is carried out, be-

'cause the man is lawfully released. He is lawfully released.

Mr. George: I am sorry it was in your power to release him, anyhow.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: I thank goodness for this, I am proud of this, that the worst, the most virulent accusation which has been brought against me in this House relates to an act of human charity.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Charity!

Mr. George: You are mistaken.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The greatest charge my enemies have levelled against me from that side of the House so far is the exercise of a more enlightened humanity. I will stand by it. None of these intimidations shall make me stop. Unless I am removed from office I shall continue to act as I have done, where I think the facts warrant it and I am safe to the extent that I am sure, on investigation, the public are adequately protected, I shall continue in this course. And if the Labour Government stand by me, and my colleagues support me in this, and we go on through this and the next term, when we are all passed away and dust history will write this fact, that with the growth of the Labour party simultaneous was the growth of the spirit of humanity towards the unfortunate of whatsoever class.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want to ask the Minister a question, which I intended to ask him previously. I understand he was using a quotation when he made the reference he did to dogs barking.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Quite so, I was.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member did not apply it to the member for Geraldton.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Of course not; I was merely using the quotation.

Hon. Frank Wilson: But you did apply it in a personal sense.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope you did not apply it to the leader of the Opposition.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: No, certainly not, not in a personal sense.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I think you ought to withdraw.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the hon. member takes it as being personal, I most willingly withdraw.

[*The Deputy Speaker (Mr. McDowall) took the Chair.*]

Mr. THOMAS (Bunbury): I feel that one needs some measure of moral courage to continue the debate after listening to the Attorney General. It is not very often that the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) gives rise to anything of very great interest in the House, but I must say that on this occasion his reference to a certain event has enabled us to enjoy the outburst of eloquence which we have listened to from the Attorney General. There is not the slightest doubt that, on grounds of the highest humanitarianism, that hon. gentleman has justified the attitude which he has assumed. I have been contemplating for the last two or three days the wisdom, or otherwise, the advantages or disadvantages, that attach to the Address-in-Reply in general. No matter what conclusion I eventually came to I have found the temptation to enjoy the freedom of speech that applies to this particular institution more than I could resist; because it is just possible that this may be the last occasion, for at least some of us, which we may have for indulging the full and free discussion which this institution provides on the floor of the Chamber. Some members may be ungenerous enough to say that coming events cast their shadows before. Possibly that may be so in my own case, but fortunately I do not think so; because, no matter how convinced we may be that at least some members of the Chamber will be taken and others left, we each individually hug to our own souls the fond, if in some cases delusive, conviction that we at least, when the elections are over, will not be numbered among the political dead; that is, that we will not be cast permanently on the scrap heap of political oblivion. I desire to sincerely congratulate the Premier upon the very

excellent address he delivered in the Chamber last week. I have had the pleasure many times of hearing that hon. gentleman rise to the occasion, but I do not think he has ever previously done so much credit to himself and to the party to which he belongs as he did in his last reply to the leader of the Opposition. When the Premier was dealing with the charges made by his great opponent, one by one he effectively and clearly laid them at rest; and when he dealt with the aspirations of the Labour movement, and pointed to some of the heights to which this democratic march can reach, I felt a new inspiration and a new zest for the fight. I never realised before that the Premier possessed so much imagination, and, as he painted the picture with the roseate hues of his fancy, I could see the vision beautiful. There is not the slightest doubt he did absolute credit to all concerned on that occasion. It seems to me that in politics nowadays, or during my brief experience, there is a lack of appreciation, a lack of that generous response, or appreciation of ability displayed by an opponent; for it seems to me the Premier on that occasion made a speech which should have at least received some commendation from those opposed to him in politics; and yet we heard the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) to-night say that, summed up, there was nothing in the speech. It ill-becomes the verbose member for Murray-Wellington to lay such a charge as that at the door of the Premier. When sitting here the other evening I heard the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) complaining that he had not always received the courteous treatment in this Chamber which he considered he was entitled to; and after a few interjections I heard that hon. gentleman make this statement: "The Premier has not a spark of honesty in his composition, and does not know what honesty means." I took down the words at the time. It is regrettable that a member occupying the responsible position which the member for Northam does should take advantage of his seat in this House to make such an unjust and ungenerous statement as that. Surely the

bitterness of disappointed ambition could find some other salve for its political wounds than to break out into such an exhibition of bitter and spiteful jealousy. I also heard the same gentleman shortly afterwards make a statement something to this effect: that the members on the Government side of the House voted for the Tramway Purchase Bill because they wanted to ride free on the trams. We have often noticed that the newspapers in speaking of members of Parliament heap ridicule upon them. It seems to be a common opinion outside that all, or nearly all members of Parliament are dishonest, and mostly of a very degraded type. I am not the least bit surprised that the outside public should entertain such views of members of Parliament when we find an hon. member, who has been a Minister of the Crown and a member for many years, imputing such low and disgraceful motives to members of this Chamber. It is degrading the fair fame of politics in this country, and we get down to a level which is a disgrace to Parliamentary institutions. If I thought one fraction of that statement was true I would leave Parliament to-morrow and be ashamed to be associated with its members. But, even in those moments when I have been incensed against my political opponents, I have never once assailed their personal honour and integrity. I have questioned the wisdom of their political opinions and the justice of the cause they fight for; but cannot we stand on the floor of the House and differ from one another without conceiving the idea that we are all actuated by the lowest and basest of motives? That hon. gentleman, to make one further reference to him, in quite a pathetic way said that when he asks questions of the Premier, which he (the member for Northam) thinks ought to be answered, the members on this side of the House laugh at him. He wants to know why it is so. I would suggest to some of his kind friends on the Opposition that they should take him aside and explain the reason for it. Surely the reason why we laugh at him must dawn upon even that hon. gentleman. If he does not contribute much to our knowledge of political

economy, or the wealth of knowledge in this country, he has, at any rate, contributed to the gaiety, if not of the nation, at least of this Parliament. I wish to pass on to another matter which has exercised the attention of the State for some time past, namely the sleeper contract, which some papers have aptly labelled "the betrayal." I do not think that in the history of Western Australia there have been many such shameless exhibitions of disloyalty to the best interests of the State as were exhibited by certain members of the Federal Parliament in connection with that matter. It seems to me strange that from the commencement of the trouble there could not be found in the Federal Parliament some members besides the Western Australian members who could refer to the faults and failings of the karri timber. Instead of this it was our own representatives, in the persons of Messrs. Gregory, Fowler, and other Liberal members. Surely if there were any fault in the timber, if it were not all we claimed it to be, would it not be the province of a member representing some other State to point to its faults, and try to damn it, rather than the men whom we sent to the Federal Parliament to foster Western Australian industries? Talk about fouling one's own nest, talk about ingratitude, the Parliamentary history of this country knows nothing equal to the betrayal of Western Australian interests which was perpetrated by Mr. Gregory. I do not know what inspired him; I do not know what the power was that pushed him on when he forgot Western Australia and forgot his duty to the people, forgot what is just to us, and, to put the mildest interpretation upon it, sold Western Australia for a petty party political advantage.

Mr. Elliott: I suppose this is electioneering.

Mr. THOMAS: Never mind whether it is electioneering or not.

Mr. Bolton: It is absolutely true.

Mr. THOMAS: Absolutely. As time goes on and that gentleman wins from this country his political reward—

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The Country party has turned him down.

Mr. THOMAS: He will assuredly be turned down and out, and that will be his reward for the great injustice he has done to this country.

Mr. Elliott: You might leave him alone.

Mr. THOMAS: I will not.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. THOMAS: He can defend himself. I only wish he was here on the floor of the House this evening.

Mr. Elliott: He would give you all you want.

Mr. THOMAS: I feel sure that if Mr. Gregory could not do it, doubtless my eloquent friend, the member for Geraldton, would succeed in his place.

Mr. Male: He will give you all you want.

Mr. THOMAS: The wish is father to the thought. I am not in any way taking advantage of any shelter afforded by this House in expressing this opinion. I hope to have the privilege of taking some little part in the campaign that is coming along.

Mr. Elliott: Then keep it until then.

Mr. THOMAS: I shall please myself.

Mr. Male: We are on the Address-in-reply.

Mr. THOMAS: I understand that the Address-in-reply embraces most things of interest to the people of Western Australia, and at the outset I am pleased to notice, in connection with the criticism which has been hurled at this side of the House by our opponents on the Opposition benches, that there is at last some acknowledgment that we have undertaken some socialistic ventures that possibly may be of benefit to Western Australia. Amongst these items we have the implement works. I believe the hon. member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) has expressed his approval of it and I think other members have done so also. We have heard in connection with the debate that is taking place in Queen's Hall amongst the members of the Farmers and Settlers' Association that they want the duty taken off agricultural machinery in order that it may lighten the burden for the farmers. We find in connection with this that the Western Australian Govern-

ment have invested their money and are endeavouring to produce agricultural machinery at a very material reduction on what has been paid for it hitherto.

Mr. Male: Sunken money, not invested.

Mr. THOMAS: I do not believe the hon. member honestly thinks anything of the sort. I do him that much credit. I heard the present manager of the State implement works say that when he was in South Australia manufacturing machinery he used to manufacture there stump-jump ploughs for £13 or £15, I am not sure which, sell it to the distributors at this price, and then they would place it on the South Australian market at £33. Now, if he could manufacture machinery for himself in South Australia he would probably, under favourable conditions, be able to do as well here in Western Australia as he did there. I see that the plough is to be sold here at £20 instead of £33.

Mr. Male: It sounds very nice, but it will not work out.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It has been done.

Mr. Male: We shall be done.

Mr. Elliott: Have you got a price list? We cannot get one.

Mr. THOMAS: I would advise the hon. member to take a little rest. I do not think that in the investment of our money, when money has been scarce in Western Australia, in making a genuine effort—because I do not think our most vindictive opponents could say we are not making a genuine effort—to reduce the burden upon the farmer, that we should get some mark of appreciation for what we are doing. I am in sympathy with the primary producers and with the idea of doing everything legitimate to help them out. I consider that in introducing the State implement works we are taking at least one burden off the farmer's back. Now, you hear of these people sympathising with the farmer—the machinery agent, the land agent, and the various producers' agents in Perth and all the people who handle the farmers' stock, whether wool or wheat. We find these people pandering to the farmer's prejudice to try and make him believe that they are his friends, whilst as a matter of

fact they each represent a portion of the weight which the primary producer has to carry on his way to success. If the Labour party could intervene to prevent the middle man from robbing the primary producer of what he has legitimately earned we will have placed him a long way forward on the path of progress. I trust that the time will not be far distant when fertilisers will be purchased or manufactured by the Government, and that they will be produced at the minimum cost and sold to the primary producer at the same rate in order to help him through.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The difficulty is to get the phosphatic rock.

Mr. THOMAS: I am not sure if there are many difficulties in that way.

Mr. Male: You have the taxpayers' money behind you.

Mr. THOMAS: You cannot do everything at once. If we raise the money for the legitimate purpose of honestly endeavouring to benefit the State, I do not think anyone can question our motives.

Mr. Bolton: We have the taxpayers' vote behind us also.

Mr. THOMAS: Yes. I think with the record which the Scaddan Government have, when they go to the people once more they will be returned stronger than ever. If, therefore, no greater accusations can be hurled against this Government than the weak indictment which has been made by the leader of the Opposition and his faithful henchman, the hon. member for Northam, then I am of opinion that the Labour Government will, like Tennyson's brook, "go on for ever." I have heard a good deal to-night about the discourteous treatment meted out by the Government in regard to supplying information to members who required it. It seems to me that the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George) in expecting that he was going to get almost immediately a particular return covering the operations of all the other States, was expecting rather too much. I am mindful of what happened some years ago when I was opposing the leader of the Opposition who was then Treasurer, for the constituency of Sussex. For over a fortnight before

the election the lands office was closed against members altogether. They were told if they wanted information they must apply to the Minister himself. I well remember the late Premier, Sir Newton Moore, standing up on the platform speaking against my election, producing a great map. He had a railway marked out on it, and he said, "You have been told that Sir Walter James and others have got blocks of land adjoining this railway. It is nothing of the kind. This block of land belongs to Tommy Walker, and these Labour fellows are telling you that it is the capitalists of Perth who are securing the land." I was, I must confess, a little bit surprised. The lands office had been closed for two or three weeks, and I could not get any information. I discovered after the election, however, that Mr. Walker had no such block at all.

Mr. Bolton: They usually do that sort of thing.

Mr. THOMAS: It served its purpose, however, and yet hon. members have the audacity to come here and complain that they have been denied certain information which they have asked for.

Mr. Bolton: Who was the Minister for Lands who supplied the map, the member for Northam?

Mr. THOMAS: Very likely. I desire very sincerely to thank the Ministry for carrying out the promise that they made to my constituency. For something like 20 years the constituency that I represent has been held up in its course of progress by the want of harbour facilities. Succeeding Liberal Administrations, in following out their usual methods of gulling the public and leading people on with promises, told the people of Bunbury from time to time that they were going to do the right thing by them and that they were going to give them a harbour which was to cost a fabulous sum. This promise apparently existed only in their riotious imagination, because after 20 years nothing has been done.

Mr. Male: What, nothing?

Mr. THOMAS: I say they have never carried out their promises. They have

never put forward any comprehensive scheme to provide for the wants of that port, or at all events no comprehensive scheme has been undertaken in the last 20 years. But the Labour Government promised nearly three years ago that they would go into this matter thoroughly and that the best scheme that could be produced and which would give the required facilities would be carried into effect. Now, before the expiration of the life of this Parliament I am pleased and delighted to say that the Minister for Works has been down to Bunbury and exhibited plans for a harbour there which have met with the unanimous approval of the people of Bunbury. I do not know of one single dissenting voice. The member for Murray-Wellington said he had been asked to bring the matter up in the House, that the people wanted to see the plans, and that there was dissatisfaction in Bunbury. He stated afterwards, however, that he had been asked to do this by men who lived in the Murray-Wellington electorate.

Mr. Bolton: He wanted brick kilns, I suppose.

Mr. THOMAS: Something of that sort. I am satisfied that the carrying out of this promise will bring untold prosperity to the capital of the South-West of Western Australia. Bunbury is the natural centre of the garden of this country.

Mr. Male: How long will it take to do the work?

Mr. THOMAS: That is a matter for the engineers. I am convinced that with the vast area of land down there and with its magnificent rainfall, and its splendid soil, there is a future before it that will not be equalled by any other part of Australia. We have an area in which there is an absolutely certain rainfall, that is larger than the whole of Victoria. Had that chronically and almost criminally optimistic gentleman, the member for Northam, exercised his full authority in the way that he should have done, and instead of pushing out into the dry areas encouraged settlement down there in the South-West where there are such great possibilities of closer settlement and in-

tense culture, and had developed the dairying industry, instead of having this spectre of drought—

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Where is that?

Mr. THOMAS: And fear of want and famine hanging over us, we should have had a happy and prosperous population that would have resulted in very great good to the State and at one fraction of the cost of what it will amount to to-day.

Mr. Male: Ridiculous!

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member says ridiculous. His limited outlook on such a question is ridiculous. The hon. member never journeys down there, he knows nothing of the wants of the South-West. He may have some conception of the needs of the pearling industry of the North, but he knows nothing of the greater benefits that could be offered in the better part of the State. Consequently it is ridiculous for the hon. member to express an opinion upon it. I hope to see a definite policy developed by this Government.

Mr. Male: There is not much time left.

Mr. Bolton: Another three years.

Mr. THOMAS: We have a long way to go yet. I hope to see some definite policy developed to provide ready-made farms on the lines of those established by the Midland Railway Company. My idea is that small areas should be fenced, a portion of these areas cleared, and houses built, and, if necessary, dairy cows provided. The whole thing should be capitalised, and we should give the selectors, particularly those coming from the Old Country, a chance to settle at once, with an opportunity of obtaining a good living for themselves. By such means I think we would get a closer settled population in the southern portion of the State. We would not require the vast stretches of railways needed to-day, and I might say that we are reaching that point in railway construction at which we must call a halt.

Mr. Bolton: For wheat alone, yes.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Tommy rot.

Mr. THOMAS: My somewhat learned friend, the member for Williams-

Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) interjects it is Tommy rot. If he would only take our figures and see the mileage per head of population, and compare them with similar figures in the Eastern States, he would realise that, notwithstanding how anxious we might be—and I claim we are all anxious—to provide railway facilities wherever they are needed, there is a limit to the taxation which the people can bear. We have one mile of railway for every 105 of the population, and I claim that we cannot go much further without reaching breaking point.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They are paying for themselves over and over again.

Mr. THOMAS: How can it be possible?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: They are doing so to-day.

Mr. THOMAS: If we continue at the present rate much further, we will be compelled to call a halt.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: It will be a bad thing for the country when that time arrives.

Mr. THOMAS: I wish to express my regret that my newly made friend, the member for Geraldton (Mr. Elliott) is not in the happy position that I am in to be able to say that the harbour at Geraldton is going to be constructed almost immediately.

Mr. Male: They put the wrong man in.

Mr. THOMAS: I do not think for one moment that has anything to do with it. I hold a higher opinion of the integrity of the Minister than to think for one moment that such a consideration would influence him in doing what he considers right, and neither would the Minister consider whether Mr. Heitmann or my friend the present member was returned. I believe the district justifies the construction of the harbour.

Mr. Lander: It is certain; there is no belief about it.

Mr. THOMAS: I accept the dictum of my emphatic friend. But the only point is this: that Rome was not built in a day, and Western Australia cannot get all its needs in five minutes. I am convinced

that if my friend, the present member for Geraldton, is again returned to this Chamber—which, with all due deference I hope will not be the case—I have not the slightest doubt that in the near future he will see that much-desired work carried into effect. I am going to have the pleasure of being present on the 24th of this month to see the first sod turned of the Wagin-westward railway, which is to connect Wagin with its natural port of Bunbury, a line which will touch one of the biggest wheat and wool areas in Western Australia. That railway has been promised by successive Liberal Administrations, and it is delightful to find to-day, so far as my constituency is concerned, and other constituencies as well, that the promise made on the hustings by the members of this party is to be carried out to the letter. Indeed, there is not one promise made by the present Government in regard to my constituency that has not been carried into effect. I fancy if Sir John Forrest were present, I would hear the old gentleman say "Where are the croakers?" He would find a few of them in Opposition.

Mr. Bolton: There are not many there at the present time; I can only see one.

Mr. THOMAS: The only consolation I can get from the absence of hon. members opposite is that I can fancy I am reviewing them in spirit.

The Attorney General: It makes you think the next elections are over.

Mr. THOMAS: The elections have nothing but charming and delightful anticipations so far as I am concerned. I am looking forward to them with the keenest zest and pleasure. Not only do I hope to accomplish a triumph in my own centre, but I hope to carry the war into the enemy's camp, and see whether I can fire them out also. It seems strange that members of the Opposition should still retain a doleful, miserable, and mournful air about everything; that everything is wrong, that the world is dark and dreary, and that there is no sunshine and no brightness, and no prospects, and that the Labour party are leading the ship of State on to destruction. What is the position? We have an

increase in our production of wheat and in our production of timber; we also have an increase, and an enormous increase, in the production of potatoes, and so it goes on right through everything, indicating the prosperity of Western Australia.

Mr. Malé: Even our deficit; do not leave that out.

Mr. THOMAS: I would not like to rob the hon. member of his one little ewe lamb; it is necessary that the hon. member should have something to complain about. If we robbed the members of the Opposition of the deficit and the State steamers, there would be an utter collapse; there would be nothing left for them to talk about. I really think that the Premier likes to give them the opportunity of going on a little longer with these taradiddles which they are so fond of putting before the people. I am glad to know that the Government propose to introduce a measure for Constitutional reform, and I hope the question will be faced fearlessly. I am satisfied that the mind of the people of Western Australia is ripe for that reform; I believe that 60 or 70 per cent. of the people desire that we should govern by the popular vote, and I am satisfied that if means can be devised by which a popular referendum can be taken on the question of Constitutional reform, the matter will be settled for ever, and I am sure that a better Government, a freer people and a better democracy will be the outcome. Personally I take the view that the Council should be fought to the end and the time is now ripe for it; we should no longer continue in the humiliating position we are now in. We also have the Initiative and Referendum, and among the many proposals to come before us now or in the future, this probably comes nearer to my heart than any other plank in the Labour party's platform. I am satisfied that much of the fierce spirit of party strife, much of the bitterness that exists between opponents in politics to-day, when we give the people the Initiative and Referendum, with its educative value, it will gradually lessen that feeling which exists. What does it amount to? If any Ministry are introducing a measure and it is freely discussed in the Press, such as that fam-



ous Redistribution of Seats Bill, the people will have the power to say, "You will go no further; we question the honesty of your intentions; we question the value of the measure you seek to place upon the statute book; your power in Parliament may be great, but there is a greater power than that of Parliament and it is the sovereign will of the people." They will have the power to say, "Halt, go no further; place that Bill before us." And when it has been fully and carefully discussed the people of this country will say whether they desire that measure or not. We in Parliament may know a lot, and some of us may consider we are bright sort of fellows, but there is surely an amount of intelligence amongst the rest of the people that at a great crisis in the affairs of the country, they above all others can be entrusted to pronounce a final verdict upon any great question that may come forward. I do not propose to detain the House any further. There are many things that one could speak upon, and by the way, I would like to deny the statement made by the member for York (Mr. Monger) who after being kind enough to throw a verbal bouquet at me, accused me—and I believe he was under the impression that he was telling the truth—of having declared that the brick works at Beenup had been established in order to assist in bringing about the defeat of the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George).

Mr. Monger: That is what you were reported to have said.

Mr. THOMAS: I am pleased to be able to give an emphatic denial to the statement. In the course of some jocular remarks I said that the brick works would be of some assistance to the member for Murray-Wellington, but I never for one moment thought, nor did I suggest they were put there for the specific purpose of helping to defeat the hon. member. I do not believe that more than 20 men will be employed there. Again, the other day I made some remarks in connection with the construction of the harbour at Bunbury. I stated that about 100 men would be employed at Roelands quarry, and as I could not have them in my electorate, I was pleased to see them in the electorate

of the member for Murray-Wellington. I hope it will not be inferred from that statement that we were building the Bunbury harbour so as to employ 100 men who might help us at election time.

Mr. Munsie: You were generous to the member for Murray-Wellington, I reckon.

Mr. THOMAS: I am satisfied that when the speech of the leader of the Government goes forth to the country, and when the work that the Labour Government have done becomes known in the highways and byways of Western Australia, they will sit upon a pinnacle of public appreciation that has never been achieved by any Government in Western Australia before. I hope the Government may live long and continue to do the splendid work they have done in the past, and that at least another ten or fifteen years may elapse before the Opposition are invited to cross the floor of the House.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON moved—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

Motion negatived.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin): I think it is a great pity that the Government would not agree to adjourn the debate at this hour, instead of having an all-night sitting which I understand is now contemplated. I will detain hon. members for a considerable time. As far as country members are concerned, it would be of great convenience if the House could meet a little earlier than at present, in order to avoid the necessity for conducting our business in the middle of the night. The Federal Parliament is able to have day sittings, and such a conservative Parliament as that of Victoria is able to meet at 10 or 10.30 a.m. on one day in the week. I hope that if this session is to last very long, the Government will exhibit the same zeal for day sittings which they did when they were on the Opposition side of the House.

Mr. Bolton interjected.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I feel that this request will commend itself to the leader of the Government. I desire to congratulate the Government upon the Speech placed before the country. It is an excellent record of the work of the Govern-

ment, and I would like a copy of it to be placed in the hands of every elector. It is a record of honest work, faithfully carried out by the Labour Government in the interests of the people of the State. One of the items which I was particularly pleased to observe was that referring to the agreement with the Commonwealth Bank under which all the State Government's business will in future be carried out by that institution instead of by private banks. This is as it should be. We have been told by the Premier that during the last six years one of the private banking institutions in St. George's-terrace has made no less than £186,000 profit out of the people's money deposited in that bank. It is pleasing to know that this sort of thing will not occur again. The Labour Government have made better banking arrangements with the Commonwealth Bank, and if any such profits are made out of the State Government's business in future, these profits will go to the whole of the people of the State instead of to a few shareholders of one favoured institution. Another splendid result of the Government's action will be the extension of the operations of the Commonwealth Bank throughout the State. If the Commonwealth Bank is going to do justice to the State's Banking business, it will be necessary to establish branches in all the more important centres. Already the Deputy Manager of the Commonwealth Bank, Mr. Kell, has visited Narrogin, and I understand it is more than likely that as a result of the Government's banking business going to the Commonwealth Bank, branches will be established at Narrogin and at other important centres in the State. This will be of great advantage to the settlers because they will have an opportunity to do their general banking business at the Commonwealth Bank and to obtain cheap money from it. I hope that before long the Government will succeed in making satisfactory arrangements with the Commonwealth Bank in regard to the Savings Bank business. It has always appeared to me that the suggestions of the ex-Prime Minister, Mr. Fisher, that the State and the Commonwealth should

work together in the matter of the Savings Bank business was a wise one, and one which should have been accepted. Mr. Fisher offered the State all the money in the State Savings Bank and three-quarters of the new business, on condition that the State Savings Bank was handed over to the Commonwealth Bank. This appeared to be a very generous offer indeed, and the figures show that if it had been accepted at that time, Western Australia would have had more Savings Bank money to handle to-day than it has. In other words, three-quarters of the new deposits which we would have received from the Commonwealth Savings Bank would have amounted to a larger sum than we are getting in competition with the Savings Banks at the post offices.

Mr. Elliott: We have the lot now.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. member is mistaken; the Commonwealth Savings Banks are getting about one-half of the new business.

Mr. Elliott: I understood that the Commonwealth Savings Banks had been closed.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No; they are open to-day.

Mr. Elliott: The arrangement is to close them up.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The arrangement mentioned by the hon. member is a suggestion by Mr. Cook but, as it is likely that Mr. Cook and his satellites will be relegated to political obscurity on or about the 5th September, I do not think the arrangement is worthy of serious discussion. The present position is most unfair to the people of Australia. We own the State Savings Banks and also the Commonwealth Savings Banks, and why should we as taxpayers have to bear the burden of two banks owned by the same shareholders, competing one against the other? No shareholder of a private bank would do this sort of thing, and it is unfair that the people of Australia should any longer be put to the cost of running two Savings Banks in opposition. I hope that at a very early date, the Scaddan Govern-

ment will follow up the excellent agreement they have made with the Commonwealth Savings Bank by a new agreement under which the State will get the use of the moneys deposited with the Commonwealth Savings Bank and permit the Commonwealth Savings Bank to conduct the only institution of its kind in this State. The workers' homes scheme will always be a standing monument to the enterprise of the Scaddan Ministry. Throughout the State, these good houses are being erected for the working people. The Premier has told us that no fewer than a thousand of these homes have been erected at a cost of £427,000, whilst the operations of the Workers' Homes Board in something over two years represent an amount of more than £600,000. As far as the towns on the Great Southern Railway are concerned, there seems to be no prejudice against or objection to building workers' homes on leasehold lands. In Narrogin a large number of the best houses are built on leasehold lands, and I am certain that if I were about to get a worker's home I would prefer it under the leasehold rather than under the freehold sections of the Act. I congratulate the Minister for Works on the splendid record of railway construction which has been achieved in Western Australia during the last couple of years. Commencing in my own electorate, we find that the Narrogin-Wickepin line has been extended to Merredin. The section from Wickepin to Merredin is a main trunk line, and I am assured by experts competent to express an opinion that it is one of the best railways ever built in Western Australia, and that it is capable of carrying very heavy traffic. In this matter, the Government have shown proper foresight because the Wickepin-Merredin line will be the main trunk railway from Albany and from Bunbury and from the Great Southern districts from Narrogin southwards to the Eastern Goldfields markets. There will be a tremendous traffic over this railway, and I congratulate the Government not only on their action in building it but on the fact of straightening out the route.

I am sorry that the hon. member for York is not in his seat because he made some reference to this matter. The Government did the best thing they could do for the producers of the south as well as the consumers on the goldfields when they straightened that railway route and decided to relieve settlers for all time from having to pay freight on 10 or 12 extra miles of railway in order to reach the goldfields markets over the Wickepin-Merredin line.

Mr. Brown: Not 12 miles.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: To the best of my recollection, that was the saving of distance on the longest route proposed by the Liberal Government. I was a member of the Select Committee who inquired into that matter, and I am sure that for all time the settlers in the districts served by the railway will thank the Labour Government for having adopted the direct route and for having decided to extend the Yilliminning-Kondinin line to Merredin so as to serve the whole of that great wheat area in the most advantageous way. I am pleased that the Yilliminning-Kondinin line is approaching completion. This is a very good railway, and it has been built on a high standard. It is not one of the cheap lines such as were built a few years ago when the Liberal party were in power. This line will open up a new province for Western Australia, and I hope that the Minister for Works will do his best to get it completed and handed over to the Working Railways at least by the first January. When the Minister for Works visited the district two or three months ago, he promised that it would be completed and handed over to the Working Railways in time to shift the coming harvest. This railway is a most important one; there are several thousand settlers in the district it serves, and I hope that they will have the benefit of ordinary Government freights over it during the next harvest. It is also gratifying to learn from the Governor's Speech that railway construction is being

vigorously carried on throughout the State. The Speech forecasts that by December next no less than 290 miles of new railways will have been handed over to the Railway Department, and that a further 295 miles of railway will at that date be in process of construction. This means that an aggregate of 585 miles of railway is approaching completion or is about to be commenced at the present time. Such a record is most satisfactory, and evidences the rapid rate at which railway construction is forging ahead in Western Australia. The next paragraph of the Speech mentions that in addition, surveys of further new railway lines totalling 378 miles have been authorised. It is clear, therefore, that the Government intend to continue the present policy of building railways rapidly.

Member: Including the Esperance line.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Including the Esperance line, as mentioned by an hon. member, which I am glad to see on our programme. The figures I have quoted disprove entirely any intention on the part of the Government to adopt the policy of calling a halt in railway construction advocated just now by the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas). I may confess that I was surprised to hear that hon. member throw aside his customary optimism and suggest that the progressive public works policy of the Scaddan Administration should cease. Throughout the country the cry of the people is for railways, and more railways, and still more railways; and the figures I have quoted show that the Government are appropriately responsive to that appeal. The ceremony of turning the first sod of a new railway is to take place at Wagin on the 24th July. That is the railway from Wagin to Bowelling. This railway runs for about one-third of its distance through my electorate, and I am extremely pleased that the line is about to be commenced. I hope the Government will get it completed as quickly as possible, because there are a large number of settlers in the district south of Dardan and at Moodjarup who have been isolated for a con-

siderable time. The country is rich and fertile, and I trust the Government will construct this railway on such a route as will best serve the largest number of selectors for all time. At the head of the list of the Government's programme for the future we have the Esperance line. Speaking as an agricultural member and one representing an electorate near the West coast, I am indeed glad to see that the Government are bringing this project forward again. They are showing their desire to avoid centralisation, and since the Country party—the new factor in the political life of this State—claims also to be a party opposed to centralisation, I take it we can confidently expect every member of Parliament who is an adherent of the Country party to vote for the Esperance railway, and thus promote the policy of decentralisation, and, at the same time, render justice to the Eastern Goldfields, which have done so much for the State of Western Australia. To my mind it is remarkable that the people of Western Australia should for so long have broken faith with the goldfields in regard to this railway. So far back as the year 1902 a permanent survey of a railway from Norseman to Esperance was effected at a cost of something over £8,000. It was not a trial survey, but a permanent one. Every chain of that railway was pegged, and people went to the town of Esperance and into that district relying on that survey, which certainly amounted to an official promise on the part of the Government to construct the line. We all know the years of deferred hopes under which those people have laboured, and I, for my part, am glad that their period of waiting is approaching its end, and that before long the Esperance railway will be authorised and built. To me the most pleasing feature of the Speech, however, is the decision of the Government to construct a railway from Narrogin to Dwarda. Dwarda is the terminus of the railway from Pingelly to the Hotham district, and thence the Narrogin-Dwarda line will give direct communication with the city via Pinjarra to the settlers north-west of Williams. The Narrogin-Dwarda line, how-

ever, has a still more important aspect than that, because from Narrogin to Dwarda is the first section of the Narrogin-Armadale railway. This proposal has been before the country for the last two years. The Narrogin-Armadale line has been recommended for construction by the Railway Advisory Board, and the permanent survey of the second section of that line from Dwarda to Armadale was authorised by this Parliament at the instigation of the Labour Government last session. I am glad to know that that survey is also in hand, and that the Government surveyors have found a splendid direct route for the first section on easy grades between Narrogin and Dwarda. The proposal to build the whole Narrogin-Armadale railway is now in the forefront of practical politics. The first section is about to be authorised during the present session, and the junction at Narrogin will be placed by the Scaddan Government beyond the interference of any other political party.

Mr. Elliott: You do not think you are coming back, then?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: We are going right forward. This country is going forward, and the present Government are going to stay in power. I very much fear that in the rush of progress the member for Geraldton will soon be left to look for an occupation outside of Parliament. I have only to say that when the Narrogin-Armadale railway has been authorised and built it will save no less than 57 miles of freight between the whole of the Great Southern districts and the whole of the districts east of Narrogin, and their port of export, Fremantle.

Mr. Bolton: And they say this party does nothing for the farmer.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The sooner the line is built, the better. The Government cannot help the farmer better than by reducing the cost of production. This line will save 57 miles of freight, as I have said, and will curtail the journey for everyone travelling between Albany, Katanning, Wagin, or Narrogin and the metropolitan area by 57 miles. The figures speak for themselves, and it

is not necessary for me to say any more in support of the proposal. I may, however, mention that the congestion on the Great Southern railway is becoming more acute. A time has arrived when it would be necessary either to duplicate the Great Southern railway in order to relieve the congestion of traffic, or else to build the Narrogin-Armadale railway. It is a far more economical and much better proposition for the State in every way to build the Narrogin-Armadale railway than to duplicate the railway running over the old route from Narrogin via York and Spencer's Brook to the City. The district through which the Narrogin-Armadale railway will pass is also a fertile and well watered one, capable of supporting a large population. The next railway in the Government's programme for the present session is the extension of the Yilliminning-Kondinin line to Merredin. This extension has been rendered necessary by the action of the Government in adopting a direct route for the Wickepin-Merredin line.

The DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Order, order! There is a little too much conversation going on. The member for Williams-Narrogin has the floor at the present time.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The construction of this railway, with the Wickepin-Merredin line, which is being built, will result in the whole of the settlers in that great part of the wheat belt being brought promptly within proper reach of railway communication. I am glad to see that, notwithstanding the pessimistic utterances of the member for Bunbury (Mr. Thomas) to-night, the necessity for new railways as the result of the Government's action in assisting settlers on the land and opening further areas for settlement, is being recognised. When Ministers visited the Great Southern district lately they were met with a request to build a new railway east of the Yilliminning-Kondinin line starting at a point near Dindinin townsite and to run thence via Walyurin to Lake Jilakin. I may say that there is considerable settlement in the Jilakin and Walyurin districts, and the con-

struction of this railway is the only means of rendering justice to the settlers. Many of them are paying up to £1 per acre for their land, which is situated at a distance of over 20 miles from existing railways. Hon. members will realise that it is impossible for settlers to pay that exorbitant price for their land and grow wheat profitably at present prices, when they are so far removed from railway communication. I trust the Government will continue their present progressive policy, and build as quickly as possible this railway and also other railways which are required to bring settlers within reasonable distance of means of communication. Another proposal which I have been hammering at for the last couple of years, without very much result so far, is the Quindanning district railway. That is one of the oldest settled districts in the State, and the people there have borne the heat and burden of the struggle for a period of 40 or 50 years, and yet to-day they are almost as much isolated as they were at any period of the State's history. However, I am pleased to know that the Minister for Works (Hon. W. D. Johnson) has promised to visit the district during next month and go into the settlers' case on the spot. I am satisfied that they have a good case, and that when the Minister for Works has investigated the matter for himself he will decide to do justice to those people. At a recent function near Gillimanning some disappointment was felt at the inability of the Minister for Works to be present. On that occasion a proposal was put before Mr. Harper and myself—the electorates of both of us being affected—for the construction of a light line of railway from the town of Wickepin to Pingelly. Members of this House have often heard about Yorkrakine. There is in that district a large area of good land closely settled, but isolated from railway communication. Between Wickepin and Pingelly there is also close settlement similarly isolated from railway communication. In accordance with a promise made to those people on the occasion to which I have referred, I take this opportunity of bringing their claims for a railway before

the House and before the Government. Last session the Premier suggested that the best way to deal with the Yorkrakine people would be to provide motor tractors for them—a means of communication which he said had proved very successful in America. Personally I do not know whether that is so or not, but I do wish to urge that the settlers of North Wickepin, Gillimanning, and Aldinga are in an isolated position similarly to the settlers at Yorkrakine. Therefore, if the Government find it possible to introduce motor tractors to help the settlers in the Yorkrakine district I hope they will adopt the same method in the case of these settlers between Wickepin and Pingelly. I have nothing but congratulation to offer to the Minister for Education on his administration of the Education Department. Primary education has been extended throughout the agricultural districts, and I congratulate him also on the action he took in establishing a secondary school on the Golden Mile. I urge the Government to arrange for the establishment of secondary schools in the principal centres throughout the State, so that the children of country parents might have opportunities similar to those enjoyed by the children of parents who reside in the City with regard to getting secondary, as well as primary, education. We have a free University established in the City; it is the first free university in the British Empire, but to extend the benefits of the University to country children, it is essential that the Government should arrange scholarships to provide for board and lodging in the City to those worthy of such consideration. I hope such scholarships will be established by the Education Department at the earliest possible date. Replying to a question the other day, the Acting Minister for Lands said that the question of the establishment of an agricultural college was under consideration. I am very glad to know that the Government have lately, with the assistance of the professors of the University, re-organised the agricultural high school which exists at Narrogin, and I am sure the Premier will remember his promise to give every

consideration to the claims of that institution when an agricultural college is being established in Western Australia. I would like to be told something about the *Journal of Agriculture*. This matter has been referred to two or three times in the last few sessions of Parliament, and the latest answer was to the effect that the Government were considering the question of the re-institution of this journal. Many members will know that it was the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) who brought about the cessation of the publication of this journal, and I hope the present Government will lose no time in starting it again. The manufacture of agricultural machinery by the State is proving a great benefit to the settlers. Orders are pouring in, and the fact that there are over 600 men permanently employed at these works speaks volumes for their popularity. One great advantage, however, is that agricultural implements are being manufactured not only cheaply, but they are of good quality, and they are made in Western Australia by Australian workmen. In this direction the Government have done good work in cheapening the cost of the production of wheat, because farmers now can, without difficulty, obtain duplicate parts at in some cases a quarter of the cost that they had been accustomed to pay, as well as much cheaper machinery. I would like to quote a few figures in regard to the electoral districts of Western Australia, figures which point to the necessity for a redistribution of seats. We all know that the Government last year tried to redistribute the seats on a fair basis, but the Bill, which provided for the appointment of independent commissioners, was thrown out by another place. In other words, the Legislative Council refused to allow a fair and honest redistribution by independent commissioners, and the result is that to-day the most glaring inconsistencies are already apparent in regard to the population of the various electoral districts. For instance, I have in my hand a roll of the Williams-Narrogin electorate, showing that on the 30th May there were no fewer

than 3,572 electors in that district. I have also the latest figures available in the *Statistical Abstract*, as to the number of electors in other electoral districts on the 31st March, and I find that Pingelly has only 2,164 electors, Sussex 1,729, and Beverley 1,765, as compared with 3,572 on the Williams-Narrogin roll at the present time. This is most unfair to the people in that district, but the Legislative Council has apparently said that one elector in Sussex or Beverley is worth two in my district.

Mr. Broun: The area that is embraced in your district is no greater.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If we are going on area, the State's political power would be given to the North-West and the unpopulated areas located between Kanoona and the South Australian border. The proper basis for a redistribution is population, and the distance of the electors from the capital.

Mr. Broun: You want all your members in the City.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, certainly not. There should also be taken into consideration the distance of the elector from the City, and the further the people are away from the City, the more representation should they have. Yet we find that at the present time, although Beverley is comparatively close to Perth, although it is a well settled district, the people there have twice as much representation in Parliament as the electors in the Williams-Narrogin district, and I take this opportunity of protesting against the action of the Upper House, which has brought such a condition of affairs into existence. Of course, the reason that our redistribution of seats Bill was thrown out was that it would have the effect of straightening out the peculiar boundaries around the Collie electorate, and it would have probably meant that the member for Sussex, the leader of the Opposition, would have lost his seat. As it is, it is currently rumoured that the leader of the Opposition is going to abandon the Sussex seat and contest Katanning at the approaching elections.

Mr. Broun: He would not mind a defeat.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He has had so many that I do not suppose one more would make much difference. I hope that after the next elections we shall be able to arrange a different system. I trust that the approaching election will be the last on which we shall go to the country on single electorates. The question of proportional representation has been before the country for some time. A resolution in its favour has been carried by one branch of the Legislature.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They do not want it to apply to the other branch.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It should certainly apply to both Houses. I hope when this Government goes to the country again, after the next elections, that it will be on the basis of proportional representation. For my own part, I would have urged the Government to bring in the Bill this session but that at the last general elections we protested against the gerrymandering redistribution carried into effect by the previous Government, and we said that if we were elected there would be a redistribution of the single electorates by an independent board, free from political control. I have already explained that it is the fault of the Upper House that this pledge has not been carried into effect.

Mr. Wisdom: Who would appoint the board?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I take it the Government of the day would appoint the board. The appointments would be made from the ranks of men who would have the confidence of every section of the community. I am sure the member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) would not suggest that such men might not easily be obtained.

Mr. Broun: Men belonging to "our party."

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, not men belonging to any political party. With regard to the deficit, I would like to say that I listened to the Premier's explanation with considerable interest. He pointed out that at

the present time the farmers owed £219,150, which represents very nearly half of the deficit. Speaking as a representative of the agricultural districts, I can thank the Government for the consideration they have given to the farming industry, as disclosed by those figures. I believe the action of the Government is appreciated, and I can tell the Premier he need not worry about that money, because when we get good seasons it will be paid. I hope, however, that the Government will not let the existence of the deficit prevent them from giving similar consideration to the agriculturists wherever it may be required. Against the deficit, it might be interesting to note that we have a sinking fund of over four millions, which is more than half the sinking fund provided by the whole of the Australian States for the redemption of our public debts. This sinking fund proves that our finances are in a very satisfactory condition, particularly as compared with those of the other Australian States.

Mr. Elliott: How is that money invested?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It is invested in London by trustees, who are free from the control of the Treasurer of this State. A very important duty devolves upon the Government this session, and it is the question of providing relief for those settlers in the wheat belt whose lands have been overvalued. It will be remembered that a resolution was carried last session by this Chamber, instructing the Government to give such relief, and I thank the Government for having accepted and approved of that resolution. We are told in the Governor's Speech that it is the intention of the Government to introduce amendments to the Land Act during the coming session, but we have not been told the nature of the proposed amendments. I understand the report of the board that was appointed to reclassify and revalue the lands in the wheat belt, has lately been handed to the Minister for Lands, and the Minister has agreed to lay the report on the Table of the House, together with the decision of the Government in this important matter. So far



the report has not come down, and I am sorry to be obliged to speak on the Address-in-reply without knowing the nature of the report, or the decision the Government have arrived at. I can take this opportunity of telling the Acting Minister for Lands that there is only one solution of the difficulty that will give satisfaction to the people concerned, and it is a reduction in the price of the land wherever it has been overvalued, and that reduction must be on the basis of its productive value during, say, the last three seasons. Then the new settlers on the land, who have gone there without capital, depending on the assistance of the Agricultural Bank, should be given a period of three or five years' exemption from the payment of any land rents, and when the payments are resumed they should only be at the rate of 6d. an acre a year for the remaining period of the lease, that is to say, if land is valued at 15s. an acre, the period of the lease should be extended to 30 years so that the settlers would never have to pay more than 6d. an acre land rent in any year after the five years' exemption had expired. I am satisfied we should have more successful settlement on the land if the advice of Professor Lowrie, to the effect that every man should have £500 capital, or at least £300, had been adopted by the late Government. But they did not do so, and men have gone on the land without capital, and relying only on the assistance of the Agricultural Bank.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Are your people doing that?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The Government are not doing it on the same lines as the previous Government. The Government are putting them on the land, but they are first surveying railways and are throwing open only such land as is within 15 miles of a line constructed, or about to be constructed. This is an immensely better system than the one prevailing in the old Liberal days when men were put on land 60 or 70 miles from a railway and nothing was done to give them railway communication. The result was that the people spent their capital to the worst

advantage and did not get the value they should have received from the capital they had when they went on the land. The damage has been done, and it remains for the Government to see that those settlers, who with their wives and children have encountered great hardships, are assisted by the State to make a success of their holdings. The settlers are working hard. No doubt they will pull through, but it is absolutely necessary that the Government should give them further consideration in the way of allowing those on the land a remission for five years from paying land rents, and also reducing the payments to not more than 6d. an acre per year provided the improvement conditions are enforced. I would like to remind hon. members, too, that the Land Bill introduced by the Government 18 months ago would have done a good deal in the direction indicated. That Bill provided that all first-class lands selected in future should be selected on the condition that the land would be held for three years free of rent, provided the improvement conditions were complied with. That was a splendid provision. It would have helped the new settlers, because the first few years on the land are those of the hardest struggle. But that amendment, with others, was disposed of without consideration by the Upper House, and it is due to that House that such a magnificent provision is not on the statute-book.

Mr. Elliott: That House also threw out the proposal for doubling the land tax.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: And the incidence of that tax would have fallen on the rich owners of valuable town lands in Perth, Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, and other centres of population, people who can well afford to pay the increased land tax and income tax which the Government desired, but which the Upper House threw out.

Mr. Elliott: It would have fallen on everybody.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, mainly on the wealthy owners of valuable rent-producing City property. In regard to the poison lands, we have there

a condition of affairs existing somewhat similar to that existing on the wheat belt. Here also, in compliance with the instructions of Parliament, the Government have sent a revaluation board out through the districts to frame reports as to the best means of affording relief to the settlers already established in poison areas, whose lands have been over-valued, and to submit a report as to the best means of settling the poison lands in those districts. Here again the report has been lodged with the Government, but so far the Government have not laid the report, as promised, on the Table, neither have they told us whether they propose to adopt the recommendations of the Commission, whatever they are. I am sorry we have not this report. I can only urge on the Government to give relief similar to that which I have advocated in regard to the wheat belt. Our Bill of 18 months ago provided that poison lands should be granted for 10 years rent free, conditionally on the land being improved. That was a splendid provision; it would have been in force to-day but for the action of the Upper House in rejecting the Bill. I hope the Government will stick to that provision, and by an administrative act see that the poor people on the poison belt are given their land for 10 years free of rent. The Minister for Lands has lately been through those districts, and he was appalled by the condition of some of the settlers, more particularly those who had come from England and settled on the land without knowing its nature. I can assure the House that these people are worthy of every consideration.

Mr. Elliott drew attention to the state of the House.

*[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]*

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: With regard to the administration of the Agricultural Bank, there is no doubt this institution is to-day of far greater assistance to the settlers than it was before the Act was liberalised by the Labour Administration. The fact that £636,000 was advanced by

the bank in hard cash last year, as compared with £285,000, which was the highest amount advanced in any one year under the Liberal Administration, proves conclusively that the settlers are getting extended benefits from the operations of the bank. At the same time I must confess that the settlers on the smaller areas, the men who most require the assistance, very often do not get it just at the critical time. I think in regard to two of the trustees who assist Mr. Paterson, the squatting element is a bit too much represented. I am afraid that Mr. Cook and Mr. Richardson are inclined to look at matters more from the point of view of the big land owner than from that of the small settler. It appears to me there is a little too much Scottish caution exhibited whenever men desire advances in the wheat areas on properties of from 160 to 600 acres. Yet the man who is bringing up a family on a small property is our very best settler, and I hope the Government will confer with the trustees on this subject and see if greater liberality cannot be extended to the men cultivating the small areas.

Mr. Elliott: You are not going to open the bank to political pressure.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: No, it is not a matter of political pressure, but of Government policy. Eighteen months ago the Labour Government liberalised the bank and the small settlers are not getting the benefit of that liberalisation as fully as can be wished. This being so, the Government ought to confer with the trustees or see, through Mr. Paterson, that the assistant trustees are men in sympathy with the liberalisation of the Act. I hope the Government will take the matter in hand and see that the Act is not defeated by its administration. In regard to the progress of the agricultural industry, I congratulate the Minister for Lands on our wheat production having attained a figure of no less than 13,500,000 bushels last season, as compared with 9,000,000 bushels in the season before. Such progress is simply astounding; it shows that under the sympathetic Labour Administration the production of wheat increased by 50 per cent. in one year.

Mr. Brown: You do not credit the Labour party with that, do you?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Yes, I do. If the Government had not given the settlers assistance at the beginning of 1912, this result would not have been obtained. It is attributable to the sympathetic consideration which the wheat producers received at the hands of the Government.

Mr. Elliott: It is due to the rainfall.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It was because of the poor rainfall in 1911 that the settlers required assistance and the Government showed their faith in the country by granting them assistance, and as a result our production last year increased by 50 per cent. on that of the preceding year. Under the improved administration of the Railway Department this huge harvest was carried without any complaints. Two and a half years ago, when the production amounted to a little over five million bushels, and the Liberal Ministry had just gone out of office, the railways were starved and from one end of the wheat belt to the other complaints were made regarding the shortage of trucks due to the backwardness of the Liberal Administration. Last year I was in the wheat districts during the harvest and I received no complaints whatever. I congratulate the Railway Department and particularly the Minister on the improved working of the department as disclosed by this fact.

Mr. Elliott: Do not forget the doubling of the rates on manures.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: When the Government go wrong, and it is very rarely that they make mistakes, I am out to criticise them and to express my disapproval of their action. In regard to the raising of the freights on manures, I say here, as I have said before, that I disapprove of the Government's action entirely, but I disapprove more heartily of the action of the Legislative Council in compelling the Government to find revenue from sources which they did not desire to utilise. In making the increased freight charges the Government considered the people who were furthest back,

and the increase applies only for the first 100 miles over which the manures are carried. All said and done, there is something to be said for the contention that the general taxpayer should not be asked to face the loss on the carriage of manures to assist settlers around Northam and York, men who have been on the land for 30 or 40 years, and many of whom are cropping over 2,000 acres of land annually. At the same time I emphasise the fact that I disapprove of this increase and I hope the Government will remove it as soon as they can get their legitimate taxation proposals passed. The Government did not make this increase in freights until they had given notice to the people that if the Upper House refused to pass their measures for the taxation of the wealthy on fair lines they would be compelled to take the step. The Government pointed out clearly that the taxation measure had been defeated twice and that if it was defeated a third time they would reluctantly have to put an end to some of the services which were being carried on at a loss. The carriage of artificial manures was one of these services and though the Upper House knew of the Government's intention they threw out a fair taxation measure. Then and not until then were the rates of manures increased.

Mr. Elliott: What about coal freights?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: At the same time I express my disapproval of the Government's action and I hope they will revert to the old rates at least during the wheat season. In the wheat season thousands of trucks are being sent out empty in order to bring back wheat and during the season the Government ought to carry artificial manures at the old rate of  $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per ton per mile, or better still, free.

Mr. Elliott: What about the coal freights?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The Government obtained very satisfactory concessions in regard to the price of Collie coal for the State railways. I wish to express my disapproval of the action of the Government in re-introducing the terminal charge of 1s. per ton on new feeder railways. This is most unfair. One of the first things which the Labour Government did

after coming into power was to remove this unjust tax on new settlers who were paying high prices for their land; yet we find that after two years of office they have reimposed this charge. The Government have reverted in this instance, to the old Liberal policy of taxing the man who can least afford to pay. The Government have made a mistake in this respect and I hope they will take an early opportunity to rectify it. Whether they desire to rectify it or not, I hope hon. members will insist upon the abolition of this charge. The Government were wrong in putting this fresh taxation on people who cannot afford it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The Liberals claim to represent the farmers.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: They do not represent the farmers, and I am afraid the farmers will tell them so emphatically at the forthcoming elections.

Mr. George: I represent as many farmers as you and represent them better, too.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: We will get the opinion of the electors on that point in the near future. I am pleased to see the hon. member for Murray-Wellington in his seat again, because I deferred making a few remarks on his speech on account of his absence. I think anyone who heard that hon. gentleman's oration to-night must assume that he is aspiring to become the comedian of the House, the Harry Lauder of Parliament.

Mr. George: I do not want to deprive the hon. member of the honour.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He could hardly have been serious in the statement he made respecting the action of the Railway Department in not giving him certain information. He is a man who was Commissioner of Railways for many years, and he told us that he always communicated with the Minister for Railways when he wanted information from that department, and yet he also tells us—

Mr. George: I did not tell you that.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I understood you to do so.

Mr. George: What I said was that for information of that sort I applied direct to the Railway Department.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It appears that for some reason or other the hon. member expected the clerks of the Railway Department to spend hours in searching for information for the hon. member to use—

Mr. George: I wanted it for my constituents.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The object for which he wanted it was pretty clear to my mind. It was to use during the course of this debate.

Mr. George: It was nothing of the sort.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: It appears that the time of the clerks in the Government departments is to be taken up in giving unnecessary information to the hon. member.

Mr. George: It is a pity you are so young.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. member's remarks about the State brickworks do not do him credit. I cannot believe that with his experience as Commissioner of Railways he thought that these State brickworks at Beenup were put there in order to defeat him at the elections.

Mr. George: I quoted the hon. member for Bunbury.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He ought instead to be going round his district claiming credit for the establishment of these works in the interests of the State.

Mr. George: I am not worrying.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Instead of which he appears to be crying out because public works are going on in his constituency. I wish that these brickworks at Beenup had been established in my electorate instead of his.

Mr. George: Why do you not stick to the truth? I only said what the hon. member for Bunbury said.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: This House certainly got the impression stated by me. The hon. member was also unfair to the management of the agricultural machinery works. If the hon. member would only go down and have a look at these works for himself, as many other hon. members have

done, I believe he would form a different opinion instead of making charges against them of importing machinery.

Mr. George: I only said a word against them in regard to importing machinery.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: He said they were simply engaged in making up machinery.

Mr. George: I did not.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. member does not know what he did say.

Mr. George: I did not say that.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. member complained that the machinery was not being manufactured in Western Australia, but that it was being imported and that the Government brand was being put on it in this State.

Mr. George: I said they were importing machines and sending them out as being their own manufacture. I did not say they were not making machinery.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: If the hon. member would go down there he would see that first-rate machinery is being manufactured by Australian workmen, and that there are 679 men employed there at the present time. It is indeed a most creditable undertaking, and the hon. member for Murray-Wellington ought to get up and thank the Government for their action in establishing these works.

Mr. George: I did not say a word against them.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I would like to express my regret that the Upper House has thrown out such a number of important measures during the last two and a half years. With regard to the question of constitutional reform, it is time that the situation was faced by the Government. We have now a case against another place, and I hope the Government will take it to the country at the forthcoming elections. It is a remarkable thing to me to see the difference between the Constitution of this State, and that of the Commonwealth, and to see how a section of the community have looked after their own interests in State affairs compared with the way the interests of the people are treated in the Federal arena. We find in the Federal Parliament the Prime Minister, Mr. Cook, can get a double dissolution because only

one small Bill, although this contained a valuable and important principle, has been rejected by the Senate, and yet under our Constitution 30 important measures have been thrown out, and we have absolutely no redress at all. I would like to point out also the extraordinary basis on which the Upper House of Western Australia is elected. It is not generally realised that whilst a majority of the people have no vote at all, a minority have anything up to 10 votes if they are lucky enough to have interests in 10 separate provinces. It appears to me most unfair, from the point of view of vested interests, that if a man has £500,000 worth of property in one province, he only has one vote for it. And yet, on the other hand, if a man has £500 worth of property equally distributed over 10 provinces he would have no less than 10 votes for his £500 worth of property, as compared with the one vote that a man having £500,000 worth of property in one province would get.

Mr. George: Would you give votes in proportion to a man's possessions?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I would have one man one vote only and would give every adult a vote. I am complaining of the system under which two-thirds of the people of Western Australia have no vote at all for the Upper House, whilst a few of the people can exercise up to 10 votes for that conservative and unrepresentative Chamber.

Mr. George: You are one of those yourself.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I certainly have votes, but I use them, as far as I can, to assist in the abolition of the Upper House. I am satisfied that this is the only way in which we can ever make that progress that is necessary or bring about the consummation of the Labour policy on the statute-book of this country. I wish to emphasise also the difference in the number of voters of these provinces. We find that the Central province has 3,702 electors; the East province, 6,023 electors; the Metropolitan, 8,303; the Metropolitan-Suburban, 15,053; the North province, 804; the North-East province, 2,888; the South province, 3,450; the South-East province, 5,266;

the South-West province, 4,704. and the West province, 5,526 electors.

Mr. George: They are all right in the South-West.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: These figures speak for themselves, and render superfluous any further comment. We find that the electors for the North province, namely, 804, a large proportion of whom are living in the metropolitan area, elect three members to the Upper House of Western Australia, and yet in the Metropolitan-Suburban province, with 15,053 electors, these also have only three members in that Chamber. The whole system on which the Upper House is elected is out of date, incongruous, and opposed to the spirit of modern democracy. I hope the Government will do their utmost to see this system altered. The proposal which the Government have in view in this matter is to pass a Veto Bill through this Chamber this session. I hope they do get it through. We find that in the old country—and surely hon. members will agree that Australia claims to be more democratic than the old country—they passed a Veto Bill. We find now that if the people's House pass a measure for three years in succession it becomes the law of the land without the approval of the House of Lords.

Mr. Elliott: That is an hereditary Chamber.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: But our Upper House is worse than an hereditary Chamber. If this were a nominated Chamber, we could get rid of it by swamping it; but, unfortunately, under the existing conditions we cannot do that. Surely, if the people's House in the Old Country can rule, if the House of Commons can place legislation on the statute-book without the consent of the property Chamber, we are justified in asking for similar power for the people in this new free land of ours. I hope the Government will carry the Bill through, and I hope that at the coming election they will submit this question to the people of Western Australia whether the Upper House approves of such a referendum or not. Let the Government submit to every elector at the coming State elections

a ballot paper asking him or her "Are you in favour of the Veto Bill becoming law?" If that is done, there is no question but that an emphatic yes will be returned by the people of Western Australia. Then we shall have something to go to the Old Country on, to go to the British Parliament on, to approach Lloyd George upon, and ask him and his Government to give us here in Western Australia the same relief from the domination of a Conservative Upper Chamber that they have fought for and won in Great Britain. I wish to say a few words about the bulk handling of wheat. I must confess that when I heard His Excellency reading the Speech I was disappointed at there being no reference to the bulk handling of wheat in that document. The question has been before the country for some time now. Western Australia is one of the leading wheat growing States in Australia. It is a State that promises in the near future to become the principal wheat growing State of Australia. That brings home the urgency of the matter for the Government's immediate attention. I have here a report made by Mr. Niel Nielsen to the Government of New South Wales on this subject.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Why do they not do bulk handling there?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: They are pledged to it, and are apportioning a sum of money for it during the present session of Parliament. The report deals with the question comprehensively, and the arguments used, to my mind, apply just as much to Western Australia as they do to the mother State of New South Wales. Mr. Nielsen says—

Looking at the question from every point of view, I feel strongly in favour of our altering our system of handling grain so as to bring it into line with that already adopted by other grain-producing countries. The initial cost will be considerable, but the greater part of it will fall upon the Government through the Railway Commissioners, and the ultimate gain to everyone will more than repay all parties concerned, including the Government.

It will, moreover, put our grain growers in a position to fairly compete with the other grain-growing countries of the world. The advantages may be set out as follows :—(1) The immense saving in labour, time, and cost of handling the grain. Terminal elevators in America receive, unload, store the grain for any period up to ten days, and load it into ships for a charge of half a cent. a bushel, equal to one farthing of our money. (2) The saving in shipping charges by the reduction of the time occupied in loading and unloading, and the consequent reduction in harbour and wharfage dues, as well as in the ship's charter time. (3) The reduction of the area of water frontage and wharfage accommodation necessary, owing to the expedition in loading and unloading. (4) The expedition in unloading railway cars, thus doing away with the congestion at the terminal point, and releasing the cars with much greater celerity than is possible at present. (5) The avoidance of the loss now accruing in handling by the leakage from torn sacks (one does not see a grain wasted round an elevator). (6) The absolute security of the grain during transportation, from any condition of weather, by its being in rainproof cars, these cars also preventing any possibility of pilfering. (7) The value of the box car over other forms of car for transportation of other classes of goods in the off season. (8) The ease of cleaning and grading grain, thus saving carriage on dirt as well as sacks. (9) The saving to the farmer of the cost of providing sacks every season. (10) The abolition of the man-killing work of handling grain in sacks. (11) The placing of our grain upon the London markets in better condition by reason of its being cleaned and graded, the saving of the handling operations at that end, and the securing of better competition among the buyers (at present many of the buyers deal only in grain coming to the Continent in bulk).

I commend this very comprehensive report of Mr. Nielsen to the attention of the Government. I have also a report from Mr. G. T. Burrell, an American expert who was specially brought to New South Wales by the Labour Government of that State to report on the question. Mr. Burrell quotes most interesting figures, which, however, at this late hour I do not propose to repeat in detail. Those figures prove that under the existing system of handling grain the farmer loses no less than £50 8s. 6d. on every 1,000 bags of wheat, or just 4d. per bushel. Mr. Burrell says that on a crop of 30,000,000 bushels, which was the return in New South Wales, there would be effected a saving of £437,000 per year if bulk handling were introduced. Next year we shall have a crop of at least 15,000,000 bushels in Western Australia. It is quite likely that our return may be 18,000,000 or 20,000,000 bushels; but, on Mr. Burrell's figures, if we have even a 15,000,000 bushel crop next year, the saving to the farmer through bulk handling would be not less than £218,500 on the one year's operations. These figures seem immense, but they are here in black and white submitted by expert gentlemen. I hope that the Government will take the matter up promptly. I would have said more on this subject had it not been that the Premier made a statement concerning it in *the West Australian* of the 14th July. His statement reads as follows :—

The Government had decided, in a general way, upon the adoption of the bulk handling system, but the financial aspect had not yet been considered, as no estimates of the cost had yet been received from the departments concerned. No specific amount of expenditure had therefore been decided upon. Authority, however, had been given to Mr. Bath, who is now in Melbourne in connection with the Australian scheme of representation at San Francisco, to consult with the Minister for Agriculture in New South Wales on the question of a joint arrangement between the

two States with a view to a saving of expenditure, the New South Wales Government have already resolved to adopt bulk handling. The Government had not yet received any communication from Mr. Bath on the subject.

It is understood that New South Wales is introducing the bulk handling system, and the Premier says he hopes that the two States will be able to work together in the matter. For my part I am extremely pleased to know that our Government are taking the matter up. The Premier was wrong, however, in saying that there was no estimate of cost, since we have had presented to Parliament lately the report of the local bulk handling of grain advisory board. In this report it is stated that the estimated capital expenditure necessary to inaugurate the system is £261,700, of which a sum of £100,000 would be required for modern rolling stock. The revenue is estimated at £34,900. Hon. members will see, therefore, that the system when inaugurated will more than pay for itself. I would like to add that the members of our local Advisory Board were unanimous in recommending that the bulk handling system should be introduced into this country gradually. The figures I have quoted show that it means a saving of more than £200,000 per year to our producers to have the system brought into being at an early date. Our Commission suggests that it should be done in time for the harvest of 1915-16, and I hope the Government will take up the matter in all seriousness and make provision for the necessary expenditure and see that the wheat growers are given the benefit of bulk handling. The statement of the Premier is gratifying to the extent that the Government have decided on the scheme, but the action proposed is not definite enough for me, and I hope the Government will give us something further on the subject very soon. I would like to say a few words on the question of the appointment of local Governors, and I think the experience of this State and of Tasmania during the last few months shows us that it is necessary that the resolution passed by

this House last session at the instance of the member for Swan, in favour of the appointment of citizens of the Commonwealth as Governors, should be carried into effect very quickly. There is no doubt that if the people of Western Australia were consulted on this question they would like to see such men as Sir Edward Stone or Sir John Forrest appointed to the position of State Governor, when a vacancy occurs, as it must occur, in the not distant future. I would be quite prepared to trust either of those gentlemen to carry out all the functions attached to this high office, and they would do it with a dignity and fairness equal to that which has been displayed in the past. As a citizen of Western Australia, I am sorry to say that the S.P.C.A. have been prevented from holding their big annual social event in Government House ballroom, where it has been conducted so successfully for many years past. It is clear that the Governor has a perfect right to refuse the society the use of the ballroom, but it is the duty of the Government, when the next vacancy occurs for the office of Governor, to see that the control of Government House ballroom is retained by the Ministry. I find the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals have had the use of Government House grounds almost from their inception as a society. In March, 1894, Sir Alexander Onslow granted to the society the use of Government House grounds for three nights to enable that institution to carry out a big fair in aid of their funds. In April, 1900, and again in May, 1903, the meetings of the society were actually held at Government House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): They have abused it.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The hon. member knows better than that. In 1900 Sir Alexander Onslow gave the society permission to use the ballroom, and for 14 successive years it has been lent to the society by Sir Alexander Onslow, Sir Arthur Lawley, Sir Frederick Bedford, and Sir Gerald Strickland, and last year we found an explanation in the Press to the effect that as Sir Gerald Strickland had promised the use



of the ball room to the society, the society's annual function could be held there that year, but that it was doubtful whether Sir Harry Barron would renew the privilege this year. That statement appeared in the Press before the function was held last year, so it is apparent it was not on account of anything that took place at that function last year that the courtesy was not again extended to the society this year. If the Honorary Minister believes what he just stated, he would believe that Sir Gerald Strickland lent it to the society knowing the society should not be granted the privilege of using the ballroom. For my part I refuse to believe that.

Mr. George: Do you accept the statement as to why it was not lent to the society?

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I have here the statement which appeared in the *West Australian* of the 8th June and it reads—

On inquiry at Government House on Saturday a representative of the *West Australian* was informed of the reason why the S.P.C.A. have not been granted the use of Government House ballroom for their annual ball this year. It was stated that objection had been taken to the use of the room by the society on the ground that the ball had developed, during recent years, from a semi-private institution, where admission was more or less regulated by invitation, into an open ball, practically without restriction as to admittance, and, as such, was not a fit function for Government House. It was further stated that the Society was not so urgently in need of funds as to be deserving of the special concession asked for; on the contrary, it was in a sound financial condition. At the same time regret was expressed at the fact that suitable halls are so few in Perth.

I think it would have been very much better if no explanation at all had been given rather than that one of this nature should be put forward, because it is untrue to say that that function was of a semi-private nature, or that the society does not need the revenue.

I have been to the ball on occasions and I wish to say it is untrue to suggest that anything ever went on there that was not in accordance with decorum and decent behaviour. The S.P.C.A. are an absolutely undenominational concern, and the business people of the metropolitan area, as well as the Government railways, have suffered a loss through the inability of the society to obtain Government House ball room for their function. From two to twenty guineas is paid by ladies for their dresses for this event and this money being kept out of circulation must have had a bad effect on trade in the metropolitan area.

Mr. George: Perhaps the husbands are glad.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: The society, finding that their main source of revenue has been taken from them, are about to approach the Government for an increased subsidy. The society which have done such good work receive a subsidy of only £100 a year from the Government. This year, through their inability to hold the ball, they will lose £400, and I sincerely trust the Government will recompense them to that extent.

Mr. Broun: There are other places where they could go.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: There is no other place for a big function of this kind.

Mr. George: They could have got Queen's Hall.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: Queen's Hall would not suit the society. The Government House ball room cost £30,000 of the people's money to construct and it is only used three or four times a year.

Mr. George: Turn up the debate on the construction of it.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I have read it. What I want to urge is that the Government should consider the desirability, when the present Governor's term of office is about to expire, to remove Government House to another site altogether.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The Government have any amount of money.

**Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON** This removal could be done at a great profit to the people. We are living in a period when city improvements and beautifying generally is the object of the people in modern and civilised communities. If we go along St. George's-terrace, we find that Stirling Square, which consists of only 4 acres 1 rood 18 perches, is at times congested with people, and that it is the only breathing space in this central portion of the City. Yet at the same time we find alongside that overcrowded public garden the Governor's private grounds consisting of no less than 14 acres 1 rood 9 perches of land, eminently adapted by its situation and by nature for a public park for the benefit of the people. I am just as loyal as the member for Murray-Wellington and I want to see the representative of the King, whoever he may be while we have one, suitably accommodated. It would be very good business for the Government and the people of Perth if the Government built a new, modern residence for the next Governor who comes here. Now is the time to start if it is to be ready for his accommodation in eighteen months time. It could be built at Crawley or some other such desirable place, and the whole of the present Government House gardens, consisting of some 14 acres, could be made into a magnificent public park for the benefit of the people. The present Government House could be used for Government offices. This could and should be done. Then the ballroom could be made a State institution and not a Governor's institution. It would be under the control of the Government, just the same as is the Government Observatory. If this were done the Governor could have it for levees or functions for which he might require it, and the Government, in their wisdom, and remembering it was built with £30,000 of the people's money, could lend it to different charities, so that the whole of the people would get a fair measure of benefit from the use of the room.

**Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister):** A very interesting proposition.

**Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON:** It is a very simple proposition and one that ought to commend itself to the approval of the democrat who has just spoken.

**Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister):** Not to any reasonable mind.

**Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON:** Still it ought to. In bringing this matter forward I am not actuated with any desire to see the society get the ballroom this year, because I doubt very much if they would take it if it were offered to them. I imagine that even if the olive branch were held out from Government House to the society it would not be accepted. In regard to the Speech before the House, I am pleased to see that a maternity hospital is being established for the training of midwives, and I hope that in accordance with their policy the Government will also authorise the establishment of maternity wards at the district hospitals in the various outback centres.

**Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister):** There are, in the most important districts.

**Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON:** I am glad of that, as such a ward is required at Narrogin. The £5 bonus does not give sufficient help, and the sooner a number of maternity wards are established the better. I would like to urge on the Attorney General the necessity of appointing a Crown defender. I have had a good many letters from people who have been put to considerable annoyance and great expense through having charges levelled against them in the criminal court, charges of which they have been found to be innocent. The duty of the Government is to see that every citizen receives justice, and it is not just to bring up a man on a criminal charge, and to pay the expenses of the prosecution, and when that man is proved innocent by a jury of his fellows to have him ruined financially through the expense to which he has been wrongly put by the action of the prosecution. In other parts of the civilised world a Crown defender has been appointed, notably in California, with the same duties and same powers as the Crown prosecutor. The State has

recognised the principle already, because in all capital charges it finds a Crown defender for the accused if he is unable to do it for himself. If it is a wrong thing to hang an innocent man because he has not enough money to obtain proper legal defence for himself, it is wrong to give a man seven years or even seven days if he is innocent, and because he has been found guilty through not having a proper defence.

Mr. Elliott: But the Attorney General lets them out.

Mr. E. B. JOHNSTON: I hope the Government will take this matter up. The citizens of the State do not want a man to be convicted wrongly, and the only fair way is for the State to take the responsibility of finding a Crown defender. I would like, in conclusion, to say that in my opinion the work of the Government, as disclosed in the Governor's Speech and known to me generally, has more than justified the action of the people in putting them into power two and three-quarter years ago. I think the Government, with their magnificent record of achievement, can go to the country with every confidence of a sure and certain return. The Government have opened up the country and have shown their faith in it; they have built public works from end to end of it, with their magnificent policy of railway construction, and above all they have put forward measure after measure for the social improvement and betterment of the condition of the people. It is true that most of those latter measures have been thrown out by the Upper House; it is true that the country is not nearly so prosperous and the people not nearly so happy as they would have been if our legislation had been carried into effect. We have to fight that Upper House and find means, through a Veto Bill or any other way, to get the noble policy of the Labour party on the statute-book. During the last three years we have had a good Government. What we want for the coming three years is the return of that Government to power, sound administration and good seasons. I am sure that if we have good seasons, we will have the other two essentials as

long as the Labour party are in power; and if this country is only blessed with good seasons also I am satisfied that the Labour Government will safely steer the ship of State into the harbour of prosperity.

Mr. McDOWALL (Coolgardie): I do not intend to occupy the attention of the House for more than a few minutes.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Move the adjournment; we want to catch the last train.

Mr. McDOWALL: I am afraid you will not catch the last train to-night.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Will you not take a motion for the adjournment, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot while the hon. member for Coolgardie is on his feet.

Mr. McDOWALL: I am willing to give way if there is any intention to adjourn the debate, but I do not think there is the slightest intention to do that. However, I am only going to occupy the time of the House for a few minutes. I wish to congratulate the Government on the excellent Governor's Speech which has been presented. On looking at this document, one realises that the country is full of prosperity, that the agricultural industry, the gold mining industry, and all other industries, are flourishing.

Hon. Frank Wilson: All on paper.

Mr. McDOWALL: It is a magnificent document I must confess, and it shows the unbounded confidence we have in the State. When we contemplate it we realise that it is almost impossible to pull it to pieces. But notwithstanding the magnificence of the report, the leader of the Opposition discredits it to the utmost possible extent.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is not correct.

Mr. Underwood: He says there is a reign of chaos.

Mr. McDOWALL: The leader of the Opposition complained of the progress and contended that everything had been initiated by himself.

Hon. Frank Wilson: There is no question that many of the things were initiated by the Liberals.

Mr. McDOWALL: The hon. member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell) adopted the same attitude as his leader, and therefore, one is at a loss to understand what the Labour Government have done.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Nothing.

Mr. McDOWALL: It is not worth begging the question the leader of the Opposition contends that the Government have done nothing.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Nothing but mismanage things.

Mr. McDOWALL: They have done everything. This reminds me of a show I saw in the historic town of Coolgardie. The man in charge of the waxworks connected with this show was a bit of a crank, which perhaps improves the illustration. He had manufactured the wax figures, and he contemplated them with great satisfaction, just as the leader of the Opposition regards the works of his Government. The man pointed to his waxen figures, and declaimed, "My work, my work; this is all my work." So it is with the leader of the Opposition. We find him gazing at his splendid work and musing, "The Labour Government have done nothing, and the Liberal Government have done everything." I am pleased that the gold yield has increased during the year, and I trust that the Ministry will give a little more attention to the industry. All said and done, gold mining is the chief industry of the State. Notwithstanding all that might be said to the contrary by the Country party and others, gold mining is still the mainstay of Western Australia. It distributes the greatest amount of money and produces the greatest item of export, and therefore the industry should receive every possible consideration. There is a question in connection with the Mining Development Act to which I desire to direct attention. If a loan is made and the mine is developed to a certain extent and then falls in to the Crown, only in the event of it becoming payable do the new lessees pay for the work previously done. There is a certain amount of reason for adopting this attitude. If a shaft is sunk and the people taking

over the mine subsequently use that shaft, it is not unreasonable that they should be asked to reimburse the Government in respect of the value of that work. But the people on the goldfields cannot appreciate this argument, and I suggest that we might make a clean sheet of all these loans and start over again.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What are you going to do with them? You have renewed them all lately.

Mr. McDOWALL: There are leases such as the Undaunted and the Redemption in Coolgardie, and others in various parts of the State to which loans have been made. It would be wise if the Government cleaned the slate in respect to these loans and threw the leases open to people to work as they please. At the present time people are allowed to take up these leases, and are not asked to pay for the value of the workings unless they use them and the mine is a payable proposition. But it is of no use arguing in favour of this arrangement with the people concerned. They ask why they should be encumbered with the liability of the persons who preceded them, and consequently I ask that the slate should be cleared of this class of proposition. If this is done, it means that we will be practically doing away with the Mining Development Act because the Government will not lend money without security. It will be much better to do away with this law, and let people know what assistance they are likely to receive from the Government in connection with mining matters. I have no intention of debating any other matters this evening because of the lateness of the hour, and I understand that other members desire to address the House. I would urge the Minister for Mines, however, to look into the question I have raised, and ascertain whether it is possible to do away with the restrictions which at present exist. In conclusion, I congratulate the Government on the splendid record of work outlined in the Speech, and on the prosperity of the country in general. Three years ago I predicted that the acts of the Government would

be of such a nature as to warrant the return of the Labour party to power at the following general elections. I trust that my prophecy will be fulfilled in its entirety.

Mr. BROWN moved—

*That the debate be adjourned.*

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

Ayes	..	..	..	6
Noes	..	..	..	16

Majority against	..	10
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#### AYES.

Mr. Brown	Mr. Monger
Mr. Elliott	Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Male	Mr. Wisdom

(Teller.)

#### NOES.

Mr. Angwin	Mr. McDowall
Mr. Bolton	Mr. McLeod
Mr. Chesson	Mr. Mullany
Mr. Foley	Mr. Munzie
Mr. Johnston	Mr. Thomas
Mr. Lander	Mr. Turvey
Mr. Lewis	Mr. Walker
Mr. McDonald	Mr. Underwood

(Teller.)

Motion thus negatived.

Mr. MUNSIE (Hannans): Although the hour is late, I cannot allow this opportunity to go without having a word or two to say upon the address which His Excellency has been pleased to deliver on the occasion of the opening of the fourth session of the present Parliament, and to reply to some of the criticism which has been levelled against the Government by some of the members of the Opposition, and also to deal with some of the matters contained in the Speech. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I wish to deal with the items contained in the Speech that will be considered by this House during the present session. We first come to the question of constitutional reform. A good deal has been said by the two previous speakers under this head, and I do not intend to deal very fully with it. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that in no State of the Commonwealth, and probably no self-governing dominion within the Brit-

ish Empire, is there as much necessity for constitutional reform for the purpose of reforming the second Chamber, than there is in the State of Western Australia. Just at the present time we are practically in the throes of a Federal election, and I notice in to-day's paper that the Prime Minister, Mr. Cook, in his Policy speech made at Parramatta, said as follows:—"The present position had become intolerable by the action of the Senate in blocking the will of the people." I want to contrast the action of the Senate, emphasising the point that it is elected by dual franchise, with the actions of our own Legislative Council. The Senate have practically blocked one Bill only, whereas our Legislative Council have blocked dozens of measures during the life of this Parliament, which would have meant prosperity to individuals throughout this State. at all events to a great mass of the people of Western Australia. I hope that the Government, when they introduce this Bill, will not be satisfied with its mere rejection by the Upper House and I also trust that it will be dealt with at the forthcoming elections, when I am fairly confident the Scaddan Government will be again returned with a fair majority. I do say that if, within 12 months of their returning after the next elections, they deem it advisable to put this country to the expense of another general election they will force something to be done to give to the people of the State the right to rule themselves by a popular vote. Another item contained in the Speech is the Initiative and Referendum, with which I am absolutely in accord, but I realise that unless we can get a reform of the Upper Chamber in some way, we have no possible hope of ever placing upon the statute book of Western Australia the Bill known as the Initiative and Referendum. The other measures contained in the Speech have most of them been dealt with. Two of the Bills have been discussed in this Chamber on two previous occasions, namely, the Irrigation Bill and the Traffic Bill. I trust that on this occasion they will receive more generous support at the hands of the opponents of progress in

this State, and that these measures, at all events, become law. I also wish to congratulate the Government upon again endeavouring to have passed the railway from Esperance northwards. I believe that, on this occasion, with the representatives we have in the Upper House of our own party, and the representatives of the Country party, we will succeed in getting that Bill placed upon the statute-book; at all events I hope so. I want to deal next with some of the criticisms of our opponents upon the attitude of the present Government. Of course, the main topic of criticism has been State enterprises, and particularly amongst these are the State steamers and the State butcher shops. I have a vivid recollection that some little time ago their chief criticism was aimed at the State milk supply. First of all, let me deal with the State butcher shops. The whole of their argument up to date is levelled against the Government, because they contend that they are going to ruin the small butcher. No doubt the whole of their sympathies go out to the small man. What does it really mean? We have one hon. gentleman opposite interjecting during the course of the Premier's speech that the beef or carcasses that were being distributed at the various meat sales were of such an insignificant quantity that it did not make any difference. I want to know why they are squealing so much about the State butcher shops if they are only retailing such a small amount of meat. I desire to quote a few figures in connection with the meat industry. They have been quoted times out of number, but I think they will bear repetition. On the introduction of the State butcher shops, I believe the Government went to the trouble of getting an actuary to work out what it meant to the people of the metropolitan area if the price of meat could be reduced by 1d. per pound. My hon. friend opposite argued that the introduction of State steamers and State butcher shops has not had the desired effect of reducing the price of meat. To that I wish to give an emphatic denial. Personally I am in Perth purchasing meat at my own door, not from the State butcher shops, but from pri-

vate individuals, at 1d. per pound less to-day than I was paying previous to the introduction of State butcher shops. I say that every other individual in Perth at the head of a home can do likewise if he so desires. Not only that, Mr. Speaker, not only has it had the effect of reducing the price of meat, but under existing circumstances, with stock selling at the price it is in the open sale yards to-day, if the Government meat shops were not in existence meat would be at least 2d. or 2½d. in the pound more to the consumer to-day than it is. What does 1d. in the pound mean to the people of the metropolitan area?

Mr. Broun: Meat was never higher than it is at the present time.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Yes, it was.

Mr. MUNSIE: The statement of the member for Beverley (Mr. Broun) is one which, so far as I am concerned, is incorrect. I am paying 1d. per pound less now than I was paying before the State butcher shops were established. Therefore I contend that meat was dearer before the establishment of those shops than it is to-day.

Mr. Broun: You are not getting nearly such good quality now.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes; as good now as then.

Mr. Broun: You are getting frozen meat now.

Mr. MUNSIE: No. The reduction of the price of meat by 1d. per pound in the metropolitan area means £300 per day into the pockets of the people. That sum may seem rather large; but if hon. members care to go into the matter they will, I believe, find that the statistician was on the low side when he made that estimate. On the Fremantle and Perth divisions of the Federal roll there are no less than 75,000 electors. Assuming that these 75,000 adults consume one pound of meat per head per day, hon. members will see that the reduction means fully £300 per day saved to the people. That being so, I want to know what is the value of all the Opposition criticism on the fact that the State steamers, on the balance sheet just published, have incurred a loss of

£23,000 for the year? Taking the daily saving of £300 to the people at six days per week, that saving means £93,900 for the twelve months; and when the loss of £23,000 on the State steamers has been deducted there still remains a gain of fully £70,000 per annum. I take it that the people of Western Australia realise the beneficial effect of the State Steamship Service in this connection; and I am perfectly satisfied that if the Liberals were returned to power to-morrow, they would not dare to interfere with either the State steamers or the State butcher shops.

Mr. Elliott: What effect has there been on the goldfields?

Mr. MUNSIE: I am pleased to have that interjection. Although I do not credit to the State steamers the whole of the reduction in price which has taken place on the goldfields, I am in a position to inform the hon. member that since the establishment of the State Steamship Service the price of meat on the Eastern goldfields has fallen by at least 2½d. per pound. It is rather surprising to me to find that all this criticism should be levelled at the running of State steamships on the North-West coast, in view of the attitude of the Liberal candidates at the recent election for the North Province. There was no Labour candidate contesting that seat. The four gentlemen contesting it were all pledged Liberals; or perhaps I should say, three pledged Liberals, and one gentleman who, whilst absolutely declining to be pledged, supported the Liberal policy. Strange to say, the whole of those four Liberal candidates advocated, on the hustings in the North-West, the continuance of the State steamers on the coast. And still the Liberals come into this House and criticise, and say that if they were returned to power to-morrow, they would wipe the steamship service out.

Mr. Brown: They criticised the steamers.

Mr. MUNSIE: I am perfectly satisfied that even if they were returned to power—which is not likely—the Liberals would not dare to interfere with those steamers. Now, with regard to the State

milk supply, the Liberals used similar arguments about two years ago. The milk supply was initiated at Claremont, and immediately upon its initiation the same class of letters as are now being published in opposition to the State steamers and the State butcheries appeared in every morning's *West Australian*—most of them, probably, written by the same man. The writers of those letters felt the deepest sympathy for the poor dairyman. Despite all the opposition, the Government still carry on the milk supply. They have not only supplied milk of pure quality to the hospitals—and, I may specially remark, to the Children's Hospital—but they have done so at a lesser cost than that of the previous inferior supply; and on top of that they have shown a profit of £800.

Mr. Turvey: And saved many lives.

Mr. MUNSIE: Yes. I wish to emphasise the point to which the member for Swan draws attention, that the best of all the good features of the Government milk supply is that this supply has been the means of saving many lives. However, since the establishment of that enterprise, the Government have had larger projects to engage their energies. State saw mills, State brick works, and State agricultural implement works have been brought into existence. Strangely enough, while the Opposition generally speaking are prepared to utterly condemn every class of State enterprise, three members of the Opposition have gone so far as to declare that they are not entirely opposed to the State manufacture of agricultural implements. I refer to the member for York (Mr. Monger), the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell), and the member for Geraldton (Mr. Elliott). In point of fact, those three hon. members express themselves as in favour of this particular State enterprise providing the manager can do what he says he will do. At the same time, however, they are doing all they possibly can to prevent the manager from succeeding. Their conduct, to my mind, shows a high degree of consistency. Next, we have the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George)

asserting here to-night that the State Implement Works at Fremantle are not manufacturing implements, but are purchasing implements from abroad and re-painting these imported implements and then selling them as State-manufactured. I wish to inform that hon. member—

Mr. Broun: He did not say they were not manufacturing implements.

Mr. MUNSIE: What he said was that they were purchasing implements abroad, repainting them, and sending them out as State-made implements.

Mr. Broun: That is true.

Mr. MUNSIE: He evidently knows more about it than I know; but the point I want to make is that, even supposing the management of the State Implement Works are doing as alleged, still they are supplying the farmer—and this is undoubted—with implements at prices fully 20 per cent. lower than he could buy those implements from anywhere else, and that, therefore, the works are performing a service highly advantageous to the agricultural industry of this State. Criticism of the kind referred to reminds me strongly of a statement made by a gentleman not many miles from where we are sitting to-night. It was at a function in Kalamunda that the gentleman made his somewhat astonishing statement. He said that he had never entertained any feeling but that of unrelenting hostility to all forms of State socialism; and very shortly afterwards he advocated on the floor of the other Chamber that the Government should not only construct, but construct and maintain, a road from Kalamunda to Welshpool. That gentleman was thoroughly prepared to support State enterprise when it suited himself.

Mr. Elliott: Whom are you talking about?

Mr. MUNSIE: The hon. Mr. Sanderson. There is another matter to which I desire to refer. Two members of the Opposition, and especially the member for Northam (Hon. J. Mitchell), took strong exception to certain remarks and interjections from this side of the House to the effect that members opposite had

proved by their actions that they paid more attention to profits and dividends than to the welfare of the workers in the various industries of the State. I now make the same statement, and in case the statement should be considered blameworthy, I will give reasons for it. Not a single measure introduced during the past three years whereby the employees had anything to gain, but has been strenuously opposed by hon. members opposite. I will mention a few instances. There is the Mines Regulation Bill. The member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom), referring to that measure in his speech the other evening, said that the Minister for Mines in introducing the Bill had advocated the appointment of workmen's inspectors; and the member for Claremont proceeded to ask how many inspectors the Minister had appointed since the introduction of that Bill, and had he appointed any inspectors since its introduction. For the hon. member's information I wish to mention that the Minister for Mines has appointed inspectors since the Bill was defeated. Further, I wish to point out to the member for Claremont that the Bill contained other clauses which were just as valuable as that providing for the appointment of workmen's inspectors. First and foremost was the principle of the appointment of workmen's inspectors, a principle which was bitterly opposed by members on the other side. Then there was the most important feature, to my mind, of all the reforms that were asked for in that Bill—namely, the abolition of night shift. That proposal again was bitterly opposed by every member on the other side of the House, and the leader of the Opposition went so far as to say that the men would object to the abolition of night shift and that the coal miners in New South Wales were working three shifts. I would like to inform the hon. member that the coal miners in New South Wales never work three shifts, and for many months past they have only worked two shifts at a few of the collieries. A big percentage are working day shift only. The abolition of contract, limiting the height of stopes and other conditions which are likely to be of benefit to those



who are employed in mining have been opposed bitterly by our friends opposite. They have also opposed the second travelling way, a thing that I can hardly imagine, especially if anyone knows anything about mining and especially if they were conscientious at all and were anxious to do anything for the benefit of the employees. Members opposite should be guided by those who know that it is necessary that a second travelling way should be provided by law. The deplorable disaster which happened in Tasmania would never have occurred if there had been a provision in the Tasmanian mining laws such as was introduced in the Mines Regulation Bill here. The re-enactment of the liability clause was also opposed by our friends opposite, as well as the granting of certificates to managers, shift bosses and surveyors, the employment of foreigners, and the bringing of quarries under the provision of the Act, so that an inspector might have them under supervision. Even the provision for the ordinary inspection of a quarry where men might be employed was opposed by our friends. And they wonder why we charge them with thinking more of profits than those who are engaged in the industry. In regard to the Workers' Compensation Bill which was introduced here, the same thing applies. While we have an amending law on our statute-book today, it is due to the efforts of the Labour party. The measure, however, is not what it would have been if it had received just treatment at the hands of those who considered it. There were two provisions in that measure which were introduced by the present Government to which our friends opposite are opposed and which another place succeeded in deleting. There was the question of giving the employee the same right as the employer to sue for a lump sum. This is only a reasonable proposition. What do we find? They give the employer the right to take the employee to the court and to say that he shall have the amount he is to receive assessed in that court, and they refuse the right of the employee to say that he can take the employer to the court to have the amount assessed. There is also

the item of payment from the date of the accident. That was introduced here, but it was defeated in another place. May I read in connection with this matter portion of an article which appeared in one of the Liberal organs of this State, practically on the same subject. It is only in accord with the majority of the articles written as far as these principles are concerned, from the Liberal standpoint. It is headed, "Miners' Union Policy." It deals with a ballot taken recently by the Boulder branch of the Federated Miners' Union, in connection with the abolition of accident pay, and, after ridiculing the officials for putting that ballot before the men, the article goes on—

What makes the malingerer mostly? It is the present method of expending accident pay. A man must be off work two weeks before he gets half-pay from the mines and half-pay from the unions, and it stands to reason that if a mishap keeps a man unemployed, say, six days, he is not going to work until the full fortnight is up—that is if he can get out of it. If the trucker or bogger is hurt for six days and he goes back to work at the end of that period, he works the second six days for nothing. If he remains off for the fortnight he gets just as much as if he were in the mine, so what is the inducement for him to go back? That is the reason there are so many who feign incapacity and why the funds of the union are so depleted. If a more comfortable position is desired as regards accident pay the union should pay in proportion to the incapacity. A man should not be encouraged, as he is now, to take a fortnight's spell instead of a week's, and we have not the slightest doubt that if men were given half-pay from the time of their accident right up to the period when they were certified sound, the bottom of the accident fund bag would not be so near.

The Boulder branch, against which this criticism is directed, has not only since its existence given accident pay from the date of the accident, but since the passage of the Workers' Compensation Act in 1902, right up to some 12 months ago,

paid an extra amount of accident money from the date of the accident for the first fortnight, to tide the injured man over his difficulty, because he was not allowed to receive anything under the Workers' Compensation Act. This is about on a par with most of the criticisms levelled at the Labour party and their actions. There are one or two other matters I want to refer to, principally in connection with the mining industry, and while speaking on that industry I want to deal with a couple of subjects which were referred to recently, as a matter of fact, on the third of the present month, at a civic reception at Kalgoorlie tendered to Mr. G. C. Klug, the general manager for Bewick, Moreing & Co. for Western Australia. In one of the speeches delivered we find that Mr. Hamilton, the general manager of the Great Boulder mine—whose speech was fairly fully reported in the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, and it was also copied by the *West Australian*—that gentleman bewailed the fact that the men on the Murchison had refused to work under the contract system, and he went on to say that the local Press and many public men were deploring the fact that mining companies were investing their money elsewhere, and that if they wanted the companies to spend more money in the development of mining in this State, it was necessary for the workers to offer some attraction instead of hunting it away by regulations which hampered mining and did no good to anyone. There is not much necessity for me to deal with Mr. Hamilton's speech. The other speech I wish to refer to was, to use a sporting phrase, mentioned as "having also spoken." Luckily, however, there was another journal in the district which happened to have a representative present, and that representative reported what was said. I refer to the speech made by Mr. R. S. Black, manager of the Kalgurli gold mine, who followed Mr. Hamilton. This is what he was reported to have said—

Mr. R. S. Black, manager of the Kalgurli G.M., followed, and merely mentioning Mr. Klug's name in passing, proceeded to open out in a most bitter attack on all and sundry who

presumed or pretended to know anything about or to express any opinion about the mining industry. It had been stated that the mining industry was on the up-grade, but that opinion was by no means general by those who knew anything about it. In his opinion the industry was declining,——

A beautiful statement for a man managing a big mine to make at a public gathering.

and one of the reasons was that it had so many enemies. So many people knew so much more about what was good for the industry than those engaged in it. The chief enemies, however, which the industry had to contend with here were the members of Parliament, and particularly those members who had been returned for these gold-fields. They knew absolutely nothing about the mining industry, but Mr. Kirwan and the others got up in the House and gave utterance to a lot of platitudes, and talked a lot of nonsense, and did everything they possibly could to hamper the industry in every conceivable manner. It was deplorable that the industry should be maligned in the manner it was by these men. Mr. Black then went on to do a little maligning of the industry on his own account. He said that they must not think because there was a temporary increase in the gold yield and an apparent improvement in the mining industry, that this would be permanent. The Government were claiming credit for the increased yield, but he could not see what they had done to help the mining industry, and even if they were responsible for the increase, he was sure every extra ounce of gold produced had cost  $1\frac{1}{2}$  oz. to recover. No industry could stand up against the hampering restrictions placed upon it by the Government, and the twaddle talked on the subject by members of Parliament. He felt it was time that responsible men stood up and made some protest. They had the best mining laws in the world if they were properly and systematically administered. But they were not. The men who got up in Parliament and said

that the men in control of the mines were heartless and inhuman monsters were talking rubbish. It was the men in Parliament who were injuring the whole industry, and he felt it was his duty to protest against their attempts to ruin the industry. He agreed with Mr. Hamilton that the contract system must stand. It was the best possible system for both management and men. Some of those around him seemed inclined to laugh at his remarks, but he could assure them he was very serious.

In connection with this remarkable speech delivered by a manager of one of the principal mines on the Golden Mile, I want to give that gentleman and the electors of this country from the floor of this House some information, if they do not know it, of what the Government have done to assist the mining industry. First of all let me say that the Government provided a water supply at Ora Banda at a cost of £43,000.

Mr. Elliott: The Liberals did that.

Mr. MUNSIE: The Liberals never even put a pick in the ground; they promised it, and that was about as far as they went. The introduction of the water scheme, I want to point out, enabled the Great Victorious mine for months and months to declare a profit of £1,000 a month. This Government also established a water supply at Marvel Loch which our Liberal friends promised for years. Their policy at the last elections included a railway from Southern Cross to Marvel Loch, but that had never been asked for. What was wanted was a water supply. The present Government also assisted many mines by enabling them to carry out cheap boring. This has also had a very beneficial effect in many instances, particularly around Southern Cross. The Government also contemplate the erection of a dry treatment plant in Kalgoorlie. Whether this is consummated or not will rely a good deal, I believe, on the reports which the Government will receive from their officers. I want to impress upon the Government the absolute necessity of doing

something in this direction. There is no question that so far as tributng on the Kalgoorlie field is concerned it is almost at an end unless the tributers can get some reasonable treatment for their sulphide ore. We have had this spectacle in Kalgoorlie for the last seven or eight months, right up to the time the Government mooted the introduction of a dry treatment plant, that there has been only one company on the field prepared to purchase, and that at their own price, the concentrates from any tributers working sulphide ores. What do we find now? It is no sooner announced that the Government intend to erect a dry treatment plant than we have almost all and sundry of the companies having treatment plants on the goldfields, offering to buy concentrates. Why? Simply in an endeavour to block the Government from putting the treatment plant there; and if the Government turn down the proposition we will have the old position again, and the tributers will not be able to dispose of one ounce of their concentrates. If the Government erect the plant it will warrant the expenditure. Kalgoorlie is a field of such nature that the longer it is in existence now the greater the necessity for providing some kind of system for the sulphide ores. The oxidised ores are practically worked out so far as tributng is concerned. We have some 90 or 100 men making a living by prospecting or tributng in the district. They will soon be starved out unless they get some better method of treatment than they have at present. After reading the speech delivered by this mine manager, I want to refer briefly to another little speech made in London recently by Mr. Doolette, the chairman of directors of the Great Boulder Proprietary. At that meeting Mr. Doolette regretted the fact that the Government of Western Australia were not doing more than they were to encourage prospecting in the State. He contended that it was the duty of the Government to equip prospecting parties and send them out to see if they could not discover new mining fields. He went on at great length, practically abusing the

Government for the attitude they were adopting in connection with mining. Yet he is the chairman of a company that has paid just on 4½ millions in dividends on a paid-up capital of £175,000, and the only thing that company has done to assist prospecting or anything else in Western Australia was the erection of a small drinking fountain in Victoria Park, Kalgoorlie.

Mr. Elliott: Where do you get the figures?

Mr. MUNSIE: From the June returns of the Great Boulder, which showed that they had paid within very little of 4½ millions in dividends, and that the paid-up capital, not all of which is called up, is £175,000. They have paid that huge sum in dividends, yet they never spent one penny in prospecting or encouraging prospecting in Western Australia. I am prepared to admit that they have a mine in Alaska, where Mr. Hamilton is going in the near future, and I am prepared at the same time to say that this country will not miss him. They also have a mine in Victoria; but in Western Australia they have done practically nothing. Yet these are the men who get up and criticise the Government on the score that they are not doing anything to encourage mining.

Mr. Brown: I wish I had what they have spent on prospecting.

Mr. MUNSIE: After having listened to the speech delivered by Mr. Black in Kalgoorlie I am pleased to think that we had other gentlemen present who, I believe, have a greater knowledge of the resources of mining, and of mining generally, than even Mr. Black. I refer to the geologist, Mr. Larcombe, a gentleman whom every member will hold in the highest esteem. Mr. Larcombe said:

He believed Western Australia offered more and better opportunities for the investment of capital than any other country in the world. We had a country which covered a million square miles of territory, fully two thirds of which was available for mining purposes. He had absolute confidence in the splendid future there was before the State. He was no optimist, but he

had no time for pessimists. We must acknowledge the greatness and magnitude of the industry, the returns from which for a period of 11 years averaged £400 per annum for every man engaged in the industry.

For 11 years in the State—and they cry out about the amount the men ask for wages—for every man employed in or about a mine in Western Australia there was produced £400 per annum. The average the men received was far short of £300, leaving a clear profit of £100 per annum per man for the employers. Mr. Larcombe's speech continues—

Past and present Governments had done everything in their power to develop the industry, and deserved every credit for their wise and vigorous policy in this respect. The mining industry and farming combined in time to come would make Western Australia the most prosperous State in Australia. Only the other day he had met a man who had travelled over the whole world prospecting and seeking mining country, and he had come back to Western Australia now because he found it offered the best opportunities of any country for the prospector and investor.

Then we have Mr. Greenard, one of our chief inspectors, whose remarks were reported as follows:—

Mr. Greenard was equally cheerful in his views regarding the prospects of the mining industry. It was a complete surprise to him to hear from Messrs Hamilton and Black that the contract system in the mines must be adhered to if the efficiency of the miner's work was to be maintained. He thought there was another side to the question, which he would not then dilate on. He certainly could not agree with those gentlemen, or believe that the depression at present in the industry—if there was a depression—was attributable to the causes stated by them, and knowing what he did about the industry he could not understand how any sensible person in Western Australia could have "cold feet" regarding its prospects.

I am pleased indeed that these two gentlemen happened to be present when we had this great pessimist, a man whose speech—if it was made public—has done more to injure the mining industry in Western Australia than all the speeches delivered by members of Parliament since Responsible Government. As an off-set we have these other two gentlemen putting the brighter side of the case, which was the true one. To come to some of the speeches made in the course of the debate on the Address-in-Reply, let me deal with that of the member for York (Mr. Monger), who entered into a strong tirade against the tyranny of unionism. He dealt with the unjust attitude, as he called it, of unionism and unions towards the foreigner. Personally I am a believer in and supporter of the provision in the Mines Regulation Bill to limit to one in ten the number of foreigners working in a mine. As for accepting a foreigner as a unionist and then not allowing him the privileges enjoyed by anyone else, I say that if a foreigner wishes to secure the same privileges as the Britisher, he should take the same responsibilities and become a naturalised British subject; then he will get all the benefits which unionism brings to the Britisher. Coming to the statements made by the member for Pingelly (Mr. Harper), I may say that I was rather surprised to hear that gentleman in his effort to try to persuade the people of the State that his much quoted remarks of last session would not lead anyone to believe that he advocated black labour for Western Australia. At all events he conveyed that impression to me. Let me read that portion of the hon. member's speech, and then ask hon. members what construction they would put upon it. The hon. member said—

Much as members on the Government side will ridicule the idea, I maintain if we had the same cheap labour which is obtainable in South Africa we would have more white men employed in Western Australia as bosses.

The Minister for Mines: Are you advocating it?

Mr. Harper: The gold resources of Western Australia, right up to Pil-

bara, are magnificent, and, given the conditions prevailing in South Africa, an enormous number of mines would be working in this State to-day, and Western Australia would have a population of millions of people, and white people at that.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Black people; you would ruin the country.

Mr. Harper: The hon. member knows nothing about it. There are 120,000 people in Johannesburg, white people all living in luxury and making large sums of money, practically fortunes.

The Minister for Mines: Out of slavery.

Mr. Harper: The white men who boss the kaffirs make £50, £60 and up to £100 a month, and they do no work but supervise the kaffirs at work. The action of Mr. Deakin, when Prime Minister of Australia and of Sir Joseph Ward, the then Prime Minister of New Zealand, in interfering in connection with the importation into South Africa of Chinamen, was ridiculous and absurd. They did not understand the position.

If that was not leading the people to believe that he was in favour of black labour in Western Australia, he had a poor way of expressing his disapproval of it. I believe that when the elections come round the attitude the present Government have adopted in endeavouring to place their platform on the statute-book, and to carry out all their promises to the people of Western Australia during their term of office will not only be the means of maintaining the present majority, but I believe that after the next election the Scaddan Government will come back to power with an increased majority.

Mr. BROWN (Beverley): I regret the Government are forcing members at this hour to speak on the Address-in-reply.

The Attorney General: We have had three weeks at it, you know.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, I know that; but members did not expect to be called on to speak this evening at this late hour, other-

wise we might have taken an opportunity of getting in a bit earlier. I noticed at an earlier stage that members on the other side were quickly upon their feet, two or three at a time, and no one else could get an opportunity of taking the floor. I am not going to detain the House very long, because a great deal I might have said would be a repetition of what has already been said. I have listened to the speeches of hon. members on the Government side, and I was surprised at the manner in which they tried to hide under a cloak the faults of the Government, whom they are pledged by caucus to support. Congratulations have been extended to individual Ministers and to the Government as a whole, and in fact, hon. members would almost convert a listener to believe that the Treasurer is capable of guiding the ship of State successfully and safely to its destiny. But we have only to consider the state of the finances to know that this is very far from the true fact of the case. Hon. members on the Government side have to pin themselves closely to their principles, and it is only natural that they pledge themselves to support a policy to legislate for practically one class of the community only. It does not matter what becomes of the country, or how much harm their legislation does to the advancement of the State as a whole; they are pledged to support a policy, and they have to do so. Nevertheless, it is deplorable to think that the people should have to tolerate party Government. It is a great pity that the difficulty cannot be overcome and that we cannot do away with party politics and class legislation entirely.

Mr. Munsie: It is a pity the Liberals did not think so long ago.

Mr. BROUN: I hope I will live to see the day when the legislation of the country will be carried on by a body of men representing the State, who will do their best for the people as a whole, and for the advancement of the State. At the present time this is not so, and it has been particularly marked during the term of the present Government. The bad administration of the Government is res-

pensible for the large deficit which has been piled up during the last three years, and which now amounts to nearly half a million pounds. The Government have made many mistakes, and their mistakes are responsible for the deficit. I was surprised to hear the Premier say that the farmers were responsible for the major portion of the deficit. I did not think that the Premier would have had the audacity to blame the poor old farmers for this.

[*The Deputy Speaker (Mr. McDowall) took the Chair.*]

Hon. Frank Wilson: They blame anyone but themselves.

The Attorney General: The Premier only explained how it was accounted for.

Mr. BROUN: In my opinion the farmers are not responsible for the deficit, but the bad administration of the Government and the undertaking of State trading concerns. I regret that the Government practically refuse or bar or gag members on this side of the House whenever they endeavour to obtain any information.

The Attorney General: Oh, no.

Mr. BROUN: This is so. We ask questions relating to many things, not out of mere inquisitiveness, and these questions are not answered. We receive either a curt reply, or a reply which a man of ordinary intelligence cannot understand. The least the Government can do is to extend a little courtesy to us and answer some of the questions we ask them. If we ask a question of very little importance it is answered, but why is it that the others are not replied to? If we ask questions relating to the finances, or to the administration of the State trading concerns, we are unable to secure answers. Is there anything underlying these concerns which the Government are afraid to reveal? If there is not, the information would be given.

The Attorney General: It is given.

Mr. BROUN: It is not given. We do not receive answers to our questions, and very often correct replies are not given. A question was asked by the hon. member for Claremont (Mr. Wisdom) the other

day in regard to the number of surveyors employed by the Government, and the Minister stated that there were 37 in the field. On the same evening I met a gentleman who is a surveyor, and who is in a position to know, and he informed me that only seven theodolites were in use by the Government at the present time.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: The Minister's answer is correct.

Mr. BROUN: How does the hon. member know?

The Attorney General: It is more likely to be correct than that of a man who is casually asked.

Mr. BROUN: The Premier blamed the farmers for the major portion of the deficit.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You must have met that surveyor to-night.

Mr. BROUN: No, I did not.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The answer was given only this evening.

Mr. BROUN: I was not referring to the question answered to-day, but to a similar question answered last week.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The answer was given to-night.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: You are accepting little-tattle against the Minister's statements.

Mr. BROUN: I am not one who accepts little-tattle; the hon. member must not judge me by himself. I do not stand at street corners and pick up this outside information like he does.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The answer given to-night is correct.

Mr. BROUN: I was not referring to that answer. The Minister replied to a question last week.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): This is the only question asked about surveyors.

Mr. Wisdom: I asked one last week.

Mr. BROUN: There was a previous question. The amount of money which the Premier claims should have been paid by the farmers is money which will be received by the Treasurer, and is represented by deferred rents, interest on moneys due to the Agricultural Bank,

and compound interest on deferred rents. All of this money owing by the farmers will eventually be paid into the Treasury. If the farmers leave their holdings, the Government will have the benefit of the improvements and of the pioneering work they have carried out. Therefore, the Premier need not be in the least alarmed that this amount is outstanding. The farmer is not responsible for the full amount of the deficit, or for anything like it. The money absorbed by State trading concerns and the increase in salaries to the tune of close on £200,000 paid during the last three years would have more than wiped out the deficit.

Mr. Underwood: Which trading concerns do you refer to?

Mr. BROUN: All of them. The steamships, brickworks, timber mills, and implement works, represent money expended for which there has been no return. I am opposed to the State implement works manufacturing material for building jetties and other things. It is all very well if the works are utilised for the construction of implements alone. A point emphasised by one of the speakers this evening was that relating to the importation and subsequent sale of machinery by the Government. The Government are importing machinery on behalf of the implement works, and selling it again. I refer to cultivators. I was told by a good authority employed at the works that the Government are not at present able to manufacture the class of steel required for cultivators.

Mr. Turvey: Is there any great harm in importing these machines if they are being sold at a reduced price?

Mr. BROUN: The Government are selling them at the price for which they can be purchased anywhere else. But other machines such as ploughs, binders, etc., are being sold at a reduction. It has been said that as much as £13 or £14 has been saved on a single implement. I do not approve of any Government manufacturing an implement and selling it to the farmer if the concern is showing a loss. The same thing is occurring with regarded to the meat shops.

Mr. Underwood: What about carrying fertilisers at a loss?

Mr. BROWN: Fertilisers are not being carried at a loss, but if they were carried free of charge, it could not be said that they are being carried at a loss. The hon. member does not understand the position. If manures were carried free, the farmer would be in a position to purchase a greater quantity, and put more manure on his land or cultivate a greater acreage of land, and the Government would secure for every additional hundredweight of manure used, an extra five or six bushels per acre of wheat to be carried over the railways. The freight paid to the railways would exceed what the Government would lose by carrying the fertilisers free.

Mr. Underwood: Does not that apply to cheap machinery?

Mr. BROWN: No. I do not agree with the Government carrying on any State trading concern at a loss for the benefit of one section of the community. This is being done in connection with the State steamship service, and the meat shops.

Mr. Underwood: And the carriage of fertilisers.

Mr. BROWN: No. The Government say nothing about the big losses incurred, and the Minister for Lands has contradicted the statement that there has been a loss on the meat shops. The Minister said nothing about the grazing of the stock sent to Yandanooka, or the provision of interest and sinking fund which is not debited to the meat works, and yet the Minister tries to make the public believe—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Wait until you get the accounts.

Mr. BROWN: We cannot get them, and they are never correct when we do get them. They do not know where they are.

Mr. Underwood interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BROWN: This means a loss on the meat shops and on the State steamships.

Mr. Underwood: How much is lost?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BROWN: It is going into the pockets of the people never to be recov-

ered. This is not the case with the assistance rendered to the farmer. Whatever deficit is incurred through the farmer, the money is there to be had, but the money that you are giving away through the meat shops and the State steamships will never be recovered.

Mr. Underwood: We have not lost any money on the meat shops.

Mr. BROWN: We are giving money to one section of the people and not to another.

Mr. Underwood: The hon. member is making a wrong statement.

Mr. BROWN: I am speaking the truth, but the hon. member does not like it.

Mr. Underwood: I know it is not true.

Mr. BROWN: I say it is true.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I shall have to deal very severely with somebody soon.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Start right in, Sir.

Mr. BROWN: I would like to refer to a question which was dealt with one day last week.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What *Hansard* is the hon. member quoting from?

Mr. BROWN: Last week's *Hansard*.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot allow the hon. member to read it.

Mr. BROWN: Or to make a statement?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Certainly not.

Mr. BROWN: In regard to State steamships and meat shops, I feel certain that there is no profit being made.

Mr. Underwood: I say there is.

Mr. BROWN: Any one with any common sense at all knows that that is not so.

Mr. Underwood: I say there is.

Mr. BROWN: Those hon. members who have a little common sense and who know a little bit about business can realise and judge for themselves whether there is a profit or not. We find the Minister making a statement that he is selling meat at 4d. a lb. less than the ordinary rates. Buyers are to be seen in the yards purchasing stock for the Government at 9d.



and over 9d. per lb. wholesale. They kill it here and bring it up to their shops and sell it to the public, or rather only one section of the public, at a reduction of 4d. per lb. What meat shops in the world could hope to make a profit when being conducted in such a way?

Mr. Underwood: You are not allowing for the pelt and the wool.

Mr. BROWN: Personally I am not able to buy 1 lb. of meat even if I desire to do so, because I am not a regular customer of the State butcher shops. I heard an hon. member make a statement the other night in condemning these State steamships, that he placed the responsibility for the purchase of the *Western Australia* upon Captain Gregory and Sir Newton Moore.

Mr. Underwood: That is right.

Mr. BROWN: If these gentlemen were responsible for the purchase of that boat, why was it that the Government was willing to place Sir Newton Moore back in office as Agent General for a further term?

Mr. Underwood: That is one of the mistakes of the Government.

Mr. BROWN: If Sir Newton Moore made that mistake in purchasing a boat of that kind, he had no right to be reinstated in the position that he occupies.

Mr. Underwood: He has no right.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I would remind hon. members that there is such a clause in the Standing Orders as Clause 73. If somebody does not take care out he will go under Clause 73.

Mr. BROWN: Anyhow the State trading concerns up to date are responsible for a large amount of the deficit and they are likely to continue a very unsatisfactory business for a considerable time to come.

Mr. Turvey: Are you in favour of any State trading enterprises at all?

Mr. BROWN: If the concerns are profitable and they show a little money over and above the cost of running them.

Mr. Underwood: Are you opposed to the implement works?

Mr. BROWN: I have already answered that question and I am not going to answer it again.

Mr. Underwood: Are you in favour of State freezing works at Wyndham?

Mr. Monger: What a silly question.

Mr. BROWN: I would like to say a few words in regard to the land question. This land question has not been discussed at any very great length by hon. members on either side of the House, and hardly mentioned at all by the Premier and his colleagues. I regard this question of the settlement of lands in Western Australia as being of vital importance to our country. Knowing that we have such a considerable area of land spread throughout the good rainfall belt, which is at the present time not utilised, I think the Minister for Lands could have made at least some effort in the direction of having most of this country settled. There is no occasion, as the Minister for Lands has been doing, to go further afield than the ex-Minister for Lands (the hon. Mr. Mitchell) did. It would have been far better if he had directed his attention to those areas that are already served by railways and those areas for which railways have already been promised. There is a considerable amount of land in these areas which is unoccupied and also a large amount which is already occupied, but on which very heavy prices have been put.

Mr. Underwood: By whom?

Mr. BROWN: I believe that a Commission has been appointed to go into this question, but I regret that it has taken the Government practically three years to do anything in this direction. I believe that the first effort the Minister for Lands should have made immediately he got into power should have been to appoint a Commission to go into the question of the reclassification of lands and reduce the upset prices placed upon them. In many instances they could have been reduced by at least 50 per cent.

Member: Who made the classification?

Mr. BROWN: If this question has been asked once it has been asked 100 times.

Mr. Underwood: Are you prepared to answer it?

Mr. BROWN: Yes. If hon. members will look up the speech made last year,

they will find the answer. I have left out the question as to who is responsible.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Bigger prices are put upon the land to-day than ever in our time.

Mr. BROUN: I think that the Minister for Lands has been lax in his duty in not having a reclassification of these lands made. I am somewhat surprised to see that he has a gentleman appointed as chairman to the Commission who was practically one of those responsible for the high prices placed on the lands. He, with Mr. Mitchell, was responsible for the high prices and it is probably only natural that that gentleman would not like now to reduce the price of land to any considerable extent.

Mr. Wisdom: Will the farmers take their original price for the land?

Mr. BROUN: Thousands of them out on those dry areas of the eastern districts would do so.

Hon. Frank Wilson: How is it they are charging more to-day?

Mr. BROUN: I do not know that they are. I am not aware of that. I am only just speaking of the land out east and I very much regret that the Minister is not making a special effort to do something to relieve those men who are settled in that portion of the State. Of course I will admit that there was a number of them who were never suitable for, or capable of making a success on, the land.

Mr. Underwood: Who put them there?

Mr. BROUN: There are not many such cases; they are few and far between. Of course we do meet with a certain number who are unable to make a success of any undertaking. This is so with a few of those people who go upon the land. A great majority of them have gone upon the land with good intentions. They have worked very hard indeed and not only the men themselves but the wives and children have also worked very hard. Frequently we go out into these areas and find the women folk out in the field helping their husbands in clearing and doing other hard work. They make a special effort to turn things out successfully. They spend what little capital they have on improvements but unfortunately they

have found that the rents are so high that they are unable to pay them, and that they are so bound down that there is no possible hope of their getting away from their holdings. This is the unfortunate part of it. Had the value of the land been nominal they would have had much more money to devote to clearing and improving, and would have had a better opportunity of reaping some benefit from their work, and would have had far more chance of keeping their heads above water. In these areas there is a considerable amount of sand plain country. A lot of this is good country for growing corn within a reasonable distance of the railways that are put down. In my opinion all these lands should be thrown open for selection, up to certain areas, practically free, and the persons taking up this land should be compelled to do a certain amount in the way of improvements. By that means we would utilise the whole of our lands in a very short time and whatever was produced on these lands would be put upon the railways and would greatly assist in the direction of making the railways payable propositions.

Mr. Underwood: And give the land monopolisers a chance of getting in.

Mr. BROUN: No chance whatever. If a proper Land Act or proper regulations were put into force it would do away with all monopolies. It is only a dream of the hon. member.

Mr. Underwood: How many acres have you got?

Mr. BROUN: It is exactly the same, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with their leasehold system. I think the fact that this is a plank on the Labour platform has caused the Ministers not to take any very great interest in the administration of lands in Western Australia. The Government found that the people would not go and take up land on the leasehold system, and even hon. members themselves on the opposite side go in for freehold; therefore they did not take a very great interest in it.

Mr. Underwood: You never gave them a chance to have leasehold.

*1 o'clock a.m.*

Mr. BROWN: The chance has been there ever since the present Government came into power. Not very long ago there was a report made in regard to the utilisation of the poison lands in Western Australia. I have already mentioned the sand plain country, but there was a report made, as a result of an inquiry, in 1911, and sent along then, I believe, to the Acting Premier, Mr. Gregory, and to the Under Secretary for Lands, relating to these poison lands and practically all that country south of the Great Southern railway. That report states that there are 1,300,000 acres of unselected poison land in that area. I have gone through the report, which is a very good one indeed, and in my opinion deserves consideration at the hands of the Government, who should do all they can to have this country utilised. The major portion of it is already served by railways practically within a reasonable distance, and the portion which is not within a reasonable distance would be reached by the line expected to go from Narrogin to Armadale and the line expected to go at some time or other from Brookton to Armadale. There is also a report made by the Agricultural Railways Advisory Board some time ago relative to this line. I think that report was made in the year prior to the present Government taking office. With regard to this line, the advisory board suggested first of all an extension of the Pinjarrah-Hotham railway to Narrogin off the 14-Mile Brook, the section from the junction to the 14-Mile Brook to be treated as portion of the trunk line which would go from Narrogin to Pinjarrah. If the line were put through from Narrogin to Pinjarrah there would be a saving of 32 miles to all who wanted to send their produce to Fremantle. Then the board advised that a line ought to be built from Brookton to near Armadale or from the Great Southern railway between Beverley and Pinjarrah. If this were done, an area of 560,000 acres would be served. The board state that this line will run through a large area of unsettled country, tap a

very fine forest of wandoo on Crown land, render more accessible to the market some country containing useful jarrah, and serve all the country along the valley of the West Dale. The board also report that another important feature of this proposal is that it would junction with the Brookton-Korrigin line, from which a large wheat traffic is expected. If this line were constructed there would be a saving to all settlers on the Great Southern railway of 41 miles from Brookton to Fremantle, as compared with the distance they have to send their produce at present from Brookton to Fremantle via Spencer's Brook. That is a very important consideration indeed, because all the produce practically from the Wickepin-Narrogin railway would come down the Brookton-Korrigin line and then go from Brookton direct to Fremantle. Thus there would be a saving of 4s. one way for the conveyance of produce, and another saving on fertilisers and so forth the other way. A considerable amount of wear on the railways and also of labour would be saved if the proposal were adopted, and I therefore think it should be taken into serious consideration by the Government. In any case there is a large number of settlers, as we know, in the western area extending towards Armadale, and a number of them are as far away from a railway as 30 miles, over which distance, as I have said before, they have to cart their produce. If the line were put through from Brookton to Armadale, it would not only serve all the country mentioned in the report of the board, but it would bring these settlers into close touch with the railway and enable them to make farming profitable. At the present time they are compelled to go in largely for sheep raising, and to leave the farming to a considerable extent, although they grow a fair quantity of oats for the stock they keep. The district is one of the best in Western Australia for mixed farming, and a railway put through it must prove a paying proposition. I have been waiting to hear from the Minister for Works in regard to that railway. Some time ago when in the district the Minister informed the people that in all probability

a Bill would be brought in this session, but I do not observe any mention of it.

Member: You have the Narrogin railway instead.

Mr. BROWN: That is because Narrogin is represented by a member on the opposite side. As regards schools in outback areas, while the residents of Perth have free education from the kindergarten to the University, in the back country large numbers of children are unable to obtain any education whatever. It is deplorable indeed to go out amongst them and see a number of nice little children growing up without receiving any education whatever.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): This State is doing more for education than any other State in the Commonwealth is doing.

Mr. BROWN: Yes, but the Government might have refrained from going so far as a free University, and instead of that have spent money in the direction of providing more schools for the children in the backblocks.

Mr. Underwood: Who established the University?

Mr. BROWN: I said, a free university. It was certainly not the intention of the previous Government to make the University free. In my opinion it has no right whatever to be free. At the present time there must be a certain number of children within a three-mile radius before a teacher is provided by the Government. I consider that the radius should be done away with altogether. As long as there were a number of children in a district who would go to school, say, twelve or ten, a school and a teacher should be provided by the Government.

Mr. Foley: That is done in many parts of the State now.

Mr. BROWN: It has been refused in my district. You must have ten children within a three-mile radius, or you cannot get a school.

Mr. Underwood: It must be a poor old district where you cannot get that number of children.

Mr. BROWN: The hon. member knows nothing about my district. The majority of the men who come out there are bach-

elors. I trust the Government will do something in the direction I have indicated, and if possible abolish altogether the three-mile radius. Another question which I had intended to refer to, as it had not been mentioned by any member prior to to-day, was the bulk handling of wheat. However, as the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. E. B. Johnston) has already spoken at some length on that question, there is no occasion for me to say very much on the point. I am very sorry that the Government have not taken some action in the direction of the bulk handling of wheat. They are already going to considerable expense in order to make provision for the coming harvest—

Mr. Underwood: Do you think it will pay?

Mr. BROWN: Knowing that there would be a big saving to the State, something like £30,000. It costs the farmers about £80,000 for the bags used for wheat, and in return for that I do not suppose they get more than about £30,000. I realise, of course, that the bulk handling of wheat represents a heavy expenditure, and that it is almost impossible for the Government at present to undertake the bulk handling of wheat throughout the railway system; but I should like to see some elevators established on the jetty to receive the wheat. Chutes might be fixed up to receive the wheat at the wharf. The bags would be ripped open and the wheat run into the chutes, and then the bags which were branded would be returned as empties over the railways to the farmers. Under these conditions, the bags if used with care would last for three years in succession, so that the cost per bag would be about 3d. instead of, as at present, 8d.

Mr. Underwood: Do you think the scheme would pay?

Mr. BROWN: There is no use in my answering any question of the member for Pilbara, because he has not any commonsense, and would not understand. Another matter I wish to refer to is the Avondale estate. I asked a question of the Minister for Lands in reference to

this estate, and he informed me of what I knew already. It was stated by the Government previously that the estate had been set apart for an agricultural college, and that this matter was under the consideration of the Government. It has now been under the consideration of the Government for about three years, and it is still there. A large portion of the estate is practically lying idle, I am sorry to say. In all, about 3,600 acres have been reserved, and out of that area only about 2,000 acres are used, and that only for grazing. Timber is growing up in huge thickets on the estate, and it is almost impossible to ride through the greater portion of the area. It is discreditable that this estate should be lying idle, and it will cost the Government a considerable amount of money to clear the paddocks.

Mr. Underwood: It cost a considerable amount of money in the first instance.

Mr. BROWN: There is no reason why it should cost the State any more than it has already cost.

Mr. Underwood: I do not think I would mention that estate if I were you.

Mr. BROWN: I mention it because, as I pointed out before, the estate could have been sold five times over at the price set down by the previous Government.

Mr. Underwood: It was a swindle that never worked.

Mr. BROWN: The hon. member himself knows that offers were made to the Minister for Lands and were absolutely turned down and refused.

Mr. Underwood: Why did not the previous Minister for Lands sell it?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. BROWN: The previous Government had not the time to do it.

Mr. Underwood: It was one of the greatest swindles ever perpetrated in Western Australia.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. Male: Is the hon. member in order in referring to the purchase of that estate as the greatest swindle ever perpetrated in Australia? It is a reflection on the previous Government.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have called the hon. member to order.

Mr. Underwood: I did not say it was the greatest swindle, but it is among the great ones.

Mr. BROWN: I hope the Government will do something to establish an agricultural college there as soon as possible. Practically no rents are derived from the estate as it is held by the Government at the present time, and I consider the district should have some little benefit and advantage from it. I do not intend to detain the House any longer. There are other items on which I intended to offer some remarks, but it is getting early in the morning and I know that there are other members who wish to speak. All I can say is that I hope the country will still continue to prosper. I am pleased that we have at last had a general rain. Though it has not been a heavy fall, it will no doubt prove highly beneficial to the State as a whole. I trust we will have a good year, and by having a good year, the country will prosper in spite of the bad administration of the Government at present in power.

Mr. CHESSON (Cue): I rise to say a few words on the Address-in-reply, and in doing so I wish to congratulate the Government on the appointments which they have made to the Supreme Court Bench, the appointments of Mr. Justice McMillan in succession to Sir S. H. Parker as Chief Justice, and of Mr. Northmore to the position of puisne judge. In Mr. Justice Northmore we have a gentleman who is recognised as one of the leading lights in the legal profession and who has many estimable qualities which fit him for this position. I also desire to congratulate the Government on the re-appointment of Sir Newton Moore as Agent General for this State. I would request the Government to advise him, however, to instruct the medical officers who control the examination of immigrants to exercise a closer inspection of the people who are sent out here. It has come under my notice during the past few weeks that one im-

migrant who landed here had not been in the State for more than a couple of months before he died from cancer. This proves to me that the medical inspection at the other end is not all that is desired. I have also been credibly informed that other immigrants have landed here, and after a few months have been admitted as patients to the West Subiaco hospital suffering from tuberculosis. If there was a close medical inspection at the port of embarkation this state of affairs would not exist. I believe in immigration. If this country wishes to prosper we must have immigrants, but they must be of the right sort. The country has enough sick of its own to provide for without importing them from the old country. I wish to say that I approve of the enterprises which the Scaddan Ministry have embarked upon, more particularly the State steamships, about which we have had so much criticism from members of the Opposition. I remember well, before the 1911 elections, all the candidates who were standing in the Labour interests pledged themselves, if returned, to support a line of steamers on the North-West coast. When the Scaddan Government were returned they lost no time in establishing this service. They stepped in and gave facilities for the shipment of cattle to the southern ports of the State, benefiting the people of the North-West, particularly those in a small way, and who had not had a beast shipped for over two years. With regard to the State implement works, I also tender my congratulations to the Government on making them an accomplished fact. I have been through the works on two occasions, and I am satisfied from what I have heard from the manager, Mr. Davies, that, not only are those works turning out an article superior to that supplied by private enterprise, but the price is 25 per cent. cheaper. This is certainly beneficial to the settlers. At the works there is to be found an efficient staff, who are engaged in not only turning out these implements but on works of a varied nature. The Opposition have contended that a workshop of that description could not be-

come efficient. That argument, however, is not sound. The manager assures me that he has 10 months' orders ahead of him for small implements, and that a big section of his workmen are engaged on their manufacture, while many are occupied in doing work for departments, such as railways and harbours and rivers. I am quite satisfied that in Mr. Davies we have an efficient manager, who controls a staff of competent workmen. Everything is carried out as would be done by private enterprise. One can go through the works and give a nod of recognition to a workman which will be acknowledged, but the workman will not for a moment cease the work he is engaged on. This proves that the supervision is all that can be desired. I have also been assured by Mr. Davies that he is showing a profit at these works. With regard to the workers' homes, the Scaddan Ministry have also my approval. They are catering for a section of the community who are not in a position to help themselves. We all know that men working for 9s. or 10s. a day invariably become victims of the rack-renting landlord. The Scaddan Government in putting up these homes, places which are suitable for the requirements of working men with families, are providing them at what might be regarded as the moderate rent of 12s. 6d., and for the houses which are worth, say, £500, the occupants have 30 years in which to pay off the amount. Fortunately this is doing good service to the workers of this State. In connection with the brickworks, I also approve of the action of the Government. The price of bricks is put down at £3 a thousand. That is what the State is paying private enterprise. In New South Wales the Government started brick works, and the cost given out for the bricks was 19s. at the works, and 22s. delivered. If our State can manufacture them at even 30s., this will mean an immense saving in the construction of workers' homes. I am a great believer in day labour. My opinion is that wherever it is carried out under proper supervision better results are always obtained than under contract.

Mr. Wisdom: Where will you get the supervision?

Mr. CHESSON: Put a suitable man in charge and you will get it. The nationalisation of the ferries seems to have given satisfaction, and according to the figures furnished by the member for Canning (Mr. Lewis) there is no chance of the people desiring the service to be returned to private enterprise. I also think that the Government are to be commended for increasing the amount which will be available for the Agricultural Bank from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 millions. This is a big thing for a small population like that of Western Australia. The Government are also to be congratulated for increasing the amount which can be borrowed from £750 to £2,000. I do not think anyone on the Liberal side of the House can say that the Government are not doing anything to assist the primary producer. We have only to remember what the Government have done for them in connection with the supply of fertilisers, and the foregoing of rents, and the extension of water to many districts. In fact, the primary producer has been given every possible chance to successfully establish himself on the land. This proves that the Labour Government are catering for all sections of the community. There is one matter I wish to refer to, and it is the treatment received by the Mines Regulation Bill in going through the Legislative Council. Members who have had any experience in mining know that every man working in a mine is an advocate of the abolition of the night shift. I am satisfied that when the Bill comes before the House on the next occasion we shall even find the Chamber of Mines supporting the abolition of night shift. The Great Fingal mine has abolished night shift. This course is advocated from a health point of view. We know from experience that if a mine is given eight hours' spell it has an opportunity to sweeten up. It will then take another 16 hours before the mine will heat up again. From a health point of view it is essential that the mine should be free for this period, and it is

also a matter of impossibility in the summer months for men engaged in night work to sleep during the hours of the day. And also see the effect it has on the wives and children. The wife has to be up at six o'clock in the morning getting the children off to school and preparing her husband's breakfast. Then she is harassed the whole day in keeping the younger members of the family away from the husband in order that he may have an opportunity of sleeping. She is up till 12 o'clock midnight to see him off to work again, making 18 hours on her feet. So not only the husband but the wife also finds the abolition of night shift something highly to be desired. A provision for the appointment of check inspectors was also rejected. We advocate such appointments because we wish to see the mining regulations carried out. It is impossible for the Government inspector to see to everything. I have known rises go up 200 and 300 feet without anything like adequate ventilation. If we had check inspectors this sort of thing would be attended to. On the Murchison and North Coolgardie fields we took a vote on the question of contract. The vote resulted in a ten to one majority against the system. We know from experience what contract has done for the workers. The last Royal Commission that sat were told by an Italian miner who had had over 200 men working for him that 80 per cent. of them had died as the result of working contract. In four years we contributed £987 in donations to assist men stricken with miners' phthisis, men who mostly had worked on contract. Nearly the whole of the money collected went to assist miners who had earned good money under contract, but who were practically dying as the result of the strain. Then, of course, it fell to the lot of the workers to provide for them. According to the Governor's Speech the sanatorium at Wooroloo is nearly completed. For this the Government are to be congratulated, for eventually a good many miners suffering from phthisis will avail themselves of this home before they are actually past medical aid. Reference is also made in the

Speech to the intention of the Government to provide a sum of money in order to assist the miners and the mining companies to set up an insurance scheme. This is a very good move. For many years I have held the opinion that the cost of any injuries sustained in that industry should be borne by the industry; but the amount of money we have had to disburse for the assistance of injured people has come out of the pockets of the miner, and not those of the company. Any scheme which will assist the miner and make provision for him when stricken down is to be highly commended. In Germany the Government provide a certain amount, while the companies and the miners also contribute to the scheme. The German doctors contend that there is no chance of curing the body unless the mind is at rest, and that to cure miners' phthisis it is necessary to take it in the early stages. That is our experience on the Murchison also. Every case we have sent to the Coolgardie sanatorium has died, because we cannot get these men to go to the sanatorium until they are actually beyond medical aid. If we could only get a scheme under which provision would be made for the maintenance of the wife and family, it would take a lot off the husband's mind, and we might then induce him to go into a sanatorium before it was too late. I am thoroughly in accord with the provision for restricting the employment of foreigners in mines. Our experience is that the foreigner draws four or five times as much in accident pay as does the Britisher. Every opportunity is given for the foreigner to become naturalised. He has only to reside in Western Australia for two years, when the way is open to him. Every credit must be given to the Great Fingall Company for what they are doing in respect to ventilation, and on this score also credit should be given to the local inspector of mines. In the Great Fingall fans are now employed to draw the bad air through the upcast. This has the effect of lowering the temperature some 12 degrees in the bottom level. They have doors down below which cause the air to split and circulate through the

mine, and as I say, every credit must be given to the management for what they have done in respect to ventilating the mine. And, be it noted, the manager has told me that he is getting better results in consequence. Previously the men had to work in a humid heat so trying that they discarded their shirts, whereas now they can work in comfort, and the company is getting better results. A good few comments have been made in regard to the industrial trouble at Youanmi. The member for York (Mr. Monger) referred to the men who would not take contract as "lazy" men. The hon. member has had no experience of the men on the Cue fields. We have there men who require no supervision whatever, who can take their places in any mine and give every satisfaction. As for the "tyranny of unionism" at Youanmi, a ballot was taken in the district a couple of years ago, and it was found that the men were pretty well unanimously against contract. Those few men who went into the Youanmi mines and took contract against the rules of the union were branded as social outcasts. The same thing would occur if a man did anything else contrary to the wishes of his fellow-unionists. It naturally followed that the boarding-houses did not care about supplying those men with food. As to driving them out of the town, it is absurd.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They were hounded out.

*[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]*

Mr. CHESSON: They were not hounded out. The statement was contradicted by the secretary of the miners' union, and I would prefer to take his word against that of the manager of the Youanmi mine.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It was sworn evidence. They hounded even the woman out of her home.

Mr. CHESSON: The employers are always ready to get sworn affidavits in connection with any trouble.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Did they not hound those 12 men out of Youanmi?



Mr. CHESSON: No. They were not hounded out. The people would not associate with them, and the boardinghouse keepers would not take them, and that was the whole trouble. The men ostracised them. That was all.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They hounded them out of Sandstone as well.

Mr. CHESSON: The employer is very ready to take out affidavits when any trouble arises, as for instance in the case of the trouble in the building trade, and also in that of the industrial trouble at Geraldton, where the men were proceeded against and fined. There was also trouble at the Baddera mine. A case was cited before the Arbitration Court and should have been heard in December, but the hearing was postponed until March, and while it was pending, a notice was posted stating that on and after a certain date a reduction would be made in the men's wages. This was purely a lock-out. The Baddera union is affiliated with the Murchison miners' union, and the secretary of the latter body was sent down to endeavour to come to an agreement, pending the hearing of the case. Negotiations were opened and an agreement was arrived at that the award should be made retrospective. The inspector contented that the action of the employers amounted to a lock-out, but the Murchison council were not anxious to prosecute them. The arbitration award subsequently proved satisfactory. I mention this to show that in at least one instance of a lock-out the men took a more merciful view of the situation than the employers usually take. Hon. members talk about the tyranny of unionists but they forget to mention the tyranny of employers.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Did the men take a merciful view when they went to that woman's house and threatened to burn it?

Mr. Foley: Who was that?

Hon. Frank Wilson: The engine man, Gill.

Mr. Foley: Has that statement been sworn to?

Hon. Frank Wilson: Yes.

Mr. Foley: No, it is still before the Court.

Mr. CHESSON: The leader of the Opposition is regarding this matter from only one point of view.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I saw the evidence.

Mr. CHESSON: I have seen men carrying their swags through the Murchison black-listed because they had given evidence to endeavour to better the conditions of their fellow employees, or to secure justice in the case of an accident. There is no mention of the tyranny of employers in such instances as these, but when some little action is taken by the employees it is heralded from one end of the State to the other. The Government should give all possible assistance to the squatter in the outback districts, by opening up the stock routes and keeping them open. One squatter who was passing through the Murchison with some stock found that the wind-lass or trough at one of the water-holes was in such a bad state that he was unable to water the stock; and a good few head were lost in consequence. The Government should assist the squatters because they are among the pioneers of the State.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They are the fat men, you know.

Mr. CHESSON: In my district they are struggling men, and when they experience two or three bad seasons they find themselves in the hands of the banks. These men should be provided with facilities to get their stock to market, and their claims should receive as much consideration as those of settlers in the agricultural areas. Every encouragement too, should be given to the genuine prospector. I am afraid that the prospector in this State is dying out. The younger men do not as a rule go out prospecting. When a prospector requires a turnout, it should be sufficient for him to show to the warden that he is a genuine prospector. There should be no occasion for him to come to the City and lodge an application here. In the past men who have been good talkers have come to Perth and have secured turnouts, although they were quite inexperienced and without knowledge of

prospecting. The Government deserve to be complimented upon having provided free education from the kindergarten to the University. In the big centres, day continuation classes should be established. Smart boys or girls might reach the seventh standard at 12 years of age, and as it is necessary for them to continue at school until they are 14 years of age, there is no opportunity for them to advance. In such big centres as the Murchison, the Government ought to establish day continuation classes for their benefit. I hope that the Wongan Hills-Mullewa line will be pushed forward expeditiously.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why is it not open for traffic?

Mr. CHESSON: This line will afford better facilities for getting from Perth to the Murchison. When the line is opened, a dining car should be provided for the convenience of the Murchison people.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Why are not they running the traffic through now?

Mr. CHESSON: I do not know. The present railway service to the Murchison is not all that can be desired. The trains leave for Perth at 4.40 a.m. on Monday, 3.30 a.m. on Tuesday and Thursday, and 5 a.m. on Wednesday and Friday. The 3.30 a.m. train is called the "sloper's" train, because people who do not wish to pay their way generally avail themselves of this train to leave the district. On Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, the train arrives at 11.30 p.m. and it is often two or three hours late. We are entitled to a better railway service and I hope that the Government will undertake to provide it. I am pleased to know that there has been an increase in the output of gold and timber. I wish to compliment the Government upon the good work they have achieved during their term of office, and I think that the next elections will result in the people saying to them "Well done, good and faithful servants, as you have served us faithfully for the last three years, you shall continue to serve us." This, I think, will be the verdict of the people at the next elections."

Mr. MULLANY (Menzies): In rising to support the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-reply, I desire to say that until a few minutes ago I had no intention of speaking, but seeing that this debate has now been carried to such a length, I do not desire to be one of the very few members in this House who have not had something to say upon it. I will not occupy any time in congratulating the Government on the good work they have done. The people of Western Australia know quite well what the Scaddan Government have accomplished, and will show due appreciation for their work when the time comes.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They will.

Mr. MULLANY: When speaking on the Address-in-reply in the session before last, I stated, and I believe I had the support of the hon. member for Swan (Mr. Turvey), that the Address-in-reply was entirely unnecessary. My experience since then has fully borne out the impression I had then formed. During the last three weeks hon. members have assembled here, and we have not got one bit further with the legislation which it is proposed to deal with this session. The whole time has been occupied in party recriminations and hon. members have almost got back to schoolboy days with their retorts, "You did" and "You did not." The Premier, on the one hand, has rightly explained the work which the Government have endeavoured to carry out, and the Opposition, on the other hand, have endeavoured to pull his statement to pieces. Whilst the debate on the Address-in-reply is proceeding, there appears to be no desire to get on with the business of the State; each member seems to be imbued with an idea simply and solely to boost his own party or his own party's politics. The Address-in-reply is to a great extent farcical. Fifty members have devoted three weeks to this debate and have really not touched the work which they were sent here to do, and it is time that we considered our position in this matter. The State steamships, the financial position, the deficit, the Mines Regulation,

Irrigation, and Traffic Bills, weights and measures, State sawmills, and the powellising agreements have been dealt with in a general hotch potch, and no hon. member could clearly state what has been said on one or other of the subjects. When we have business before us which we can clearly debate, I can understand and I do not mind sitting here even to such a late hour as this, but in a general discussion which leads nowhere it would be well if some scheme could be devised to cut out some of these inordinately long speeches. While it is, perhaps, advisable that His Majesty's representative should open Parliament, and that the leader of the Government and the leader of the Opposition, or a few hon. members should have something to say with regard to the Governor's Speech, I think hon. members would be conserving their own interests and doing more for the interests of the State if they did not speak at such length on the Address-in-reply. Now, one would wonder why members indulge in these addresses, and one would think that it is merely a case of their talking to their constituencies. Of course they have every right to do this, but I think that the right time to do so would be outside on a public platform and not in this Chamber where we should be dealing with the business. The whole discussion on this Address-in-reply simply leads us nowhere. I will conclude my remarks with a recommendation to the Government that in the future they should endeavour to come to some compromise with the Opposition or with the members so that this farcical Address-in-reply could be greatly curtailed in the future.

*2 o'clock a.m.*

Mr. WISDOM (Claremont): I will commence by congratulating the hon. member for Menzies, and would also like to say that to a large extent I have been anticipated in one of the things I was going to deal with by a previous speaker on this Address-in-reply. I should probably not have spoken on the Address-in-reply had it not been that I was struck

with the remarks contained in the Premier's speech and with the enunciation of the high principles contained in it, and because of the Premier's remarkable inconsistency in practising the very opposite to what he preached. He started off with a very high and proper sentiment in stating that while not objecting to criticism, he has always endeavoured to keep as near as possible to facts. He immediately proceeded to make one of the most outrageous and inaccurate statements with regard to the leader of the Opposition—

Hon. Frank Wilson: Hear, hear.

Mr. WISDOM: In which he stated, what he must have known fully to be untrue, that the leader of the Opposition was sacked by the Premier whilst he was Treasurer of this State. Now the Premier took the leader of the Opposition to task for having thrown some doubt on a statement made by him that it was very improper for the leader of the Opposition to doubt a statement that he had made as head of the Government. I quite agree that the Premier when making a statement as head of the Government should be beyond doubt altogether, but the experience we have had there has not led us to accept the Premier's statement without proof. When he makes an accusation of that sort, which almost in the very next breath he had to retract, one can hardly wonder if we on this side of the House should require proof before accepting his statements. As an instance of the misleading nature of his statements and the false inferences that can be drawn from them, and are probably intended to be drawn by the public, he stated that under the Labour Administration something like 34,000 people had been added to the population of this State. These figures are entirely misleading. Certainly the population of the State has increased by nearly 34,000 during the term of office of the present Government, but the Premier was very strong in disclaiming all responsibility for the immigration which entered this State in 1911, and not only that but for the immigrants which we at that time had under contract to come into the State. He claimed that it was unfortunate and he

regretted that they would have to find the money to carry out the contract for over 4,000 people, which the Liberal Government had arranged for. If he is disclaiming responsibility for these immigrants, surely he cannot claim to have had anything whatever to do with the increased population for which they have been responsible. Therefore, the utmost the present Government can claim in the way of increased population is 26,000 instead of 34,000. I only mention this because I think it is only fair that the people of the State should know what the present Government is responsible for and how much of that which is claimed by the present Government should rightly, and could rightly, be claimed by the past Liberal Government. One thing I am glad to see is that since 1911, and since the Premier has had an opportunity of seeing more of the world and of visiting England and America, his ideas on the question of immigration have been considerably modified and that he has been able to imbue the Government with his own modified ideas—for I am glad to hear that they have spent £200,000 on immigration. The only regret I have is that the expenditure of that large sum of money has not resulted in more people being brought to these shores. It is rather interesting to note, with regard to the question of immigration, that in 1910, the excess of emigration over immigration was 6,655. The assisted and nominated immigrants numbered 4,049, so that the gain was 2,606 over the assisted and nominated immigrants, leaving out of consideration the natural increase. That is to say, we gained 2,606 by way of population from sources other than natural increase, and other than assisted and nominated immigrants, that is people coming into the country freely from other places. In 1911, the excess was 12,465, an increase of 2,887 over the assisted and nominated immigrants. That was a gain to the State of 2,887 persons leaving out of consideration altogether the assisted and nominated immigrants and the natural increase. In 1912, the first year of office of the Labour Government, we lost 708 persons. That is to say, the excess of emigration over immigration was

6,229, or 708 less than the assisted and nominated immigrants.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The largest number of immigrants that ever came into the State.

Mr. WISDOM: In 1913, we gained 865 only over assisted and nominated immigrants. For the five months to the 31st May last, the excess was 579, or 271 less than the assisted and nominated immigrants. During the term of office of the present Government we have really lost 110 of the old population by way of emigration.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You are very clever.

Mr. WISDOM: It shows that if it had not been for the assisted and nominated immigrants, for which the Liberal Government were responsible, and exclusive of the natural increase, we should be losing at the present time by emigration. I was rather amused at some of the remarks of the Premier with regard to his deficit. The Premier states, and he has stated many times, that he is not ashamed of his deficit, and so, not being ashamed of it, he seeks for every possible excuse for that deficit. This sounds rather paradoxical, but that is absolutely the position that we find the Premier taking up. He makes a curious claim that he has a better right to plead adverse conditions as an excuse for his deficit—though why he should plead anything for a deficit that he is proud of, I do not know—than the Liberal Government, because although conditions prevailed similar to those which prevailed under the previous Government, they were in his case, in a more aggravated form. It is interesting to see how far that is justified. The conditions for the last three years were certainly similar as far as the average yield per acre was concerned, but so far as the total yield was concerned the Liberal Government were far worse off. One of these instances is in regard to wheat.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There are many instances in which they were worse off; that is nothing to go by.

Mr. WISDOM: During the three years of office of the present Government,

they had 1,294,152 bushels more than were received during the three years of the Liberal Government. That in itself is a big advantage. Then again, the revenue from the Commonwealth was less during the time of the Liberal Government, and what probably interests the people of the State more is that there was less taxation then. Certainly, as mentioned by the Premier, the Liberal Government during their last three years had an increase over the previous three years of £438,000 in revenue. It is interesting to see what they did with it. In the first place they carried on the services of the country with perfect satisfaction and they saved £326,000. In the next place, when they went out of office, they left an absolutely contented country.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It did not appear so. The people do not seem to have approved of their actions.

Mr. WISDOM: The country was more contented and more prosperous than it has ever been since. Let us look at the other side of the picture.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Yes, give the other side.

Mr. WISDOM: During the three years of the Labour Government they have had two bumper seasons, they had an increase in Commonwealth revenue, an increase in the gold yield, and an increase in every direction, and an increase in revenue of £3,181,000, on the previous three years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): That shows the prosperity of the State.

Mr. WISDOM: What did they do with it?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Spent it.

Mr. WISDOM: You went to the bad at least £450,000. You had left the country in anything but a state of rest and prosperity. The country at the present time is in a state of unrest and uncertainty, financially. The Liberals, with poorer seasons and with less revenue, and notwithstanding the fact that they had saved £326,000, reduced taxation to 22s. 7d. per capita. Labour, in spite of record

seasons and record revenue, increased taxation to 25s. 5d. per capita—an increase of 2s. 10d. in two years. Again, the deficit, after all, has to be made up by taxation, because the Government have exhausted every other source. They have exhausted the railways. There is no source, other than new taxation, from which the Government at present are likely to derive revenue to clear off their deficit. Of course, we hear a lot about the trading concerns. We are told that the Government are relying on the trading concerns to clear off the deficit. It seems to me, however, that the trading concerns have been, up to the present, and so far as we can judge are likely to prove in the future, a means of increasing the deficit and not of wiping it off. The deficit, then, if made up by new taxation will represent another £1 7s. 9d. per head of the population. The Premier is fond of stating what the Government have spent money in, and of asking what the Liberals would cut out of the Government programme. That question has been put over and over again. So far as I am concerned, I should certainly cut out most of the trading concerns in which the Government have engaged; but as far as developmental works are concerned I do not think there is anyone on this side of the House desirous of cutting out any of the items. But there is one thing that certainly we Liberals do contend and do hold, and that is that we could have done the same work of development with a good deal less money. We do not accuse the Government so much of spending money in the wrong direction as far as developmental work is concerned, but we do accuse them of not getting value for the money they spend.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): What have we lost?

Mr. WISDOM: I think, at any rate, that the people would understand from the past Liberal record that if the Liberals had had the same opportunity as the present Government have had, this country would be richer in development, and in population, and also in money.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Hear, hear.

Mr. Bolton: That is nonsense. The Liberals had the opportunity for years and years before this party ever got a chance.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier also—he wants watching, the Premier does—confuses, and persistently confuses, revenue and loan when trying to find excuses for his deficit. It is really pathetic to watch the efforts of the Premier to explain away the deficit of which he professes to be so proud.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is it.

Mr. WISDOM: As the hon. member for Beverley (Mr. Broun) has justly said, the Premier has blamed the farmer. The Premier says that had it not been for the help given to the farmers he could have reduced his deficit by £200,000. Then he goes on to state that he knows the farmers and knows the condition of the farmers, and that to reduce the deficit, or to do without a deficit, would have affected the farmers, and that it was better to have a deficit for a time than to hurl the farmers into absolute ruin. One would think, from the Premier's statements, that the farmer was responsible for the whole of the deficit. But let us look into the figures a little—and they require some looking into. The Premier pointed out that deferred rents amounted to £112,685, and the interest on seed wheat to £7,048, and interest owing to the Agricultural Bank to £99,417; a total owing by the farmer, and which the Premier implied would have gone to reduce the deficit, of £219,150. This amount, the hon. gentleman states, has been a charge merely on revenue account. However, on cross-examination he had to admit—and he very frequently has to make admissions when cross-examined—that as regard the £7,048 and the £99,417 and the £20,000 owing in principal to the Agricultural Bank there was only the interest chargeable to revenue; which modifies his original statement very, very considerably. The interest and sinking fund at  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. would equal £6,952 instead of £126,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): He paid the whole of the interest due to the Agricultural Department.

Mr. WISDOM: It is due to the Bank, certainly; but it is not a charge on the revenue. It is the interest on the interest which is a charge on the revenue. Allowing the Premier the interest on the interest, and the sinking fund, it amounts to only £6,952. Then add the rents, £112,685, and the total is £119,637; not £219,000. So the Premier has overstated that little bill by £100,000, a full £100,000. But that is nothing to the Premier. The deficit is nothing to him.

Mr. Bolton: But you are figure-juggling. You have got mixed up. You are reading from the wrong sheet.

Mr. WISDOM: Another point is that the Liberal Government had some outstanding rent and some outstanding interest, which have to be taken into consideration.

Mr. Bolton: And some debts.

Mr. WISDOM: No; no debts.

Mr. Bolton: Yes; outstanding debts.

Mr. WISDOM: The Liberals left the present Government a credit balance. The outstanding rent, at the time the Liberals left office, would be certainly not less than £40,000, and the interest owing amounted to £27,000. Taking the same rate of interest,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., on the £27,000, and £40,000 as deferred or overdue rent, there remains a balance, which is all the Premier can claim as against his deficit, of about £78,000. That amount of £78,000 represents the assistance he has given to the farmers. These figures, I may mention, are the Premier's own figures, as on the 31st May last. So there is left a balance of £449,000, which he must blame someone else for, and not the farmer. It is hard, however, to reconcile the amount of £99,000 owing for interest. Ninety-nine thousand pounds represents just about, I think, the interest on the whole of the money lent by the Agricultural Bank for one year. It is hard to believe that the whole of the interest on the capital of the Bank is in arrear. On the 30th June, 1912, the amount of interest outstanding was £40,000. Now, 1912 was the bad year, the year which the Premier blames for all

his shortages. But in 1913, after a good year, there was an additional £25,000 of interest owing or in arrear, making the total £65,000. Then, 1914 was a record year, and after that there was a further £34,000 of interest in arrear, making the total £99,000. I want to know how much of that £99,000 represents arrears, and it would also be interesting to know what proportion of the £99,000 represents interest owing in respect of money lent on farms which have since fallen into the hands of the Agricultural Bank. Where is the Agricultural Bank to get its interest in those cases?

Mr. Bolton: That trouble is owing to the bad policy of the previous Minister for Lands, the member for Northam, in settling men where they had no chance.

Mr. WISDOM: Another interesting statement of the Premier was that in which he referred to a business getting an overdraft. He asked, was there a huge business that had not at some period drawn on its capital in order to carry it over a critical time? We know, of course, that the case is as the Premier's question suggests; but the critical time, if there was one, for the Government was in 1912. On the 30th June, 1912, the deficit was £121,000. The year 1913 was not a critical time; there was nothing particularly critical in 1913. On the contrary, there was a good season, and there was an abounding revenue. But at the end of June, 1913, the deficit stood at £311,000—an increase, during a good year, of £189,000. Again, 1914 was a still better year. Everything was going up, returns were improving in every quarter, in agriculture, timber, and gold, and also in Commonwealth revenue. The Government were getting more from taxation. Yet in May, 1914, the deficit reached £527,000—an increase of £216,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Why do you not give us what it was in June?

Mr. WISDOM: It seems to me that these figures point conclusively to the peculiar fact that the less crisis the Government have, the more overdraft they want. I should think that, logically, the Treasurer must pray fervently for a few

bad seasons to enable him to square his finances.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is the logical conclusion from his arguments.

Mr. WISDOM: There is another absurd claim made by the Premier, in regard to the workers' homes; a particularly amusing claim. I remember that long before I thought of entering politics the question of workers' homes was discussed by Liberals and was favoured by Liberals with whom I talked.

Mr. Bolton: Never, never. No Liberals on your side of the House have favoured the scheme.

Mr. WISDOM: Yes.

Mr. Bolton: Why, they opposed the very item.

Mr. WISDOM: I discussed and advocated workers' homes before the hon. member interjecting was in Parliament.

Mr. Bolton: Nonsense. Never.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Order, order!

Mr. WISDOM: I discussed the question with other Liberals, as I have stated. However, the Premier states that the Liberals are opposed to the scheme of workers' homes.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Several of your side opposed it last session.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier quotes from a speech of the leader of the Opposition, and tries to deduce from that speech a conclusion that the Opposition leader ridiculed the workers' homes scheme. To anyone who knows what the policy of the Liberals was at that time, and to anyone who knows the leader of the Opposition, the only possible inference to be drawn from that speech is that what the Opposition leader ridiculed was the illogical and absurd attitude of the Labour party in advocating workers' homes with a freehold principle attached, in violation of the Labour party's political platform.

Mr. Bolton: He was against the workers' homes, of course.

Mr. WISDOM: Another piece of presumption on the Premier's part was to claim as his own a plank of his opponents' platform. To show how absolutely wrong the Premier was in accusing the leader of the Opposition and the Lib-

erals generally of being hostile to the workers' homes scheme, I will read an extract from the Opposition leader's speech on the Workers' Homes Bill.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): What year?

Mr. WISDOM: In 1911.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): He was only thinking about it then.

Mr. Bolton: Read what he said last year.

Mr. WISDOM: The leader of the Opposition opened his second-reading speech by saying—

The principle embodied in this measure is one which, I think, every member will cordially endorse.

That does not indicate that members on this side of the House were opposed to the workers' homes scheme, as stated by the Premier. Then in his concluding remarks he says, "I think it will receive the approbation of every member of the Opposition." There is nothing further to be said in refutation of a deliberate intention to mislead with regard to the attitude of the Liberals towards worker's homes. The Bill was passed without a division in either House. Only two Liberal members spoke on the second reading, the leader of the Opposition, and the member for Murray-Wellington (Mr. George). The only difference between the policy of the Liberals and the Government in power in regard to workers' homes was the question of leasehold and freehold. Of course the usual bogeys were trotted out by the Premier. He said the worker who has a home of his own will not be under the thumb of the tyrannical employer who might turn him out of his house into the cold.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Did he say "tyrannical employer?"

Mr. WISDOM: No, those are my words. I quite expect him to use those words all the same. The man who has a house of his own is more dependent on his job than if he were renting the house. He is less independent of his work and of his employer than if he were renting the house. So that bogey stands for nothing. If he owns his house, and he loses his job

and has to go 20 or 30, or even 100 miles to another job, what good is his house to him? He must get rid of the house if he wants to keep his other job going. In spite of the workers' homes administration doing their utmost to push leasehold and discredit freehold, the outstanding feature of the whole system up to the present time is that the workers themselves who have taken advantage of the Workers' Homes Act have shown a decided preference for freehold.

Mr. Bolton: You know that is wrong.

Mr. WISDOM: There were 653 approvals for homes, and out of that total 605 were for freehold and 48 leasehold. If that does not show preference for freehold I do not know what does.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): There are 60 leaseholds in Fremantle alone.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier is very cock-a-hoop at the fact that he has brought down rents in the metropolitan area by the introduction of the workers' homes. I have no doubt that these workers' homes will bring down the rents in time, but certainly the figures of the Premier are a sample of the usual figures which he quotes to suit himself. He stated that the rents had gone down in the metropolitan area since the establishment of workers' homes. But he carefully used figures covering the whole cost of living to argue that the rents were reduced.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The figures he used were Knibbs'.

Mr. WISDOM: I am using Knibbs' figures, but perhaps mine is a different Knibbs. Mine are correct figures; they are figures for Western Australia.

Mr. Lewis: Where did you get them?

Mr. WISDOM: From Knibbs. They are the figures for Western Australia. We want to know the relative prices in Western Australia. In 1911 the purchasing power of a sovereign so far as concerned rents, was 16s. 3d., in 1912 it was 17s. 3d., in 1913 it was 18s. 7d., and in the first quarter of 1914 it was 18s. 5d. The only reduction, therefore, is between 1913 and the first quarter of this year.



Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You could not find anything but empty houses in 1911.

Mr. WISDOM: Rents have not been reduced in the metropolitan area. The cost of living generally has been reduced, but not on account of rents or meat, but simply in regard to potatoes and onions—so Knibbs says, and he ought to know. We will now talk about the vexed question of the trading concerns.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We heard about them at Claremont.

Mr. WISDOM: It is noticeable that the Government are very quiet.

Mr. Bolton: Another attack on Mr. Davies.

Mr. WISDOM: They boast about everything except the trading concerns, but the Government are extremely quiet on that particular subject. Although the Government complain they have heard too much about the trading concerns, the people of the State have not heard enough, and they want to hear the truth. It is interesting to note some of the Premier's high ideals in regard to the trading concerns. In the course of the second reading of the Government Trading Concerns Bill, the Premier stated that the measure would compel each trading undertaking brought under the operation of the measure to keep proper books of accounts, which would be presented to Parliament duly certified to by the Auditor General, in order to give Parliament, and through Parliament, the people, a proper account, as complete as possible, of the operations during the year, and to show whether the State trading concerns had lost or were showing a profit. That was one of the intentions of the Trading Concerns Bill. Referring again to the trading concerns, the Premier said that they would be operated "just as if they were a concern operated by a company or a private individual." Then again he promised trading accounts on the Estimates, so that the revenue and expenditure could be kept separately from the ordinary Treasury accounts. Again the Premier repeated that it was intended to place these concerns exactly on the same footing as if

they were being run by a private firm. Further on he once again declared that they would be placed on the same footing as a private individual might place such a concern, and in conclusion the Premier remarked—

I have nothing more to say, except that the only concern of the Government is to comply with the wish expressed, not only in this House, but in another place, and also by many public men, that when the Government undertake trading concerns they should present a statement and a profit and loss account each year, showing the position of those trading concerns just as though they were controlled by private persons or individuals. That has been our endeavour, and I think the provisions of this Bill will meet the case exactly.

The Premier finishes up by saying, "That was my desire and intention when I introduced the measure." It is quite clear from all that, that the Premier intended that these trading concerns should be run on exactly similar lines as private businesses.

Mr. Underwood: Not exactly.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier says so, and that the people should be kept informed of the condition of these concerns each year by having proper accounts and statements presented. It is interesting to see how the Government have carried out the high-falutin' principles of the Premier. There were 15 concerns gazetted under this Act, but for some reason or other six were exempted and nine remained under the operations of the Act, and, leaving out the Water Supply Department, which publish their accounts in a special report, there remained eight in connection with which accounts and statements were under the Act to be presented to Parliament with the Auditor General's certificate, to show the people whether they had paid or not, and if they had been run efficiently or not. Out of the eight, there were five statements produced, and not one complied with the Act, and only one was audited. It is unnecessary to waste time over what the Auditor General said, because it has already been mentioned by the mem-

ber for Murray - Wellington. It is sufficient to say that the people to-day are absolutely ignorant of the state of these trading concerns, and it is not too much to say that the Government themselves are ignorant of the condition in which these concerns are. In face of the Premier's protestations, which I have read, it is extraordinary the endeavours which are being made by the Government to keep things quiet.

Mr. Underwood: Hush!

Mr. WISDOM: Yes, a policy of hush. The member for Murray - Wellington (Mr. George) read an interesting letter from the Railway Department with regard to a very innocent piece of information he required.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Did he not want a man sent to the Eastern States to get that information?

Mr. WISDOM: I also can read some correspondence with regard to a request for information. I wrote to the Under-Treasurer—at his request; he promising that he would put my letter before the Acting Premier, to see whether the information could be given—as follows:—

On going through the accounts relating to State hotels laid on the Table of the House during last session, I find the information given absolutely inadequate for anyone to be able to judge whether these hotels are paying as they should be or not. I would ask that, if possible, I might be furnished with further information which will enable me to take out the percentage which, in my opinion, is the only method by which the true state of affairs can be judged. As the Government insist on all hotel-keepers giving the information shown in the attached cutting from an income tax return, it seems reasonable that the Government should be in a position to give similar information with regard to their trading concerns, and especially hotels. Of course I understand that in the ordinary way the information given to the Income Tax Commissioner is confidential; but there is nothing necessarily confidential or secret with regard to the business of

State hotels. I would, therefore, ask if I might be furnished with the particulars as laid down in the income tax return which I enclose for the Gwalia State hotel and the Dwellingup State hotel.

Here is his reply—

Re State hotels. I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of yours dated the 24th ult., asking to be furnished with fuller information than that already published in connection with the trading of the above. Any comparison with State and privately owned hotels is unfair to the former inasmuch as conveniences are given to the public under State control that are non-existent under private enterprise—

I would like to know where. The letter continues—

and it is not considered advisable to depart from the information already published. Doubtless you realise the object of State control of the liquor traffic, which is not so much as to look forward to a high percentage of profit, but more to keep the traffic within control for the benefit of the community.

I want to know where the answer is to my question. I asked for certain information, and he states it is not considered advisable to depart from the information already published. I wrote again, this time to the Treasurer, as follows:—

I have received a communication from the Under Treasurer in reply to an application which I made for certain information regarding the State hotels, in which he states that it is not considered advisable to give any further information than that already published. I can only repeat that the information published is so meagre as to be of no practical use in judging of the positions of the several hotels. I have only asked for information which would be contained in a profit and loss account, if such account were to fulfil the function for which all profit and loss accounts are created. I would point out that the Government Trading Concerns Act, 1912, requires that accounts shall be kept audited

and laid before Parliament annually. This has not been done, as the balance sheet and profit and loss account laid on the Table of the House could by no stretch of the imagination be considered "a full and true" account, and, further, was not audited. I cannot conceive that any question of high public policy forbids my having the information I ask for, and, failing that, there are only two reasons I can think of which might prompt the refusal—(1) That the information does not exist, or (2), That it is such as would be embarrassing to the department concerned. I trust neither is true, and even if true I feel sure it would not be considered by you a sufficient reason for withholding the information. I would ask that the decision to withhold this information be, in the public interest, reconsidered.

In reply to that I got this letter—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 9th inst., with reference to your application for certain information regarding State hotels, which was refused by the Under Treasurer. In reply I beg to state that you, as a member of Parliament, should be aware that the Under Treasurer is not prepared to give any information beyond that supplied with the public accounts, unless the application is made through the Colonial Treasurer. If you care to apply to me for any additional data, I shall be pleased to consider the advisability of granting your request.

There is more of it, but it only means that the Treasurer asks me to do the very thing I had done. I again wrote explaining that, and asking once more for the information, and the final reply was this—

Referring to your letter of the 15th inst., and previous correspondence requesting certain information relative to the State hotels at Gwalia and Dwellingup, I beg to inform you that the hon. the Colonial Treasurer regrets he is unable to supply any further information on this subject. He is of

opinion that the audited reports in this regard, as laid on the Table of the House, should be sufficient for your purpose.

Another instance of the suppression of information in regard to these trading concerns. I might also quote the answer I got from the Minister for Works to a question asked in regard to the Boya quarry, an absolute case of evasion. We have had so-called balance sheets and profit and loss accounts referring to the steamships. These were placed on the Table and were supposed to be correct.

Mr. Underwood: Are you opposed to State steamships?

Mr. WISDOM: Most decidedly. The Premier even went so far as to state that, although they were not audited, the accounts were correct. We find, however, when the accounts for the steamships came to be audited, the loss stated to be £19,000 rose to £23,000. Are we to infer from that that the other statements laid on the Table are similarly accurate?

Mr. Underwood: Yes, if you like.

Mr. WISDOM: What reliance can we place on any of these statements, when we know that the moment they get into the Auditor General's hands the whole statement is altered? A very essential part, the depreciation, has been altered. Depreciation is a most important item, and we find £5,611 put down for depreciation. That is under 5½ per cent. on the book value of those steamers, and the book value is grossly exaggerated. The method usually adopted and considered by shipping companies to be the most sound is to take the original value of the vessel and annually write off a sum not less than five per cent. on the original value of the vessel. If that were done in the case of these steamships the amount to be written off for depreciation alone would be £9,000.

Mr. Underwood: Would you not like to buy one of them?

Mr. WISDOM: I want to point out that this £5,611 covers not only depreciation but replacements, in other words, replacement or extraordinary repairs. That ought to amount to another five per cent.

on the original value; and nothing less than five per cent. for depreciation and five per cent. for replacements and extraordinary repairs would be considered in any proper shipping business to be sufficient for these items. If that were done in connection with the Government steamships the amount written off for depreciation last year would have been £18,000 instead of £5,611.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You will wipe out the lot presently.

Mr. WISDOM: It is time the people were made aware of the actual position with regard to these steamships to-day.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It is a most disgraceful thing.

Mr. WISDOM: In June 1913 the debit against the steamships was £130,000. Against that, leaving out the value of the steamers and stores there is £5,400 for sundry debtors, insurance and furniture, leaving a balance of £124,600, as represented by the steamers and stores at that time.

Mr. Underwood: You are a wonderful calculator.

Mr. WISDOM: The expenditure to the 31st May last was £68,900, making a total debit of £193,500. Deduct the revenue (£57,800) for the same period and we get a balance of £135,700. That £135,700 is represented by the State steamers and the stores. I have taken a good deal of trouble to try to get a fair estimate of the present value of those steamers.

Mr. Turvey: Wasted energy.

Mr. WISDOM: And as a result I give a fairly liberal valuation.

Mr. Underwood: A Liberal valuation; I like that.

Mr. WISDOM: It works out at £49,000 for the lot. I may say that one man who knows a good deal about it valued them at £28,000, but I thought it was utterly absurd and I refused to look at that figure. I put down for stores the same amount as last year, namely £5,000. That makes a total of £54,000, represented by steamers and stores. This leaves a loss on the capital and working expenses of no less than £81,700. Now we want to know where that mysterious

£12,500 is—the £12,500 incurred for repairs and docking in Sydney. The February expenditure does not include it, nor does the March, the April, or the May expenditure. It must have been paid. The Mort's dock people in Sydney are not going to allow the Government to owe it.

Mr. Underwood: Of course not.

Mr. WISDOM: I want to know, and we have a right to know, where the money was paid from and, although asking for it repeatedly, as usual when we ask questions in regard to trading concerns, we get no reply.

Hon. Frank Wilson: But get idiotic interjections instead.

Mr. WISDOM: The Government have been told for the last two years that the "Western Australia" was an unsuitable ship for the trade and that they were losing money over it. They have known for 18 months that they are likely to lose from £10,000 to £15,000 a year on the ship. Yet they persist in running that ship. Nobody in the State wants to see a loss, but we do object when for political purposes a losing steamer is kept on the line. The Premier's excuses are amusing.

Mr. Underwood: So are yours.

Mr. WISDOM: He said it was possible even in the best regulated services to find the retention of a steamer not suitable for the trade. What nonsense! It is impossible to find any such thing, and still less is it possible to find any company at all retaining a steamer losing £10,000 a year.

Mr. Underwood: Who bought the steamer?

Mr. WISDOM: The Government.

Mr. Underwood: On whose advice?

Mr. WISDOM: On Sir Newton Moore's and Capt. Gregory's.

Mr. Underwood: He bought it himself.

Mr. WISDOM: He did not.

Mr. Underwood: He did.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Pilbara that if I have any more of his interjections I shall have him removed. There has been too much interjection altogether. Interjections are not permissible except for the purpose of eliciting some information from the member speaking, and most of these interjections, I have concluded, are for the pur-

pose of embarrassing the hon. member. I want to hear no further interjections of that character.

3 o'clock a.m.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier stated that the "Western Australia" is a magnificent steamer, admirably suited for the North-West trade from a weather point of view. He admits that she is not a passenger steamer, and that she can carry only 400 tons of cargo, and therefore is not a good cargo steamer, but he says she is a splendid steamer and exceedingly well adapted for the North-West conditions. For what purpose is she such a splendid steamer? Possibly the Premier means as yacht; this is about the only purpose for which she is adapted.

Mr. Underwood: Do you think that is why Newton Moore recommended her purchase?

Mr. Bolton: The hon. member will not take notice of pertinent interjections.

Mr. WISDOM: It is a pity that the Government have not the courage to cut the loss on this steamer. No one would blame them. They have known for 18 months that the steamer is unsuitable, and people would not blame them if they tied her up in Fremantle, Melbourne or Sydney and waited, as was done by her late owners, for a suitable opportunity to sell her. The Premier says she is a fine ship for getting out of a difficulty. She proved to be a fine ship for getting her previous owners out of a difficulty when the West Australian Government purchased her.

Mr. Turvey: What would you do without her over there?

Mr. WISDOM: Over where?

Mr. Turvey: On your side of the House?

Mr. WISDOM: We would do much better without her.

Mr. Bolton: That is embarrassing to the hon. member.

Mr. WISDOM: The steamers have been an absolute failure so far as meat cheapening is concerned. The Government meat transactions represent another little socialistic experiment at the cost of the general taxpayer.

Mr. Lewis: Are you opposed to them?

Mr. WISDOM: It has been stated by way of interjection that there is a profit on the meat shops. Perhaps the meat shops as such do show a profit, but the cattle shipping business has shown a loss, and we do not know what loss has been incurred on the Yandanooka estate.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Would you like to know?

Mr. WISDOM: Yes.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You will know in good time.

Mr. WISDOM: The Government show a profit in the meat shops by separating them from the cattle trade and from the Yandanooka estate, but the cattle trade, Yandanooka estate and the meat shops are so intermixed that it is impossible to get the result of the whole of the transactions without considering them as one business. The Government method of supplying the meat shops in the earlier stage was to set aside the best of their cattle shipments, sell the remainder and debit the meat shop with the average realisation of the balance. This must have resulted in an immense advantage to the meat shop, and it is one explanation of the meat shops having made the profit which has been shown. In the absence of any charge of which we are aware for depasturing the stock at Yandanooka, there is every reason to believe the statement which is made that the stock are being fattened on the estate and transferred to the meat shops and that the price charged is the average realisation at the original sale. The cattle trade, the meat sales and the Yandanooka estate are so intermixed that they cannot be separated and it is impossible to arrive at the net result of this trade without considering them as one concern.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Do you honestly believe that no charge is credited to Yandanooka in connection with this stock?

Mr. WISDOM: No.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Then why make such statements?

Mr. WISDOM: We want to know what charge has been made; we contend that sufficient charge is not made.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): How can you say it is not sufficient if you do not know what it is?

Mr. WISDOM: There would be no objection if the meat shops, the cattle trade, and the Yandanooka estate were really made separate concerns and if the man from the meat stall was sent into the open market to buy. This was done yesterday for the first time. We desire to know if any serious effort has been made to sell Yandanooka estate. The Government are bound by the Agricultural Lands Purchase Act to dispose of this estate under the Land Act. So far as we are aware they have not made any serious attempt to do this. Some kind of an attempt was made, but the price was so high that no portion of the estate was disposed of.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Something like the Avondale estate.

Hon. Frank Wilson: No.

Mr. WISDOM: Yandanooka is used for depasturing State cattle, and we want to know whether the interest of £6,300 and the maintenance are being charged to the cattle trade.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Give it a chance.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It has had three years chance.

Mr. WISDOM: It is of no use asking questions of Ministers because we get no answers. When will we receive this information? Last year we did not receive statements until after the Loan Estimates had been passed, when no discussion could take place.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It would be a bad job if you got it, because you could not then make wrong statements.

Mr. Bolton: Yandanooka was not purchased from a supporter like Avondale was.

Mr. WISDOM: I do not know anything about that.

Mr. Underwood: The leader of the Opposition knows.

Mr. WISDOM: We have authority for saying there is considerable juggling in connection with the transactions between these three branches of the one concern.

Mr. Underwood: And there was in connection with the Avondale estate.

Mr. WISDOM: The gross profit from the meat stall was 38 per cent. The Government shops are selling meat cheaper than anyone else. The profit made by one of the most economically run firms in the line was 25 per cent., and that firm received more for their meat than the Government. How was it done?

Mr. Bolton: We will not tell you everything.

Mr. WISDOM: There is only one way either the Government can get their meat cheaper than anyone else, or they can get a better price for it than anyone else. The Government do not get more for their meat than anyone else and therefore they must get it cheaper. The Government cannot buy it more cheaply than any other butcher. Where does the extra percentage come in? It is this which leads us to assume that the statements made with regard to the transfer of the cattle from Yandanooka and from the shipments from the North-West are well founded. We have shown a loss on two branches of this concern, the cattle trade and the meat stalls of £812. If the third branch was included, what would the loss amount to? Why cannot we be supplied with this information? Is there any reason why we should not know? If the transaction redounded to the credit of the Government they would tumble over themselves to give us the information. No doubt the public have again been rooked for the benefit of a few. We want to know who benefits from this sort of thing. The average quantity of meat sold by the Government is about 6½ per cent. of the total meat disposed of in the metropolitan area. This means that about 320,000 people in this State are paying in order that 4,000 may get meat cheaper than the rest.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You are getting yours cheaper, too.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier stated the other night that the price paid for mutton was 6½d. a lb. allowing for the value of the skin, and that the Government were selling it from 5d. to 7d. per lb., and were just making it pay. What has actually happened? The Government have bought sheep averaging 36lbs. in weight for 29s. Another lot averaged 30lbs. in weight for which 32s. was paid. In regard to the sheep worth 29s. the price of the meat, allowing for everything, would be 8½d. per lb. The sheep which cost 32s. would be worth 8¾d. per lb., allowing for everything. Yet the Government sold leg of mutton at 7d. per lb., forequarter at 5d., an average of 6d.; loin chops were sold at 7d. a lb., and the flap at about 4d. This is an average of less than 6d. per lb. But I will concede that the average was 6d. This was previous to the rise in price made by the Minister for Lands.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It was previous to when the Government bought sheep.

Mr. WISDOM: No; the Government made a loss of 2d. per lb., but this was the loss on the hooks in the meat stall and does not allow for the cost of the upkeep of the stall and wages. Since then the Government have increased the price of meat 1d. per lb., and the market has gone down 1d. per lb., so that the Government have made up that 2d. Now they are putting mutton on the hooks at the same price as they are getting for it. This incurs a loss because the Government have to pay wages and for the working of the shops. This is sometimes done by butchers when there is a sudden jump in the market; they sell mutton at less than they paid for it, and they make up the difference by the profit on beef. I mention this because the statement by the Premier was absolutely misleading.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It was true.

Mr. WISDOM: It was not so.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I say it was.

Mr. WISDOM: I wonder when the Government will realise that all this tinkering and pettifogging business will never alter conditions which have their

root in the law of supply and demand. They have started at the wrong end and gone the wrong way to work. In order to cheapen meat the Government must increase the supply. The steamships are not doing this, and the meat stalls will not do it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The stations will.

Mr. WISDOM: The only station is Moola Bulla, which is an inheritance from the previous Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): What about Yandanooka?

Mr. WISDOM: It is a pity that this miserable, party spirit, which I have mentioned, will not allow the Government to admit that anything good was done under the Liberal regime. I refuse to believe that members on the Government side do not realise that the Liberal scheme for providing freezers was the scheme which would have cheapened meat more surely and quickly than any other.

Mr. Underwood: When did Liberals propose freezing works?

Mr. WISDOM: It seems unfortunate that such a scheme should hang on two things, namely, the inability of the Government to acknowledge that anything was right which emanated from this side of the House, and the reliance on a report of a Minister posing as an expert. After three years of tinkering with the meat supply, in spite of the Premier's statement the price of meat is dearer today than it was in 1911. Members of the House who were here have listened to the Premier's speech, and I think I can prove that what I say is a fact.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Not rightly.

Mr. WISDOM: Yes, rightly.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It is not so.

Mr. WISDOM: Yes, it is.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Do be quiet while he proves it to you.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier takes the whole of Australia and uses the year 1912 as the basic year. Why did he not take 1911, which was the last year of the Liberal Government and the first year of the Labour Government, and why does he not take Perth instead of the whole of Aus-

tralia? We want to know the difference in the prices in this country, in Perth and in the metropolitan area, and we want to know whether meat has risen since the present Government took charge or whether it has dropped in price.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It has dropped minus one penny per lb.

Mr. WISDOM: I am sorry for the Honorary Minister. Mr. Knibbs does not agree with him.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): My pocket proves it.

Mr. WISDOM: When Mr. Knibbs hears that the Honorary Minister has said that he is wrong I suppose that the Commonwealth statistician will proceed to alter his figures in the *Year Book*.

Mr. Bolton: He will have to alter his figures for you; you have disputed his figures to-night.

Mr. WISDOM: In 1911 the index number was 1577 and in 1912 it was 1643; in 1913, 1607, and in the first quarter of 1914 it had hobbled it up to 1615. These are Mr. Knibbs' figures, and they are applied in a perfectly straightforward way so that nobody can possibly misunderstand them. You want to know something about the retail prices. It shows how futile it is for the Government to pretend that their steamships and butchers' shops are making a great difference in the price of a commodity which fluctuates up and down according to the markets which they cannot touch.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It is always fixed at one price, at 8d., 9d., or one shilling, as the case may be.

Mr. WISDOM: In 1912 in Perth we find that a sirloin of beef, ribs of beef, steak, corned beef, neck of mutton, loin shops, leg of mutton, pork chops, etc.—

Mr. Underwood: Who prepared that?

Mr. WISDOM: I do not think, however, I will worry the House with the whole of the details, but will just give the results. In 1914 there was a reduction of  $\frac{4}{5}$  of a penny in the price of a sirloin of beef. For ribs of beef there was a reduction of  $\frac{2}{5}$  of a penny, and in shoulder steak a reduction of a halfpenny,

while corned beef was the same price. A leg of mutton was a halfpenny higher and a neck of mutton was  $\frac{2}{5}$  of a penny higher, loin chop was a halfpenny higher and a leg of pork was  $2\frac{1}{10}$ ths of a penny higher, while pork chops were  $1\frac{3}{5}$ ths of a penny higher. In 1912 there was a reduction as compared with 1911. From 1912 to 1914 there was a complete rise with one exception. That was corned beef, which was the only item that decreased between 1912 and 1914. The total increase went from the index number of 1577 to 1615. Western Australia was, in fact, the highest State in the Commonwealth, namely, 225 points higher than Hobart, which was the next highest.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That knocks their figures out.

Mr. WISDOM: So that meat was dearer after the term of the present Government. In the face of these figures one wonders what becomes of the statement of the Minister for Lands and that of the Premier made when they were in the Eastern States when they said that they had succeeded in effecting a reduction in the price of meat of from 2d. to 5d. per lb. What the Premier really gave, when he stated that the price of meat and rents had been reduced, were the figures for the whole cost of living over Australia.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Not in this State?

Mr. WISDOM: Not in this State in particular. He might still have given the whole of the figures for this State.

Mr. Underwood: He did; I assert it.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You would assert anything.

Mr. WISDOM: In groups 1, 2, and 3 which are food, groceries, dairy produce, and meat products, the numbers are as follows—In 1911, the basic year, the figure was 1,000; in 1912 it was 999; in 1913 it was 942, and for the first quarter of 1914 it was 925. There was a reduction in the total cost of living, but, as we have shown, number 3 (meat) was dearer and number 4 (house rent) was also dearer. Therefore, it lies between number 1 and number 2 to show how this reduction in the total cost of living is brought about.



To confirm the figures already given with regard to group 4, we have the index number in 1911, the basic year, as 1000; in 1912 as 1086, which shows a rise; in 1913 as 1145, and for the first quarter in 1914 as 1123, showing a rise in house rent. So that we have a rise in house rent and we have a rise in the price of meat. Mr. Knibbs states further on that dairy produce was stationary, so that the reduction in the total cost of living is due to groceries. Now, what have the State steamships and the meat stalls to do with the reduction in the price of groceries, or the Government to do with it, for that matter? Mr. Knibbs says that the reduction is due to the fall in the price of potatoes and onions particularly. We want to know whether the Government are going to take any credit for that?

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Certainly they should.

Mr. WISDOM: They have done nothing to reduce the price of potatoes and onions. At any rate, the Premier claims that the State steamships and the meat stalls are responsible for the reduction in the cost of living in Western Australia, and that the workers' homes have been responsible for a reduction in house rent. These figures show conclusively that meat has risen, that rents have risen, that dairy produce is stationary and that the reduction is due to the fall in the price of potatoes and onions. Again I say, what have the State steamships, the meat stalls and the workers' homes to do with the reduction in the price of potatoes and onions? In all the groups, that is, the whole of the cost of living, the true figures are—for 1911, 1000; for 1912, 1025; in 1913, 1002; and for the first quarter of 1914, 987. This shows a reduction of 3/1000ths. To give an instance of how misleading, or how careless the Premier is in his figures, he states that the value of money, the purchasing power of money in 1911 in Perth was 22s. 6d. That is correct, but he goes on to say that notwithstanding the shortage of meat in the North-West in particular, and the large quantities of importations of food from the Eastern States, where

the prices have also risen, the purchasing power of a sovereign in Western Australia has been increased. That is, a sovereign in 1912 was equivalent to 23s., and now to 22s. 7d. He starts with 1911 and would lead one to suppose that the difference is between 1911 and 1914. It shows how careful you have to be with the Premier.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He requires watching all the time.

Mr. WISDOM: Now, the correct figures with regard to the purchasing power of money are as follows—In 1911 it took 22s. 6d. in Perth to purchase a sovereign's worth. That is the value of a sovereign with an average over the Commonwealth for the year 1911. In 1912 the purchasing power of a sovereign was 23s. 1d.; in 1913 it was 22s. 6d., and for the first quarter of 1914 it was 22s. 3d. There are some further instances of little inaccuracies. The Premier said that in Western Australia it required 22s. 3d. to purchase what can be purchased in any other part of the Commonwealth for £1. In this case Western Australia should be Perth. It does not require 22s. 3d. to purchase what can be purchased in any part of Australia for £1, but it requires 22s. 3d. to purchase what, taking the average of 30 towns in Australia, would be required to purchase £1 worth in 1911, which is a totally different proposition. That is not what the Premier made out at all. In 1911 the Premier says—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The year 1911 was that in which you retired.

Mr. WISDOM: "In 1911," the Premier says (the weighted average for the Commonwealth being fixed at £1), "it required 26s. 11d. in Perth. We have reduced that and it is another illustration of bringing about that blue ruin which our friends talk about when the average of 26s. 11d. is reduced to 24s. 11d. It has been reduced by 2s." That is what the Premier says. But it did not do anything of the sort. It required 26s. 11d. for groups 1, 2, and 3 in 1911, but he forgot all about that. As I have shown,

these figures have fallen to 24s. 11d. on account of the decline in groups 1 and 2. Groups 3 and 4 have risen in price. In 1911 the purchasing power of a sovereign in Perth was 22s. 6d., and for the first quarter of 1914 it was 22s. 3d., which is a difference of 3d. and not one of 2s., a discrepancy of 1s. 9d. But what does that matter to the Premier? What is a deficit? What is £100,000 charged to the farmers? Nothing. In the face of these somewhat modified figures—

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I would rather take the Premier's figures first.

Mr. WISDOM: I say in the face of these figures his claim with regard to the reduction in the cost of living and how it had been brought about by such adverse circumstances, looks extremely silly.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I will take him as being the more correct.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier says that these figures being Knibbs's may be taken as conclusive, Knibbs having no party and not caring a button about Western Australia. But the figures were not issued by Knibbs at all. They are a distortion by the Premier of Knibbs's figures.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Perhaps you are making the distortion. I would rather trust the Premier than trust you.

Mr. WISDOM: We shall hear from Knibbs himself about this, because I shall send him a copy of *Hansard*.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I trust you will.

Hon. Frank Wilson: It is not a question of what you trust.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I would rather have the Premier's figures.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order! The member for Claremont is addressing the House.

Mr. WISDOM: There is another little example of how the Premier's virtuously expressed intentions with regard to the State trading concerns have been carried out, and that is the example of the Boya quarry. The balance to profit and loss

account is really another sample of the Government method of showing the people the true position of these trading concerns. I will accept the figures in those statements, and they show that the value of the material produced at the quarries in 13 months was £6,303. The average number of men employed was 35. For the sake of comparison, I will deduct the average production of one month, and that would leave £5,819 worth of material produced in 12 months. On the other hand, a private concern produced £4,931 worth of material in 12 months, with an average of 17 men, and that concern made a loss of £44 on the year's operations.

Mr Lander: That is a private firm?

Mr. WISDOM: Yes, a private firm. If the Government had been working as efficiently as that private firm, they would have produced £10,786 worth of material—nearly double of what they did produce. Private enterprise averaged an output of £290 per man per annum, while the Government averaged £166. Private enterprise would have done the same work with 20 men as the Government did with 35. This is a striking example of why Government enterprises do not pay, and it points to the root of the whole trouble. I am informed, on authority, that if the private concern had had the Government business, it would have reduced the price of material by 20 per cent.

Mr. Taylor: Where is that private concern?

Mr. WISDOM: That is my business.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): It is all in his imagination.

Member: Tell us where it is.

Mr. WISDOM: That is my business. I am authorised, however, to say that my figures are taken from the balance sheet, duly audited, of this private concern.

Mr. Taylor: Are you afraid to name it?

Mr. WISDOM: I am perfectly prepared to stand by the figures. Let the Government give their figures. That is what we have been asking for.

Mr. Taylor: Are you prepared to stand by your figures?

Mr. WISDOM: Yes. The curious thing is that the private concern, in spite of its efficient management, lost £44 in that year. The Government, with far less efficiency, made a loss of only £73. How are we going to reconcile that?

Hon. Frank Wilson: It is absurd.

Mr. WISDOM: We tried to reconcile the increased percentage of gross profit made by the butchers' shops as against the results from private enterprise. Here is an instance where the Government, working half as efficiently as private enterprise, make a loss of only £73, as against a private concern's loss of £44. How does that come about?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We have only got your word for that.

Mr. Underwood: That is all imagination.

Mr. WISDOM: I am talking on authority. If it costs the Government about twice as much to produce material, and if the Government sells that material to outsiders at the same price as the private concern sells at, a very much larger loss should, naturally, be shown by the Government. But the Government are their own best customer. They buy more stone from the Boya Quarry than is bought by any other concern. We want to know what price is charged by the Boya Quarry to Government departments. The Premier has said, "We want the people to know: we want these concerns run just as a private concern or a private company is run: we want everything charged up against these concerns that a private company would charge up against its business: we want Parliament to know, and the people to know, and everybody to know whether these concerns are run at a profit or at a loss; we want the Auditor General to audit the accounts." So far, the public have had only one account audited by the Auditor General; and the result of that audit was to make the original statement out to have been grossly inaccurate.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Hear, hear.

Mr. WISDOM: Why do not the Government tell us the price that is charged to Government departments? I asked a

question in this House of the Minister for Works on that subject. I asked the Minister what prices were charged to Government departments by the Boya Quarry for material of various sizes. The answer I received is perfectly true, mind you, perfectly true—that the material was charged at a cost which covered working expenses, interest, and sinking fund. I should think it did. It also covered the loss made on the material sold to municipalities and roads boards. The answer was an obvious evasion of the question I asked. What is the necessity for these evasions?

Hon. Frank Wilson: Because the Government must hide things.

Mr. Taylor: What price does this private concern charge?

Mr. WISDOM: I always understood, though I am not an authority on Parliamentary practice, that questions asked in this House would be answered unless the answer involved disclosures on high questions of policy or it was not for the good of the country or in the public interest that the questions should be answered in this House.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Certainly. The answer was an insult.

Mr. WISDOM: I understood that that was the practice of Parliaments everywhere. To answer questions as they have been answered in this House is, in my opinion, an absolute flouting of Parliamentary practice—so far as I am aware, of all proper practice.

Mr. Taylor: What particular quarry are you referring to?

Mr. WISDOM: The only result of the Government's refusal to give information is to confirm the impression which is abroad that things are not by any means what they should be in connection with these trading concerns. The Government's action in withholding information tends to make the public believe that the position is worse than perhaps it really is. In the absence of information people are probably inclined to think that the business is really very much worse than the actuality. It is a mistake, it is a pity, to refuse information. If these concerns are losing money, well, let us know all

about it. Let us know all about it, so that we can take measures either to stop the loss in some way or to find out what is wrong so that what is wrong may be put right and that a profit may be made. Let us have the courage to do that.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We cannot all expect to have the same courage as you have.

Mr. WISDOM: We want that information.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You will get it.

Mr. WISDOM: We want such details as the Premier promised, in order to enable the people to judge whether these concerns are being run at a profit or at a loss. We want to be sure that these concerns are not a tax on one section of the community only, as we have every reason to believe that the meat shops, for instance, are. Now, as to the Government iron works—there are no Government implement works—

Member: Oh yes, there are.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You can speak with safety tonight; the manager is not here.

Mr. WISDOM: I told the manager they were Government iron works. This is another case in which the same evil is likely to arise, that is, that we shall find it difficult to separate the business that is being done for departments from business done by the works as an ordinary trading concern. If the Government are going to carry on this undertaking in the same way as they have conducted the meat shops and the quarries, the same thing will be happening with regard to these Government iron works. The Premier mentioned the incident at Claremont. I wish to state that it was not the leader of the Opposition who was responsible for Mr. Davies' interjection or Mr. Davies' speech at Claremont. I was responsible for Mr. Davies speaking. I knew Mr. Davies was in the hall when I came into it, because I sat behind him. I knew he was there when I spoke. What I did was to give an illustration of something that might occur in the case of the iron works; and that is, that the Government work would be overcharged to the departments, and that if there were no profits, then losses

which might occur in the manufacture of implements would be made up by the excessive profits on work for the departments. I gave as an illustration the case where the Fremantle harbour works charged the steamships an amount of £1,509 for certain work done. The engineering surveyor refused to accept the debit, and stated that a generous estimate of the value of the work done would be £1,121. This shows that in that case an overcharge had been made of at least 34 per cent. Now, as I have said, I was the cause of Mr. Davies' interruption. There was no intention on my part to reflect on the management in the slightest degree. I am quite certain there was no reflection whatever cast by me either on the management or on Mr. Davies personally. If Mr. Davies was under the impression that I in any way reflected on his management, or on him personally, I can only say that I regret it extremely, and that there was no such intention.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: He resented it.

Mr. WISDOM: He misunderstood me.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Those at the meeting resented it when he finished speaking.

Mr. WISDOM: Out of the 15 Government trading concerns altogether which were gazetted, only two have issued statements which show a profit, and it is interesting to note that those two concerns have both been inherited from the Liberal Government. Those two concerns made a joint profit of £4,600. The loss on three other concerns amounted to £79,000. In those trading concerns about £250,000 of public money was invested, so that we have lost 31 per cent. of our capital. And yet the Government ask this country to give them an overdraft. It is impossible to run a business under political control to compete with private concerns. We have been committed to these things and our only object should be to do our best to ensure that the country does not lose, or that it might lose as little as possible. Our experience in State trading concerns is that those in charge, and who are responsible for their economical working, are not in a position to enforce discipline.

Mr. Lewis: How about the railway system?

Mr. WISDOM: There is no discipline in the railways; the heads of the department are hampered by party politics in every direction.

Mr. Lewis: You know nothing about it.

Mr. WISDOM: There is the restriction of service in connection with the Midland Junction Post Office, and another example is the Trans-continental railway, which will cost three or four times as much as it was originally intended to cost.

Mr. E. B. Johnston: Through Teesdale Smith's contract.

Mr. WISDOM: I might mention several other reasons why these concerns cannot possibly pay under political control. If they are to be made to pay, and if the country is to save the ultimate loss which must result, there is only one thing to do, and that is to put all these competitive concerns under a trading commissioner, who will be absolutely free from political control, and who will be entirely responsible to Parliament. We have in this country a most absurd system of Ministerial control of departments, a system which is the laughing stock of statesmen and politicians in the old country. We have the Minister for Works posing as an authority on refrigerating.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You are very friendly with him politically.

Mr. WISDOM: I think a lot of him non-politically, but politically he is on the wrong side of the House. We have the political head of a department interfering in matters of administration.

Hon. Frank Wilson: And blaming the manager.

Mr. Bolton: Not attacking the manager like some people do.

Mr. WISDOM: In England a little time ago a certain Minister interfered very innocently in the administration of a department and he was nearly expelled from Cabinet, and there was such a row that he never repeated the same mistake. Ministers should take no part in the duties of their department. They have no right to interfere. That is the duty of the under-secretary, but so long as the Government underpay these men, as they are

doing, they cannot expect them to have any initiative, or to handle the departments as one might expect them to do.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I think it would be a good thing if we had a few new under-secretaries.

Hon. Frank Wilson: If you killed a few of the Ministers off you would have a better chance.

Mr. WISDOM: There is a sad record of the effect of political interference in the case of contracts which have been entered into. Every contract which the Government have made, and which they have had to make with cute business men, they have had the worst of it. It can be said that the Powellising contract is one of the most one-sided and softest snaps for the other party ever entered into.

Mr. Foley: Because Western Australia was betrayed by the man who should have helped the State.

Mr. WISDOM: What sort of a contract was the Bovril contract, and what about the electric lighting contract entered into with the Perth City Council? The city council got the best of that deal by a long chalk. We have a cute man in Mr. Prowse, the mayor, and when the Government are pitted against smart business men they have gone down, because Ministers will interfere in matters they know nothing about. The sleeper contract is another instance where a Minister, for political purposes, declared that he could turn out nearly double the quantity that the mills were capable of doing, and he secured a contract on these lines and failed to carry it out. If the Government had been properly advised they would have known that they could not carry out this contract, but the Government had every reason to believe that the Fisher Government would assist them. Unfortunately, however, for the State Government, the Federal Government, which succeeded the Fisher Government consisted of business men who refused to be humbugged by the contractors.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Dishonourable men.

Mr. Foley: Where did they show their business acumen?

Mr. WISDOM: The hon. member cannot switch me off like that. A contract was verbally arranged for the supply of 1½ million sleepers. The plant was provided and the mills were erected before the contract was signed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): The acceptance was there in black and white.

Mr. WISDOM: The contract to transport the sleepers was signed before the contract for the supply of sleepers had been signed. Is that the action of business men? What business man would do that? If such a thing were done by the manager of a firm like Millars, he would be sacked in five minutes.

Mr. Foley: Are not Millars doing it at the present time?

Mr. WISDOM: Certainly not. The Premier admits to-day that the utmost capacity of the mills, without night shift, is 50,000 sleepers a month. How can he admit that and claim that he did not know he could not produce 72,000 sleepers a month? The curious thing about it all is that the present Government complain about having been badly treated, and yet the Federal Government are paying them 5d. more for a sleeper which they consider inferior.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): A superior sleeper.

Mr. Bolton: Who said inferior?

Mr. WISDOM: The Royal Commission.

Mr. Bolton: Gregory's Commission.

Mr. WISDOM: The Government are to be congratulated on having secured as much as they have done in regard to this contract. The Federal Government have given away a great deal by paying 5d. more.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): As a West Australian representative you ought to be ashamed to make such a statement. They are telling lies by the dozen.

Hon. Frank Wilson: That is a nice statement to make. I hope it is being reported in the Press.

Mr. WISDOM: The total price they are going to get is £110,000, and the work is to keep the mills going steadily for 10 months. I wonder what the Govern-

ment will make out of it. These things are entered into because of the profit which the tyrannical and bloated employers are going to get. How much profit are the Government likely to get? It would pay the Government better to leave these concerns alone. It would certainly have paid the Government better to have left this business alone, a business which they were utterly incapable of conducting. It would certainly have saved the people of Australia, who are going to pay 5d. more for an inferior sleeper, a considerable sum of money. The most deadly feature of the whole thing is the restriction of the licenses to sleeper cutters. This is cruel.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Very cruel.

Mr. WISDOM: The Government will say we have these deadly monopolies which crush the little squatters in the North-West, but the Government monopolists, in order to prevent the Federal Government getting jarrah sleepers from the cutters, will refuse to give the cutters licenses.

Mr. Foley: Who are the sleeper cutters working for?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Who pays them?

Mr. Foley: And who are they cutting for at the present time? Why, they are cutting for Lewis & Reid, and Millars?

Mr. WISDOM: The excuse given by the Premier is that he does not want the jarrah cut out. I am afraid the remarks of the member for Leonora must be extremely embarrassing for the Premier when he reads them in *Hansard*. Why does not the Premier want the jarrah cut out if the jarrah is inferior to karri? Why does he not save the karri if it is better?

Mr. Bolton: Millars' have locked up their lands and want to use the Crown lands.

4 o'clock a.m.

Mr. WISDOM: The Minister for Lands publishes the information that there are eight million acres of jarrah, and only 1,200,000 acres of karri. If karri is the valuable timber which the Government make it out to be, much

more valuable than jarrah, why do they want to save the jarrah so much?

Mr. Foley: They do not want to save the jarrah.

Mr. WISDOM: The Premier says they do. The member for Leonora must be extremely embarrassing to the Premier.

Mr. Bolton: If all the Crown Lands are cut out for jarrah, and only those belonging to the combine remain, what will be the price asked for jarrah?

Mr. WISDOM: According to the Minister for Lands, there is plenty of jarrah for everybody.

Mr. Bolton: No, you are wrong there.

Mr. WISDOM: The amusing feature of the whole thing, and a fitting climax to the dabbling of politicians in technical contracts, is that after weeks of haggling over the terms of the sleeper contract, and after politicians stumping the country, and slanging the other fellow, and bickering on both sides, we find two expert engineers coming and meeting and settling the whole thing in two days. Why could that not have been done at first? Why could the technical advisers not have been trusted?

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): I would not trust the Federal Government with anything.

Hon. Frank Wilson: They will not trust you very far.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We were too honest for them. Men who would enter into an arrangement for a shipping contract and at the same time tell us they would not take delivery except at Port Augusta—I say it is a disgrace.

Mr. Bolton: Cook told a lie at the Premiers' Conference.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. WISDOM: I believe that possibly with two exceptions the Government realise the truth of what I have said, namely that political interference with these enterprises does more to kill them than anything else. They have made a gallant attempt to free one concern from interference. They have tried to give an absolutely free hand to the manager of the State implement works. They were very wise in doing that, and will be wise if they continue to give

that manager a free hand. He is a sincere and earnest man, trying to do his best.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I do not think he can be successful, all the same.

Mr. WISDOM: Whether he can succeed in the up-hill game he has to play, I do not know, but I hope he does succeed. I know he means to succeed if he can, and he will do his best. As I say, the Government made an attempt to give him a free hand, and were wise in doing that. Not many months after the implement works started operations, a deputation from some Labour organisation at Fremantle waited on the Premier with the object of having the manager of the implement works talked to about the discharge of some hands. I do not know the result, but I hope the Premier had the courage to send the deputation about their business. If he has the courage to do that, and give the manager a free hand, then he is doing the best he can to make the implement works pay.

Mr. Foley: You would not provide any appeal from the manager's decision?

Mr. WISDOM: If he is fit to be trusted with the management of a concern like that, he is fit to be trusted with the handling of his men.

Mr. Foley: Do you not think Parliament should govern him?

Mr. WISDOM: I do not believe in any interference whatever. The Government have been on the defensive for a long time in regard to the cost of railways, the cost as between day labour and contract, and they produced a statement from Mr. Rolland which goes into the matter very deeply, and is certainly somewhat confusing to the lay mind although I have no doubt it is reliable as far as it goes. But the curious part of it is that Mr. Rolland's statement, which has been quoted so extensively by the Minister for Works and by the Premier, is contradicted by the Premier himself; while the Premier is contradicted by the Commissioner of Railways. The Premier stated that the amount spent on 336 miles of light railways, to bring them up to standard, was £46,460, or £130 a mile; while Mr.

Rolland says the cost was £586 a mile. It is rather a coincidence that Mr. Rolland's £586 is just the exact figure necessary to bring the contract railways up to the same price as the day labour railways. The Premier states that all the new lines being built are being constructed so as to avoid the matters complained of by the Commissioner of Railways in his report, and that is the excuse given for the increased cost of construction. Unfortunately for the Premier, the Commissioner in his 1913 report, when the Government had been doing day work for nearly two years, had this to say—

With the exception of the Wickopin-Merredin line, which is laid with 60lb. rails, the railways are designed on plans which are criticised in paragraph 20 of my report last year. The inevitable result will be undue expense in working, until such time as considerable additional capital expenditure can have been incurred to remedy initial deficiencies of construction.

Those lines are the lines the Government are at present constructing, and which are costing them so very much more than the lines constructed by the late Government. In the face of these confusing and conflicting statements, one does not know where one is; one is inclined to wonder what is happening in regard to railway construction.

Hon. Frank. Wilson : One knows they are hoodwinking the public.

Mr. WISDOM : I remember the last occasion on which I spoke for such a long time. It was at about the same hour in the morning. I tried to make the point that what this country requires is sound and solid development work, and not the exploitation of fancy theories. We have not got a very rich country. It has great potentialities, but it cannot be called a rich country in other respects. The riches in our country have to be developed. At the present time it requires economical treatment. People probably do not realise—I do not think that the Government realise that their loan policy is getting far ahead of their population and development. One naturally has to be careful in ad-

vising anything which might restrict the proper development of the country, but one cannot help sounding a note of warning that in respect to the expenditure of loan money, due regard should be had to the population and progress of the State. The increase during the last three years amounted to 13s. more per head of population for interest and sinking fund on our loans. That does not sound very much, but it is really a fairly serious matter from an economical point of view. We require to avoid, and I am afraid we are not avoiding, the false prosperity due to the expenditure of large sums of loan money. We do not want to reach that position where we are practically living on our capital. Of course, in the early day of the present Government, they in their exuberance plunged into huge expenditure, which, although they might now wish to curtail it, they find themselves utterly unable to do so, because they are being pushed ahead. They have started something going which has got out of control, and they cannot stop it. There seems to be going on, on the eve of an election, something almost in the nature of bribing a constituency. I do not for a moment think that the Government are not justified on spending money in the Bunbury and Albany harbours, or on the Geraldton or Fremantle harbour. I think they are justified in spending money in those places; but I do not like the preference being given to the places represented by Labour members. I think the Government have made a mistake, and have been unfair in not giving Geraldton the same consideration as they have given to Albany and Bunbury.

Hon. Frank Wilson : What about Busselton ?

Mr. WISDOM : I think also that while I am absolutely in favour of decentralisation, and the opening up of those ports, still in trying to carry out that decentralisation, we must not forget those nearer home. We have a population in my own constituency of 12,000, and I want to know what money has been spent in our district. We have been promised water supplies, and



that subways shall be substituted for the present dangerous railway crossings. Still nothing has been done. We are still afflicted with the same old water supply, and the dangerous level crossings still exist. The Stirling-road crossing at Claremont is one of the most dangerous to be found anywhere. Years ago we were promised that a subway would be constructed there, but it has not been done. There are two crossings at Cottesloe, at Jarrad and Napier streets. The latter is particularly dangerous, and we were promised a subway there, but have not got it. We have received no consideration, although the population of the district warrants a share of the expenditure. The Minister for Railways should consider the traffic on the suburban line, and provide better carriages. Some of them are shocking and disgraceful.

Mr. Lewis: In what way?

Mr. WISDOM: They are tattered, dilapidated, and not too clean.

Mr. Bolton: They became in that condition during the Liberal administration and the present Government have tried to improve them.

Mr. WISDOM: My experience is that they have become worse during the last two years.

Hon. Frank Wilson: The cleaners run the whole show.

Mr. Bolton: There was not much for us to run when you left office.

Mr. WISDOM: The suburban train service is very fair, though trains are sometimes late and overcrowded. It is disgraceful that it should be necessary for 14 to 18 people to crowd into a single compartment of some of the trains. These people must reach the city by a particular train in order to get to their business, and the overcrowding happens morning after morning and evening after evening. Yet no extra train is provided. Surely if ever an extra train was justified, it is on this line. This is not rush traffic, but it is constant traffic on every working day of the year.

Mr. Bolton: An extra train would not overcome that.

Mr. WISDOM: It is impossible to run longer trains, but surely extra trains can be provided. Why should not trains be run at 5-minute intervals.

Mr. Bolton: The sections are too long for that.

Mr. WISDOM: In 1911, the previous Government ordered 68 locomotives, and over 1,100 trucks in addition to a number of vans, and they doubled the capacity of the railway workshops where a large quantity of rolling stock was in course of construction. Although the State has gone ahead, the present Government have not ordered anything like this quantity of rolling stock. They have had every opportunity to judge what the traffic would be, and especially the suburban traffic, and there is no excuse for them not having catered for it. There may be some difficulties in running extra trains, but surely they can be overcome. I have seen 30 trains run in an hour on one particular line. Surely suburban trains could be run at intervals of five minutes. If not, the tramways should be extended to Claremont because the people must travel to the city.

Mr. Bolton: Trains can be run every three minutes to the racecourse, but this is a different section.

Mr. WISDOM: I do not intend to criticise the Government with regard to education matters. I do not care how much money is spent on schooling; so long as it is judiciously expended it is justified. The Minister for Education has been faced with a very difficult task and has done wonders. He has not accomplished everything that might have been done, but I do not think he can be criticised very severely. In my district we could do with additional school accommodation, but there are many other centres in the same position.

Mr. Lewis: That is the position throughout the metropolitan area.

Mr. WISDOM: The Minister has endeavoured to fulfil the wants of the districts, but these have by no means been met. In a short time it will be necessary to provide additions to our schools. It is astounding how many children in my district are growing up to the school age, and schools which

have been provided with extra accommodation within the last few months are again overcrowded and will require to be still further extended. . . . .

Question put and passed; the Address adopted. . . . .

House adjourned at 4.24 a.m. (Friday).

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 21st July, 1914.

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

### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Minister for Works: 1, Alteration to by-laws under the Roads Act for the Black Range Roads Board. 2, By-laws under the Roads Act for the Kalgoorlie Roads Board. 3, Map showing route of proposed railway from Esperance Northwards.

By the Honorary Minister (Hon. W. C. Angwin): 1, Preventative Detention Regulations, 1914. 2, Western Australian Police Benefit Fund, amendment of Regulations. 3, By-laws under the Health

Act, 1911-12 for the Gnowangerup Local Board of Health. 4, Food and Drugs Regulations, 1913-4, under the Health Act, 1911-12. 5, Return showing the number of members in each industrial union registered under the Industrial Arbitration Act (Section 25) as on the 31st December, 1913.

### QUESTION—PANAMA EXHIBITION.

Mr. SWAN asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that the Government have purchased some carved jarrah for exhibition at the Panama Exhibition? 2, If so, will he arrange for its exhibition at the Museum and Art Gallery prior to its being sent away, so as to afford the general public an opportunity of viewing it?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes: it is now on exhibition at the Art Gallery.

### QUESTION — SHIPMENT OF NORTH - WEST CATTLE BY GOVERNMENT STEAMERS.

Mr. UNDERWOOD asked the Premier: 1, What are the names of the stock owners who have shipped cattle from the North and North-West by the Government steamers during the present season? 2, What number of cattle has been shipped by small owners, including Government departments, and by large owners respectively?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The shipping season will not expire until the end of October, but the following have booked space:—Stock Department; Connor, Doherty & Durack; R. H. Holmes; M. Kelly;—Brennan; Elder, Shenton, & Co.; M. J. Durack; Aborigines Department; Robt. Sexton; F. C. Booty;—Bridge; F. Taylor; A. Dunbar; C. Newman; McDonald Bros.; Farquaharson and Gordon Buchanan. 2, The total number booked for the whole season by small owners is 7,800, and by large owners, 1,890.