

the man on the land decent and profitable, and free from isolation. Moreover, it is essential that he should be furnished with decent medical facilities. Otherwise, instead of our having to think about getting immigrants to settle on our lands, we shall have our time and energies fully occupied by the task of keeping on the land those men who are already there. I wish to emphasise this matter because I shall not have an opportunity of speaking here for the next two or three weeks. Next, with regard to Saskatchewan and co-operation. There has been much comment on the Premier's Mooré speech. My view is that the Premier appreciates the difficulties of the farming population and realises that through co-operation lies the farmer's one way out. The hon. gentleman realises that fact as the people of Canada have realised it long ago. That country has in its Agricultural Department a "Co-operative Organisation Branch," which encourages the co-operative movement among farmers not only by cash and advice but by sending lecturers out into the country to expound the benefits of co-operation, and organise the farmers. The outcome has been that, when the handling of wheat fell into the hands of elevator trusts, a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the matter and make recommendations, with the result that the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevators Act was passed, providing that 85 per cent. of the amount required for the construction of, say, a country elevator should be provided by the Government, the farmers finding 15 per cent. cash down and undertaking to pay the other 85 per cent. in 20 annual instalments. They took a lesson from Manitoba and other places, and provided that those farmers or shareholders should have for every 10,000 bushel capacity in the proposed elevator, a crop acreage of 2,000 must be provided to ensure the success of the elevators financially. Whereas in 1911 they started with 46 elevators and handled over 3,000,000 bushels of wheat, in 1915-16 they had 236 elevators handling over 43,000,000 bushels of wheat.

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

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

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

On motion by Mr. Mullany debate adjourned.

BILL—SUPPLY (£1,431,000).

Returned from the Council without amendment.

House adjourned at 5.20 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 3rd September, 1918.

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

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

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

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

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

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

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

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

in-reply in the Legislative Assembly, which amendment the Government propose to treat as a vote of want-of-confidence. I have looked up past precedents and also endeavoured to study the wishes of hon. members as to the course this House should pursue. I find that on two other occasions when amendments to the Address-in-reply were moved, this House continued the debate on the Address-in-reply as usual, and one case which is very similar to the present occurred in 1904. On that occasion the then Colonial Secretary, Mr. Kingsmill, raised the question as to whether the House should proceed with the debate or not. Sir Winthrop Hackett interjected, "We know nothing about another place," and that hon. member contended that the House should continue. But the feature of that case to which I attach importance is the ruling of the President given on that occasion. He said that there was no Standing Order dealing with the matter and that it was purely a question for the House to consider. The House thereupon continued the debate. That is so far as precedents carry us. With regard to the convenience of hon. members, I wish to do just what hon. members desire. I have no wishes myself in this matter, but as hon. members from the country have come to attend the sitting this week, if we decided to adjourn, it would be difficult for me to tell the date to which it would be necessary for us to adjourn. Then on re-assembling we would devote two or three days to completing the debate on the Address-in-reply, and it would be necessary to again adjourn for a while until business had been prepared for this Chamber by another place. It seems to me that the course for us to pursue would be for us to continue the debate, which we may reasonably hope to complete at the end of the present week. It will then be competent for the House to adjourn for a fortnight or until such time as business is prepared for us by another place.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan) [4.38]: Speaking as a metropolitan member I should very much like to see the debate continued.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: As a matter of practice, the continuance or non-continuance of the debate during the progress of a want-of-confidence motion in another place, which, in spite of the disclaimer of the late Sir Winthrop Hackett, this House is aware of, is a matter for the Government to decide, because, if the Government's fate is at stake I may say, absit omen, that on the occasion alluded to by the Colonial Secretary, when I was leader of the House, the debate was continued and the Government in the course of the following few days were thrown out of office. As I say, this is a matter for the Government to determine, because hon. members will realise that during the progress of the debate in another place even harder things may be said about the Government in this House while the debate is proceeding, and our criticism may have some influence on the debate. If the Government are prepared to take the risk the debate might be allowed to continue. I am certainly in favour of

the suggestion made by the leader of the House.

The PRESIDENT: Are hon. members in favour of the debate being continued?

Members: Aye.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fourth Day.

Debate resumed from the 29th August.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN (West) [4.50]: When Mr. Nicholson was speaking on the Address-in-reply he referred to the advisability of members of this Chamber to a certain extent curtailing the volume of their remarks, and it struck me that that advice was sound and that it would apply well not only to the Address-in-reply, but to other questions which come before this Chamber. Those hon. members who are so voluble on many occasions might well take advice such as that. Think of the patience of other hon. members which would be saved, and not only that, but the labour of the "Hansard" reporters would be considerably reduced, while the cost of printing would be curtailed. I trust that the advice will be taken seriously by hon. members. What I also would like to suggest is that Mr. Nicholson made a very fair start on that occasion. He traversed a good deal of ground, and I notice that he covers a great amount of space in "Hansard," and while he was delivering that speech he took up a great deal of the time of this Chamber. I should like to estimate what would be the result if every member occupied the same amount of time, and I wonder how many yards of "Hansard" would then be devoted to the Address-in-reply. The same remark might advantageously be applied to the Government in regard to the Speech which they asked His Excellency to deliver to members. That Speech has been referred to in another place as a speech of length without breadth, depth, or height, and I think there is a good deal of truth in all that. There is a great amount of verbiage in it and very little matter; a good deal of promising without hope of fulfilment. This might to a certain extent be typical of the Government at the present time. They make long speeches and many promises and lamentably fail to carry them out. There are several things in the speech which one recognises as old friends which keep cropping up time after time. We are told of the wonderful country we have, the great possibilities we possess, and that all that is necessary is so and so, and then we learn of the proposal to establish all sorts of industries and amongst them grindstones. It has suddenly been discovered that this State possesses stone from which it might be possible to manufacture grindstones, a great industry to be sure, which will result in considerable benefit to the people and of financial help to the Government by its being brought into existence. There is no doubt that there is room for more grindstones in this country, and I would advise the Govern-

ment to get a few turned out for the benefit of the various departments, so that the pruning knives which are to be applied in the process of cutting down expenditure to the bone might be kept well sharpened. They might also have used it in the drafting of the Governor's Speech for delivery to Parliament. If the knife had been sharpened on one of these grindstones, the manufacture of which the Minister for Industries is contemplating, we might all have been saved the trouble of listening to a tedious Speech, and the patience of members might not have been tried to the extent that it was. I also missed something else from the Governor's Speech. I did not see any mention made of the weevil trouble. I have been very much interested in this question during the last two or three months. I have abandoned the proposition as to whether rabbits climb or not, and am now more particularly concerned in the question of whether weevils fly or not. This matter is exercising my mind to a great extent. When speaking on the subject of bulk handling in connection with the Bill that was before us last session, I was unfortunate enough to tread upon the corns of the Honorary Minister (Hon. C. F. Baxter). I did not intend to say what I did say, and but for his interjection would not have said what I did. What I said was purely a criticism of his administrative ability, and in what I did say I did not indulge in one word of personal abuse. I regret that in his reply the Honorary Minister went in for a good deal of personal abuse against members of this Chamber, and attributed motives to them which wounded very deeply. If criticism is aimed at him in the future I hope he will take it as criticism aimed at a public servant in a public department. He must expect to be criticised, and in return he must remember that he should only answer criticism, and not indulge in personal abuse and attribute motives which are unfair to his critics and reflect no credit upon himself. Mr. Nicholson, in the course of his remarks, referred to members' passes on the railways, and suggested that members might very well do without them. This does not come with good grace from a member of Parliament living in Perth and representing a metropolitan province, and sitting in the House meeting in the centre of that province. He should consider the interests of those members who live miles back in the country, some of whom have to travel hundreds of miles a week to attend to their parliamentary duties. Members also travel on other occasions in connection with public affairs, and to question these passes, I think, comes with very little grace from a member of a metropolitan province.

Hon. J. Nicholson: I have no objection to a pass being given to members who travel from their homes to Parliament.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: These passes are intended for other purposes than merely those of attending to parliamentary duties. Since I have been a member of this Chamber and have had that pass, I have used it very largely in other parts of the State outside my

own province. I have also travelled throughout the Commonwealth on this railway pass and have made myself familiar with conditions in the other States, and have also taken advantage of the opportunity thus presented, within my means, to study such questions as irrigation, wheat storage, and other questions which affect the people of Western Australia. I venture to say that if everyone in this Chamber only took advantage of the opportunities he possesses in this direction, he would better fit himself to carry out the duties he is called upon to perform than others are at the present time. Such a course would widen a man's judgment and increase his sphere of usefulness. This privilege is given for that purpose. We can do better work, I think, if we widen our minds by travel with the means at our disposal, and so fit ourselves for the particular duties which devolve upon us. The question of payment of members is also a debatable one. When payment of members was first introduced it was introduced for the specific purpose of enabling certain representatives of particular sections of the people, who could not otherwise afford to be represented or whose representatives could not afford to take on the duties, to be adequately remunerated for their services. Consequently, this principle has been established and approved of here, and I daresay is approved of by every community in the world. For us to think of going back from that position simply because some of us can afford to do without the remuneration would be an injustice to many members of Parliament, and to many of the electors outside Parliament. It has been suggested that there should be a reduction in the number of members of Parliament at this time. This question is certainly another debatable one. I hold that this is not the time when the matter should be brought before us. Our minds are not sufficiently clear to devote to many of the questions which already come before us. This question of the alteration of our Constitution is one which we should not be called upon to traverse at this juncture. Some of those possessing the best of our minds and the best of our abilities, and who are best able to judge and take the biggest interest in our public affairs are away fighting our battles in Europe. If we took advantage of their absence to alter the Constitution in this or any other direction, we should be doing something which would be unjust to them, and something which they might not approve of if they were here and might disapprove of on their return. These men are fighting for the privileges that we possess and for the institutions that we enjoy. Surely this is not the time to take into consideration the alteration of the Constitution, which would mean the destruction of many of the privileges which we possess. Whatever opinions may be held on the subject, this is a question we can allow to stand over until we return to normal conditions, and are free to discuss it calmly and judiciously, in such a way that we can arrive at the most equitable results, both for us and for future

generations. We are not in a position to decide this question at present. The influences of the war are with us. Every man in the community is touched with the sorrows which have been brought upon us by this war. At this time we should only have our minds bent upon those things which are of immediate material benefit. There are many problems which should occupy our minds before the one which has been mentioned. We should hold fast to that which we have. We should retain our Constitution as it exists at present until our troubles are over, and we can then alter it in that direction in which our collective minds and wisdom may deem to be necessary. We have heard of retrenchments in the Government service and of the saving of money in that way. We have heard of reductions in this, that, and the other direction. I would point out that not one of these propositions is going to be of any use to us as a community. If we were to wipe out the whole of our civil service we should not be able to make good the deficit. We have been told by the leader of the House that no amount of reduction in the civil service will help us very much in our present financial position. What we want is efficiency. We also need to wipe out the over-lapping that exists, and prevent officers of the different departments acting in opposite directions. I have pointed out before in this House instances in which hundreds of pounds, and possibly thousands of pounds, have been wasted through a lack of co-ordination throughout the different departments of State. I told the House on one occasion that I wanted a railway siding constructed. I first went to the Railway Department, but was referred on to the Public Works Department, because it was a public works siding that I wanted to take my particular siding from. This department referred me back to the Railway Department, and I went from one to the other until I was tired. I then designed the thing myself and submitted it to the two departments, received their approval, and the thing was done. What would have happened if there had not been someone outside the departments who wanted this done? If it had been anyone inside one of these departments who wanted this done, I suppose they would have been played with as in battledore and shuttlecock to this very day. It is this lack of efficiency and co-ordination which are largely responsible for our gigantic losses. The Wyndham Meat Works, for instance, might have been constructed for less than £200,000, but to-day they have cost not less than £500,000. In the history of these works we find the same thing that I have just instanced. There is continual vacillation in policy. Men are sent there and withdrawn. One day one man is in charge and another day he is replaced by another man, until at last everyone has lost control of the works and all count of them. They have now become a gigantic white elephant foisted upon the State. What we want is decision of character in our administration. We also want efficiency in our officers. We do not want vacillation such as we have had

in the past, but definite action, and men who are prepared to do something and say less. If we can get these things brought about we shall find that the difficulty will largely solve itself and our troubles will slowly melt away. I have the strong opinion that the Treasurer of the State should be the Premier, and that the Premier of the State should be the Treasurer. If this were so it would not be necessary for the Treasurer to go down on his knees to his colleagues and ask them to cut down in this, that, or the other direction. He would be able to say to them that they must keep down their expenditure, as he tells them to keep it down. He must be the dictator in regard to the finances of the State, and he can only be the dictator if he is also the Premier. Half of our troubles to-day are caused by the fact that the Treasurer has to appeal to his colleagues, rather than tell them that if they do not cut down their Estimates they and he will have to go out of office.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They cannot do it. They are all elected. Who will put them out?

Hon. W. Kingsmill: The electors.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: I should like to refer to the speech delivered by the leader of the House last session. As Mr. Sanderson has said before, it was a masterly outline of our financial situation. He pointed out what condition we had got into and what had been the cause of it. He failed, however, to give us any suggestion for any immediate solution of the difficulty. We can all find fault whether we are Ministers or not. Some of us possibly might be able, if we set our minds to it, to produce a fine financial statement, but what we do want is someone who will tell us how to get out of our difficulties. The suggestions which were made then have been made since. To increase production and population are, in their way, very good, but these measures take too long. Increased production will largely depend upon increased population, and to increase the population is a very big proposition. It takes nearly 22 years to produce a citizen in the State. It will take a very long time indeed, if we depend upon that, to increase our production and to solve our financial difficulties. What we want is efficiency, and more especially we want to stimulate interest on the part of our public servants in their work. We want the elimination of all waste, and co-ordination in the various departments of the State so that we get 20s. worth of value for every pound that we spend.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Hear, hear!

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: Until this is done it will be useless to talk of economies or retrenchment, or to speak of production and increased population to enable us to get out of our difficulties. In the last session we passed a Stamp Duties Bill. One of the stamp duties provided for was on bookmakers' tickets. This, I understand, has been made to apply to bookmakers' practising in the streets. Surely it was never intended for that purpose? If it was so, I am certain that very few members of this Chamber understood the Bill in that way. Some two or three years ago a select

committee sat to inquire into the whole question of the over-indulgence of horse-racing in our midst, and one of the strongest recommendations of that committee was to eliminate all street betting which was taking place in our community. No one anticipated that bookmakers would be turned into a source of revenue in the years to come. The Colonial Secretary, when sitting as a private member in this Chamber, was very strong on the question of bookmakers. He said that the bookmaker was illegal, that there was no necessity for further legislation to wipe him out of existence, and that all that was needed was to put the present law into operation. He challenged the then leader of the House to do that which he advocated, namely, to administer the law as it stood and so wipe the bookmaker out of existence. He also said that any country that depended on money made out of the vices of the people had arrived at a state when they should give it back to its original inhabitants. I wonder how the Colonial Secretary feels to-day when he is raising this tax on the small vices of the people to enable the Government to meet our financial difficulties! The position is ridiculous. It is sad to contemplate that members of the Government can so far forget their convictions and principles as to utilise the small vices of the community for the purpose of assisting the Treasurer out of his difficulties. Another question I should like to touch on is that of education, and I am as keen a supporter of the educational facilities for our children as the Colonial Secretary or any member of this House. I have been giving my time free for a number of years to the technical branch of the education of this State and I take a very keen interest in it. I claim to have as much interest in the education of our young people as anybody, but is this a time when we should be increasing expenditure on education? It is very nice for us to obtain a certain amount of popularity at the expense of the State. These convictions and sentiments may help us personally in many directions, but the two questions I wish to ask are these, firstly: can we afford it, and secondly, is the money at present being judiciously expended. I claim in the first place that we cannot afford it, and in the second place I believe a large amount of the money expended in this State on education could be well saved. We have too many inspectors. We have too many educational departments, and there are many things which can be eliminated without loss to the people, and we are giving free education to too many, the parents of whom can afford to pay. These are questions which we must face. Some of them may be unpopular, but nevertheless, they are facts and although a member may become unpopular in saying them, that should not influence him. We should be candid and prepare to take any opprobrium which may attach to any statements which we may make. When the Estimates come before us I hope the Colonial Secretary, if he is asking for increased votes, will be able to justify them and will see that the money is judiciously and well expended in the best interests of the educational system of the State. There is a tendency for those at the head of the Education Depart-

ment to draw parallels with other States and other countries, but because a thing may exist in one country, there is no reason why we should have it. No educational system is such that it can be applied to any other country. A system can only be applied where it exists and it should be the best for the requirements of the people. If a nation is depending on primary industries, its educational facilities should be devoted in that way. If a manufacturing or commercial people, its education should be in that direction. No education should be applied on hard and fast lines. Every community must work out its own salvation. We have had before us recently a project for building ships in this State, and I do not want to express an opinion as to the benefits to be derived from that or otherwise, because all the arrangements have been made. However, this matter will take its own course. But one question has arisen in connection with this matter that I desire to say something about. It has been reported—how far it is true or otherwise I do not know—but it is said that a portion of our foreshores at Preston Point, East Fremantle, is to be granted for this purpose. I do not know whether it has been denied.

The Colonial Secretary: It has in this morning's paper.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: I believe it was stated in another place.

The Colonial Secretary: It was denied this morning.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: Then I shall say no more about it. I wish to emphatically protest against any portion of our foreshores being alienated at this time or at any time. We have had too much trouble in the past in this direction and I am glad this is not to be done now. I next come to the question of the Royal Commission which is now sitting on the Wheat Marketing Scheme. Sometime, I believe, in April I asked the leader of the House whether it was the intention of the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the Wheat Marketing Scheme, and I was given a deliberate and emphatic "no." There was no qualification whatever, I was simply told "no." On the 30th May the report of a select committee was presented to the House, and adopted by the House, recommending Parliament to pass the Wheat Marketing Bill as submitted at that time with the elimination of certain words making the Bill extend to one year, conditional on a Royal Commission being appointed to inquire into all matters connected with the Wheat Marketing Scheme since its inception, and to advise as to its future operations and control. The Commission was appointed by His Excellency, the terms of which were these—

To inquire into and report upon the working of the Wheat Marketing Scheme under the Wheat Marketing Act of 1916. The Commission which the House asked for, conditional on the passing of the Bill, was a Commission to inquire into all matters connected with the control of the Wheat Scheme since its inception and to advise as to future operations and control. The Commission appointed to inquire into the Wheat Marketing Act of 1916 can only deal with two harvests.

No mention is made of the amending legislation to deal with the handling of the harvest of 1917-18. There is no mention in the Commission as to any scope as to the amending legislation. We have been advised by the Crown Law authorities that we can extend our inquiries beyond the scope of that Commission as indicated, but the position is this: this House emphatically, by adopting the report of the select committee, passed certain legislation conditional on a certain Royal Commission being appointed with certain powers. That Commission was not appointed with those powers. The powers were limited and consequently the Government have not kept faith with the members of this Chamber in that connection. This Commission was asked for by me, as I said before, or suggested by me in April or May last, I am not sure which. This House adopted the recommendations of that committee on the 30th May and the Commission was appointed on the 12th June, and the members of the Commission were called together on the 21st June. That is three weeks after this House passed the resolution that called them into being and probably two months after I first suggested to the Government the advisability of appointing a Royal Commission. The Commission met on the 21st June and hon. members will see by the newspapers that from day to day we have not wasted much time in our investigations. From the reports in the paper members will see that the Commission has been sitting continuously ever since. They have, members will note, visited the various depôts in the State and endeavoured as far as possible to familiarise themselves with the operations of the scheme and to do what they consider right in this direction, and to prosecute their inquiries as quickly and expeditiously as possible. But members will also note that almost immediately after the Commission started their inquiries, they received a hurry-up letter from the Premier asking how long it would be before they sent in their report on the bulk handling of wheat. They were again reminded by the Government that time was passing very rapidly and it was necessary for the Government to draft legislation to introduce into Parliament for the control of next year's harvest; and then again members will notice from the papers, the scheme called for tenders for the handling of next year's harvest. Then it will be found that the time for the receipt of tenders was extended and now it will be found that the question of tenders has been withdrawn. Those who were asked to tender have been informed that no tenders are required from them. Still the Commission is told to hurry up.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Is this an honorary commission?

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: It is an honorary commission. It is not competent for me to refer to any matters under consideration by the commission or to disclose the evidence, although it is a public matter and is published in the Press, but there are certain phases of the question which I think members should know. There is the question of calling for tenders, and I am only referring to this because the

Royal Commission have been publicly mentioned in connection with it. A celebrated conference was held in Perth of the primary producers of the State which has been referred to on various occasions, and speeches were delivered by the Honorary Minister in charge of the scheme which I am not sure whether I should refer to as gentle zephyrs or withering siroccos, but in that speech the Minister made certain statements in regard to the scheme. He said—

With reference to the action of the scheme in calling for tenders for certain services for next year's harvest, I am sorry that I am not at present able to give you my full mind on the matter. The question at present is more or less sub-judice. I might remind you that—(a) A Royal Commission is sitting to advise on the future control, management, and operation of the Scheme. (b) An Enabling Bill, giving the Government power to purchase the coming season's wheat, must pass both Houses before we can operate. (c) The legislature will be guided to a very great extent by the report and advice of the Royal Commission. When the Royal Commission pointed out that as far as they were concerned the calling for quotations would have a prejudicial effect on their deliberations, I agreed with my colleagues that the quotes should be withdrawn for the time being, although we all realise that the time for a decision in connection with the handling is very short, if we are to make proper preparatory arrangements to have the work done effectively and commercially.

Members will see that he states that in deference to the wishes of the Royal Commission the question of tendering was withdrawn. I am not going to express an opinion on that or say whether it is right or wrong. I will leave it to the Honorary Minister when speaking on the question, if he does so, to tell the House whether the action of the Government was prompted by the action of the commission or was the outcome of some pressure brought to bear on the Government from outside.

Hon. H. Carson: When does the commission hope to finish?

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: I did intend to speak on the question of repatriation, but I have made up my mind not to do so to any extent this afternoon, but I feel it is a question in which we are all vitally interested. It is a question which everyone should consider. It is our primary duty and one which we have no right to play with or to shuffle with. Our soldiers are away fighting for us, offering their lives for our sakes, and what are we doing for them in return? The soldier in the past has been honoured not because he fights for us and kills the enemy, but because he offers his life for us and our protection. In all ages nations of the world have honoured their soldiers for that reason, because they have been prepared to give their lives for the people they fight for, which is the greatest sacrifice a man can render his country. What are we doing? Are we making those preparations for them which we are expected to do? The Federal Government are taking certain steps; but certain duties devolve on the Government of this State. I ask, what are they doing? If

they are not doing their duty we, as members of Parliament, are here to see that they be compelled to do it. Our men are fighting for us, and no nation can expect its soldiers to be successful unless the spirit of the nation is behind them. No soldier will win in battle unless he feels that his cause is just and that the people he is fighting for have confidence in him and are also determined to see that he shall be properly supported. It is our duty to do that. We who cannot go to the Front must do our duty here, and the one thing we can do for our men is to see that they are placed on their return, to properly prepare for them, so that when they come back they will be able to drop into those places without any worry or difficulty on their part.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: We do not quite know what places they want.

Hon. J. F. ALLEN: We know that the man who vacillates and has no opinion will never do anything for them. Lack of knowledge of detail does not prevent general principles being established. Those who lack decision in these matters and consequently take no action, are not equal to the task of controlling our affairs. We require men with definite opinions, men who will analyse the question, make up their minds and act upon their decisions. Although we make mistakes, it is better to make mistakes than to do nothing. Men who never make mistakes never make anything. If our Government make mistakes in this matter we will forgive them, but if they do nothing, then they shall be regarded as unpardonable. I trust that the Government will see to it that their duty to our soldiers is done, and as far as in them lies will make the necessary provision, so that the men on their return will not look at us reproachfully for having neglected their interests, but will realise that we have done our best to make ample provision for them.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM (North) [5.18]: When I first read over the Speech submitted by His Excellency I made up my mind that I would not express any opinions upon it. It was so full of obvious and self-evident platitudes that it seemed to call for little or no criticism. However, when I came to look into the state of the finances, I felt that possibly were I not to say anything at all my silence might be taken as approval. While, perhaps, I am not able to suggest any wholesale and first-class remedies, still I cannot sit down and approve of the present state of the finances with the steadily increasing deficit. Opinions have been expressed as to whether we should say much or little on the Address-in-reply. I am one of those who regard the Address-in-reply debate as a very good opportunity for members to address themselves to any subject of importance in our minds. It fulfils two good purposes. It makes a safety valve for members with grievances, and it also affords the Government some information as to the views of members on different subjects. Those are two good points in connection with the Address-in-reply debate, and under those circumstances if perhaps a little time is used up in the debate, I do not think it is wasted. The great point we should consider is the avoidance of repetition, and to see that each

member does not get up and blindly follow what has been said by the previous speakers. In regard to the finances, the Government have been freely criticised. Certainly their financial results do not give satisfaction, nor do they show that the Government have been successful. But that is no disappointment to me, for I never expected this Government to be successful. To my mind it is impossible for any Government elected by other people as a Government to be successful. The hon. member who just sat down said that the Premier should be the Treasurer and should have control of the finances. He could then tell other Ministers, who did not shape their estimates according to his plan, to get out. The difficulty is that the Treasurer, not being Premier, has no power to put them out. But even if the Premier was also Treasurer it must be remembered that he did not put the other Ministers into office, did not even ask them to come in. They were put there by a number of irresponsible others, and the Premier has no power over them. The marvel is that any man could be found to take the Premiership under such conditions. In my opinion no Government but a party Government can achieve success. I will go further and say none but a one-man Government. Take Western Australia, for 12 years under the Forrest Government. There we saw a one-man Government bringing the State into a marked condition of prosperity. Take New Zealand, for many years under the Seddon Government, again a one-man Government. Can it be imagined that Premiers such as the two men I have mentioned would submit to having people thrust upon them? Certainly not. Take Great Britain. At the present moment where would she be were it not for the one-man Government led by Lloyd George, who came in and saved the people? Take America. Who has piloted America with skill and care and altogether in splendid manner, who but the present President? All precedents show that a Government can only be successful under the system known as party Government, and even then it must be a one-man Government.

Hon. J. E. DODD: What about Russia?

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Russia is in her present position because she has not a one-man Government. When she had a Czar she had some little success, but he was not a good man; he was not even clever enough to be bad. I am not going to say that you cannot get Premiers and guiders of destinies powerful for mischief as well as for good. Take our own State. We had here a Premier, Mr. Scaddan, who, I think, worked for mischief, and who spent 35 millions in five years without showing a single thriving industry, and hardly a single contented person. The present state of the finances is, to a large extent due to what was done at that time. Then, as another instance of a clever man guiding the destinies of the country for mischief, take the Kaiser. In this instance the leader has guided the country with consummate skill on wrong lines. All successful organisations are run by one man. In regard to elective Ministries, I may be met with the retort, "Why is not a board necessarily a failure, because elective?" I think the parallel is faulty. Boards, such

as the board of a bank or other similar institution, have a distinct aim which it is comparatively easy to achieve, namely, success in a particular line. The difference in respect of a Cabinet is that when you have elected Ministers you have several people pulling against one another. Take the present Cabinet. It contains three parties, Liberals, Country party, and National Labour. National Labour is Labour under a new name. Scaddan, Hughes, and all others who have left the Labour party for the National Labour party say that although National Labour they have not given up a single item of their political ideals. I remember Mr. Scaddan stating at Albany, "Do not think that because I have joined the Nationalists I have given up any of my Labour ideals." Mr. Hughes, the other day, said, "Rather than give up my ideals I will leave the position I am in."

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Perhaps.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: Therefore how can we expect Liberals, Country party members and National Labour members to work in the same Cabinet? I am not saying this offensively. Take the case of the Minister for Railways, against whom personally I would not utter a word. How on earth can we expect such a man to run that huge department satisfactorily at a time like this when we want things run profitably? The Labour members were elected, what for? To raise wages and spend money. When the Scaddan Government first came in, that was their avowed propaganda, and I think I am correct in saying that as soon as victory was won, a day was added to the lower paid of the whole of the Railways staff, representing an increased annual expenditure of \$32,000. That was their policy. That is the policy of the Labour members today. How can we expect a man representing Labour, who is still a Labour party man, and who still says that his views are not changed, to run a department like the Railways, where we want retrenchment? Put him into the Mines or somewhere else, but how can we ask a man like that to run the Railways? What are the proposals of the Government in regard to the Railways? More expense. Three Commissioners. There is no necessity for three Commissioners. I guarantee we can find a man in Western Australia to run the Railways satisfactorily, a man with local knowledge and with ample ability, if only we let him alone. Mr. Short will tell us that his life is almost bothered out of him by interference, that he is never left alone to run his department properly. Directly he dismisses a man he encounters political interference by members. But at the present moment the Railways are not run by the Commissioner or by the Government. The unions are running the Railways at present. Whom have we in charge of them? A man elected by the Labour party, whose sole idea is to increase wages. How can we reasonably wonder that there should be a failure under those circumstances? In my opinion a great deal could be done with the railways if they were taken in hand properly, and done not by lowering wages or anything of that kind. I do not believe in lowering wages any more than I do in lowering the salaries of members of Parliament. I say give men good

wages and let them work for those wages. There are many means of retrenchment in the Railway Department besides lowering of wages. With regard to the Government, we have heard the Honorary Ministers criticised, and to my mind criticised in a very unpleasant fashion. I know the two Honorary Ministers, and I think they are painstaking, hard working men who are doing the very best they can. Their chief crime is inexperience. Looking round this House, let me ask how many of us have suffered from the same complaint? I can honestly say that even at my time of life I have not got over that complaint. Inexperience has to be got over. Therefore, I do not think there is anything wonderful in the fact that these two Honorary Ministers should have made some mistakes from want of experience. It takes a long time to learn to do business with experience and with tact and with judgment. Therefore, we must excuse those who are beginning in life. But I go further and say that there is no necessity for Honorary Ministers. I will give a case to prove that: I happened to be in the unfortunate position once of holding a portfolio as a Minister of the Crown, and I am quite certain that in those times there was a great deal more doing than there is now. In the years 1895-1898 what was Western Australia doing? Any amount of improvements, any amount of construction work. There were the Fremantle Harbour Works and the Coolgardie water scheme. Railway extension was proceeding in every direction. Schools were being built all over the State, and there was quite as much administrative work as there is now, if not more. But there were no Honorary Ministers at that time. Even I in the unfortunate position of my hon. friend here as leader of the Legislative Council, never heard of such a thing as an Honorary Minister, and never during my four years of office had the assistance of an Honorary Minister. Probably Honorary Ministers are of great assistance to Ministers, and they certainly ensure to the Government a certain amount of sympathy and support when it comes to a division. If only we had a public works committee, the thing would be all right; since the Government would command nearly half the House. I maintain accordingly that the appointment of Honorary Ministers is superfluous. I am only throwing this out by the way, and I wish to say that in view of the present composition of the Government I am not at all surprised that they are a failure in finance and not very successful in many other directions. I consider that some headway could be made if the matter was taken in hand. I still hold—although it is a very unpopular opinion to hold—that £100,000 a year could be saved on the Education Vote. I still maintain that the Education Department could turn out our boys and girls better prepared for what they are intended to do, under that reduced expenditure than they are turning them out at the present time. Take the boys who have to go on to farms. What do they do? They are kept about in Perth before they go to the farms. I learn that the Education Department are now going in for continuation classes. That means that the boys are kept in the City longer than they otherwise would

be. What is the consequence? The boy gets into Foy & Gibson's, or Boan Bros., or some other such establishment. I believe Foy & Gibson employ about 800 people, forming quite a community of their own. At the age of 15 or 16 a boy is a good upstanding young fellow. Entering such an establishment at a salary of 10s. a week, he forms himself into that community. His ambition then is to get a place behind the counter or to become a shop-walker. He has a comfortable home with his parents, with bed, sheets, and other things; he has his sweetheart; he goes to the pictures. No country for him, but 10s. a week in town! What happened in my own case? I am not talking about things I do not understand. I left school when I was 15½ years of age, and went straight to a station. That is where a boy ought to go if he is intended for that life. There were no sheets in my days. A boy going on a station now expects sheets. What is the good of sheets with the present system of pyjamas? One does not want sheets as well as pyjamas. I am not joking, but giving a practical illustration. During the years I spent in England I could not get between sheets in the winter, because the sheets were too cold. My friend described it exactly when he said that there was not enough care taken to educate the boys for what they were intended to be in future life. If a boy is to remain in town to be improved there, give him the best education and keep him in town; but if he wants to go into the country, let him go into the country straight from school. Once we have him in town running about, he has no opportunity of being made into a good man for country life. The effect of the present system of education is to make boys despise the country and to make girls despise anything like domestic service. Look at the numbers of girls in shops at £1 a week and find themselves. A statement to that effect was made recently in evidence given before a common court. Those girls could go into a good hotel or a private house and get £1 per week and their keep. Which is the more independent position? But the girls seem to run away with the idea that when serving in a shop they are not serving anybody. But in a shop a girl is more of a servant than she is anywhere else. A dissatisfied purchaser need only go to the shop-walker, and the shop assistant is dismissed. The idea held by girls on this subject is absurd, and the fault lies with the educational system. That system is not practical enough, and I am quite certain that £100,000 per annum could be knocked off the present Education Vote, with the result of the Education Department turning out a class of people a good deal better than the class being turned out at the present time. Further, the Education Department seem to have the idea that every boy going to school is to be a controller, or a master, or a manager. Anyone with experience will, I think, agree that not five per cent. of people can manage a business satisfactorily. In fact, I think my estimate is far too liberal. Take the world over, one does not find five per cent. of people able to manage a business well and satisfactorily. Take any business you please: a farm or a station. One

can get a tip-top overseer or a first class clerk or a thoroughly good accountant, but not one of these can manage a station or a farm himself. And the same thing applies in businesses. It is the thinker, the man with brains, that does the managing. I do not believe there are more than five per cent. of people capable of the work of management. Therefore we must find avocations for the rest of the people—the other 95 per cent. A great many of them have no ambition, and we know that it is useless to try to educate such people. Our educational system is too academic altogether for a huge country like this, containing some 300,000 people. To fill our great vacant spaces we want people educated in a practical manner, who will grapple with those problems and solve them. Referring to the industrial enterprises of the State, I believe it is the view of the Government that they do not care about handling those enterprises. There is, for instance, the Post Office, which is a Federal matter. We know that that department is mis-managed in a most lamentable manner. Then we have our own railways, which at one time were earning a profit of £250,000 annually and are now showing a deficit. As regards repatriation, I await information where all the people are to come from who will be wanting farms. Positions are open for all the soldiers who went out of offices and business houses. Those who left places on farms will find those situations open to them. Those who left stations will find the pastoralists only too glad to have them back. Therefore I wait to hear whence is to come this large demand for going on the land. I agree that some preparation should be made for it, and in this connection I repeat my suggestion that the Yandanooka estate should be worked by the Government as a place on which returned soldiers may see whether they like country life or not. Yandanooka is a place where grazing could be learned. Yandanooka could be made a splendid probation farm, and as soon as a man is satisfied, from experience on that estate, with country life he could be drafted off to some place suitable for him to work. As it is, I fear that many returned soldiers will get the money to go farming, and go on a farm, and get tired of the farm. I know enough about farms and stations to know that the life on them is not so very attractive. I have now in my pocket-book an extract from a letter written by a returned soldier. The extract is somewhat lengthy, and I will not read it now; but its effect is, "If you think that you are going to get any of us returned men on to these farms in districts away from civilisation, you make a great mistake, because we do not intend to go there." The letter is signed by a soldier with a pseudonym. Mr. Kirwan referred to the gold-mining industry, and I do not think there is anything more regrettable than that the gold-mining industry should have gone down so much. Years ago, I remember, that industry was booming, and was, at the time, practically the making of Western Australia. I only wish that the same position would obtain again. Mr. Kirwan's theory was that a bonus should be offered by the Government on any gold won. But how can one expect gold mines to

pay after the treatment they have received in the arbitration courts? Gold, we know, has a standard value—about £4 per ounce, I think. It never goes up, it never fluctuates in the least; and yet awards of higher rates of wages in the gold-mining industry are being made continually. I am not going to say that these awards should not be made, or that the rates of pay awarded are too high for a man's living, or anything of that kind. But I do contend that it is absurd to keep on making higher awards in face of the fact that the gold-mining industry is receiving no higher price for its product, and in face of the further fact that all the requirements of that industry are rising in price. If this state of affairs is to continue, we shall not have much gold-mining here. If the Government did grant a bonus, then, the next time the industry was before the Arbitration Court, the wages would go up; and another bonus would be required. And so on ad infinitum. Therefore I contend that the arbitration courts have to a large extent been the cause of the drop in the gold yield. Speaking generally, I consider that the arbitration courts have entirely mistaken their duties. I always understood that an arbitrator was a party trying to do justice between two people undecided about certain matters. But that is not the position in our Arbitration Court. If I say that I want to give 20s. for labour, and labour says it wants 25s., our Arbitration Court does not say, "The industry cannot stand more than 21s., or more than 22s. 6d. We know the cost of living is so much and the price of the product of the industry so much, and we think the rate of wages ought to be so and so." The question arises in my mind, is our Arbitration Court in existence for the purpose of granting ideal conditions of living, or does it exist for the purpose of fixing fair rates as between two contestants? To judge from awards made in Western Australia and also in other States, it would seem that the arbitration courts are idealistic, that they are working towards ideal conditions of living. The other day one of the Eastern States afforded an instance of an award being placed on farms and stations; and farms, we know, cannot even now grow wheat to pay. I say it is impossible now to grow wheat to pay. There has always been great difficulty in making wheat growing pay, and yet an arbitration court has just put up the price of the labour connected with the growing of wheat. If this is going to happen the industry will be extinguished. The price of gold has not advanced. This commodity is not like wool or meat, which increase in value. Gold is still the same price, but the costs in connection with working the industry have gone up considerably. I do not know that there is anything else that I can refer to. I hope that if the Government intend to continue we shall see that the deficit is reduced in the future and that they will endeavour to make such a reduction, not in the way of wages or salaries, but in other directions, so that the expenditure will be brought within the revenue.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES (North) [4.48]: I am pleased to see an expression of loyalty contained in the Governor's Speech. It is

a good thing that the Ministry opened the Speech with an expression of loyalty to our King and country and loyalty also to our soldiers. While there is not much in the Speech that we can congratulate the Government on, I may say I am disappointed insofar as the Government have gone. They have not come up to my expectations. There has been a good deal of criticism levelled at them with regard to their financial policy. It was stated by my friend Mr. Holmes that we were going back at the rate of £2,000 a day, and he quoted the deficit for July. The Colonial Secretary in reply said that the cause of that deficit was that we had 31 days expenditure and only 26 days of revenue. It will be interesting to hear the explanation of the Colonial Secretary with regard to our deficit for August. The expenditure for last month was greater than that of August last year, and I consider that the duty of the Government is to curtail that expenditure and take steps which will enable them to live within their means. In the first speech which I made in this House I suggested that the Government should repeal the Civil Service Act so that the civil service could be dealt with. I am not an advocate of the reduction of wages, but I want to see competent men at the head of affairs, and something in that direction should have been done. I maintain that the Government have followed a wrong policy and it requires to be altered. They have adopted a centralisation policy which has been carried on here and in the other States, and they are riding for a fall unless that policy is departed from. So far as the railways are concerned, the people in the back country are taxed not on their freights per train mile but in regard to fares. For instance, in the metropolitan area passengers are carried at one penny per mile. The argument will be used, perhaps, that in the metropolitan area thousands of passengers will be carried, and when they are carried in such numbers it is possible to do so cheaper than it would be to carry 100 passengers in the back country. Twenty or thirty years ago the return fare from Perth to Fremantle was 2s. 6d. At that time wages were only half what they are to-day, and the cost of running the railways was considerably less. To-day the ordinary return fare is 2s. 1d. and, I understand, at week ends and on special occasions the excursion fare is 1s. 7d. Let us compare that with what the man in the back country has to pay. Meekatharra, which perhaps is further away from the metropolis than any district to which the railways proceed, is distant 600 miles. If the same rate as is charged in the metropolitan area were charged on that journey, the return fare would be, first class, 104s. 2d. Instead of that it is 148s. 9d.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Meekatharra is 575 miles from Perth.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: Not by the Wongan Hills line. The time table says it is 600 miles away. There is a difference of 44s. 7d. on the first class return journey as compared with what the fare should be if the metropolitan rates were charged. And then, on top of that, a passenger going to and from Meekatharra has to spend four nights in the train and he has to pay £2 for sleepers. That policy

is wrong, and it is the duty of the Government to do everything possible to assist the primary producer in the back country. Instead of that we find they are out to assist those who live within the metropolitan area. The trains arriving in the City after seven o'clock at night bring in people who patronise the picture shows and other amusements, and 75 per cent. of these people travel on their season tickets. If the department desired to raise additional revenue they could take steps in the direction of seeing that season tickets were not used after 7 o'clock, and people would thus have to pay an additional fare to come to the metropolis. The other day I noticed that chairs were being carried from Adelaide to Kalgoorlie for 1s. 6d., while it costs not less than 5s. to take a chair from Perth to Kalgoorlie. How can we expect a workman to furnish his house when such unfair treatment is meted out to him? In our district we pay a higher rate than in any other in the State. We pay 6d. per ton per mile; carriage on a chair being 7s. 6d. over a distance of 114 miles. While that policy goes on it is no wonder that we are drifting financially. As I illustrated the position to a Geraldton friend of mine, we seem to be like a full-rigged ship in a gale of wind drifting to a lee shore without a man in the Ministry capable of taking the helm to steer us into calm water. The Government have asked for suggestions. One came from our particular district. It is only a small matter but it illustrates the position of things. We suggested that the office of warden should be abolished until the war was over, as the mining registrar had been carrying out the duties of warden for six months. The suggestion was turned down, the department replying that they wanted an extra man there in case the other fellow became ill. When the National Government came into power, however, Mr. Hudson, the Minister for Mines, agreed to the position being abolished, and immediately a saving of £500 or £600 a year was effected. I merely quote that instance to show how the departments protest against the retrenchment of any of their officers. In this case, however, an officer was not retrenched; he was transferred. A few months ago I brought under notice the question of the management of the State Steamship Service. The present Government stated they were opposed to State trading concerns, and I expressed the opinion that it was the duty of the Government to call tenders for the purchase or the lease of the State trading concerns. The matter, of course, would have to be submitted to Parliament, but nothing has been done and we are losing money on them every day. We found that the brickworks were closed down, but now the Government are opening them again. When the brickworks were started by another Government the cost of bricks in this State was 47s. 6d. per thousand. The Government started by cutting the price to 42s. and the result was that some privately owned works had to close down. Private enterprise had invested money in brick-making concerns and they were paying land and income tax. It was most unfair on the part of the Government to start trading against them and to run

the concern at an absolute loss to the State. Now we have a Government in power pledged to do away with these trading concerns actually starting one of them again. When bricks were sold at these works at 40s. the cost of producing them was 45s. 9d. Private owners are to-day charging 47s. per thousand, which is 1s. 3d. a thousand more than what it cost the State to produce them. I notice an advertisement appeared in the "West Australian" on the 27th August for two setters for the Hoffman kiln at 1s. 6d. per hour and one pan man at 1s. 4d. per hour. These were the rates the Government were offering, a Government who were returned to do away with State enterprises. They were actually offering 1d. per hour more than the Arbitration Court award. In 1913 there was a rate fixed which was 1s. 4d. per hour for setters and 1s. 2½d. for pan men. The employers agreed to give the employees an extra 1d. per hour, which would make the wages 1s. 5d. and 1s. 3½d. respectively. I understand that the men were to go to the Arbitration Court to have this rate fixed. Now we have the State Government offering a higher rate of pay so as to take these men away from the private employers. That is not good government. It seems to me that they are afraid either of votes or their positions. With regard to the State Steamship Service, what has been done? Absolutely nothing. On a previous occasion I pointed out that thousands a year were being lost through the mismanagement of that service, and now I have been privately informed that something is about to be done. But why was it not done before? We have lost a considerable sum of money through having an incompetent man, one who knows nothing at all about the business, being at the head of the concern. There have been losses on several occasions of sums of money through lack of knowledge, and in one instance the sum of £600 or £700 was refused because it was said that space was not available. Yet when the ship arrived in port it was found that space was actually available. The Treasurer says that he wants more revenue. Eighteen months ago we passed an amendment of the Land Act which provided for the reclassification of the lands of the North and giving extra tenure of 20 years to our pastoralist friends. They were prepared to pay and the State has received an extra £60,000 by the surrendering of these leases, and when the land is reclassified there will be another £40,000 revenue that the State will get. What has been done in regard to the reclassification of these lands? Absolutely nothing. I have heard that they are doing something in the Lands Department in Perth. Just fancy trying to classify a territory as big as Queensland from the Perth office!

Hon. W. Kingsmill: There is no hurry.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: Apparently the Government do not want any revenue. If the Government are in earnest they should endeavour to do something in the direction of straightening the finances. The Government went to the assistance of the nearling industry by guaranteeing an advance of £125, for which the pearlers were thankful. That resulted in the buyers of the shell giving

the pearlers an extra £15 per ton. I have learnt that it costs £140 to £150 to produce that shell, and now the pearlers are approaching the Government to see whether they can get an increase of £15 over the amount which was guaranteed. This is a business proposition. Before the Government came to the assistance of the pearlers the buyers were getting all the advantage of their efforts, but if the Government would still further advance their subsidy, the buyers too would be compelled to pay more for their shell. I should like to see the Commonwealth Government control the pearlshell industry the same way as they control the wool and wheat industries.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: They will control the lot presently.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I do not mean in the direction insinuated by the hon. member, but merely for the purpose of assisting the industry during the war period. I am not in favour of Government interference with private enterprise in any shape or form. That is one of the causes of the present condition of the finances of the country, namely, that past Governments have spent two millions of money in State enterprises which are being run at a loss to-day. We are also paying interest and sinking fund on that two million pounds, and we have at the same time driven two millions of private capital out of the country, capital on which we could have collected land and income tax. In regard to the educational question, I am in favour of educating our people. At the same time I maintain that at present the Education Vote should not be increased. More supervision should be instituted by the Government over the way in which the children are educated. A friend of mine illustrated the point in this way, that if the State provided free meals in Parliament House for 30 members only, the first 30 men who entered the dining room would have their meals free and the other 50 would have to pay for theirs, there would then be trouble. That is what they are doing to-day on the education question. There are wealthy people sending their children to the technical schools, and other people who cannot afford it are not having their children educated. Whilst the educational system is good and should be extended into the back country, if we are going to educate our children free, the State should say in what direction these children should be educated. As Sir Edward Wittenoom has said, we should educate our children to become primary producers in the State, and not typists, shop assistants, and so on. Under present methods the population is coming into the city. We have over 37 per cent. of our population in the metropolitan area, and we shall soon be catching up to Melbourne and Sydney in this regard. They are having a boom time through the expenditure of war money, and Melbourne and Sydney will meet with their troubles when this war expenditure ceases. We are creating the same position here. If things go on as they are we shall soon find that there is no money to spend. Force of circumstances will then compel us to put our house in order, and we should straighten the affairs of the country before that crisis actually comes. A friend of mine said if we dismiss many of the civil

servants there will be houses empty, the families will go to the Eastern States, and land values will go down. I said, "You surely do not say that we should go on paying people whom we have no work for in order to create fictitious land values, as was the case in Melbourne in the nineties." I say a certain amount of retrenchment is necessary. In the Government departments there are many posts which can be done away with, and it is the duty of the Government to do something more than they have done, as far as I can see, in the direction of economies. In regard to further revenue, the Income Tax Bill was brought in last year, and a tax was fixed at a minimum of 2½, graduated up to 5s. on £5,000. I claim to represent the worker as much as any other individual, and I want to see him get a living wage, but I do say that this talk about the exemption of the worker is all moonshine. Everyone should be taxed, even the boy and girl earning £1 a week. A man earning £4 a week ought to be able to pay 1d. on each pound. It would be quite a simple matter to arrange that the money to be paid by the workers should be collected by means of the employer. A stamp could be placed on the wages sheet so that the tax would cost nothing to the State to collect and it would thus be possible to do away with half of the present staff now seen in the taxation offices. The employer would be responsible for seeing that the stamp was placed on the wages sheet. The tax should not stop at £5,000, but should go on up the scale until the income reached £20,000. Why should a man earning £20,000 only pay at the same rate as a man earning £5,000? In this way another £100,000 could in my opinion be got in by way of taxation, and I think that the people will be quite willing to pay it.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: There are not many persons earning £20,000 in this State.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: There may not be many, but there are many earning over £5,000. Those who are even earning £1 a week could well afford to contribute their penny towards the finances. I said last year that I considered it was the duty of the Government to approach the Federal Government with regard to the war profits tax. It is their duty to look after the interests of the electors of this State.

The Colonial Secretary: We did approach them.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I did not know that the Government had done so officially. I hope they will continue to use what influence they possess with the Federal Government to induce them to repeal this war profits tax. I understand that the Federal Government have stated that they are going to review that measure. Let me compare Australia with Canada. The policy in Canada is that of developing her agricultural resources. Canada since the war has loaned to the British Government 80 millions of money, whereas Australia has borrowed money right and left. But for the fact of the Mother country advancing money for our wheat and our wool, we should have had no money to spend on amusements or luxuries in the Commonwealth. The difference between Canada and Australia is that

with a population of eight million people there are four million people on the land in Canada, whereas in Australia with a population of five million, there are only 800,000 people on the land. It is the duty of the Government to do everything possible to assist our primary industries and to get people into the back country, and make the conditions there as good as possible for them. We cannot go on living in a fool's paradise, and we shall have to live on our primary products sooner or later. So far as our essential secondary industries are concerned, these should be run in conjunction with the primary industries, but in my opinion the secondary industries should be left to private enterprise and should not be tinkered with as has been the case in the past. At the opportune time private enterprise will come along and establish the necessary secondary industries, without the State squandering any more money in assisting them. If this sort of thing goes on, sooner or later every man will be leaning up against the Government for some form of assistance. I hope the Government will desist from assisting secondary industries, as has been foreshadowed by some of the statements which have appeared in the Press from the Minister for Industries during the last few months. Mr. Allen referred to the shipbuilding at Fremantle. While it is necessary to build ships in the State, I think that private enterprise could well do the work. I am pleased to see that a company has been formed. I am not complaining that, so long as they put up their cash, the Government should assist them in some measure. The statement which has been made in regard to 13 acres at Preston Point was contradicted in this morning's paper, and it now appears that the Government are going to lease instead of sell that land. If the Minister had given that company a seven years lease of that land with the option of purchase at £250 an acre I do not think he would have had the interests of the country at heart. This apparently has been altered now at the request of the Engineer-in-Chief, who says that it will be required later on, but the fact remains that Cabinet passed that lease. It is time that that sort of thing came to an end. I understand that the lease could have been ratified without coming before Parliament to be discussed. If it had not been brought up in another place in all probability the situation would not have been altered now.

Hon. W. Kingsmill: Apparently the Engineer-in-Chief did not spot it.

Hon. G. J. G. W. MILES: I do not know about that, but a few others did spot it. I do not want to weary the House with my views on repatriation. This question is now being discussed in another place. I say, as I said before, that we cannot do too much for our soldiers to assist them in every way. It has just come under my notice the treatment accorded to certain returned soldiers in this State. Some returned soldiers landed in Sydney and were brought by rail to Perth. In Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide they were given first class carriages, but when they reached Kalgoorlie they were put into second class carriages. These were wounded men. I do not know whether the military authorities or the

State Government were to blame, but this is something which should not have been allowed, and which should not be allowed to occur again. What I have said in criticism of the Government I have not said in any unfriendly spirit, but do want to see them do something to straighten out the finances of the country. In my opinion the Wyndham freezing works should be either leased or sold. If we are going to run them, I for one congratulate the Honorary Minister upon appointing the man he has appointed to manage them. I understand that he is one of the best men in his line in Australia, and it is a good thing to give him something like a decent salary instead of the miserable pitances which are usually given to public servants. By giving this man £1,500 a year we are not paying him a penny less than he is entitled to have, if he is the right man. I would even give a higher salary if necessary in order to get the best brains and ability to run any works. With regard to the question of the appointment of three commissioners to manage the railways, I think if one commissioner was appointed, a strong man and an able man, and if he was given a decent salary and not interfered with in any political manner, that he should be able to run the railways better than they have been run in the past. We are going through abnormal times, and we have not the freights that we could depend upon in pre-war times in the matter of timber, wheat and other commodities. I hope that some of the suggestions I have made will appeal to the Government, and will be adopted.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

On motion by Hon. J. Cunningham debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.31 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 3rd September, 1918.

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

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

QUESTION—FREMANTLE PUBLIC HOSPITAL.

Mr. ROCKE (without notice) asked the Premier: Is the report ready which on the 17th April last he promised should be laid on the Table? I refer to the report in connection with the treatment at the Fremantle Public Hospital of James McGowan, since deceased.