

bled. If we in Australia are not prepared to stand behind our Governments and see that this principle is maintained, we are unworthy of the privileges we enjoy. If the Governments are not also prepared to maintain that principle, even to the sacrifice of their personal advancement and ambition, we will fail deplorably, as we deserve to do.

On motion by Hon. H. Stewart debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 7.37 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 14th August, 1919.

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

OBITUARY—Mr. H. ROBINSON.

Letter in reply.

Mr. SPEAKER: I have received the following letter—

Albany, 12th August, 1919. Dear Mr. Taylor, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia. I duly received your letter of the 6th inst. conveying to me the resolution of the members of the Legislative Assembly expressing their sincerest sympathy with me and my family in the loss of my dear husband and father of my children. Will you kindly accept, and convey to the members, my heartfelt thanks for your kindly reference to my late husband, and permit me to assure you, that this added token of respect in which we rejoice to know he was held by the members of your honourable House is, and will ever be, a source of deep consolation to us in the great loss we have sustained. For your personal message of sympathy, please accept my grateful thanks. I am, Yours very sincerely, Meta Robinson.

QUESTIONS (2)—POLICE DEPARTMENT.

Promotions.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Mines: What method is employed in the Police Department for selecting members of

the police force for promotion to—(a) commissioned rank, and (b) non-commissioned rank?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: (a) and (b) A system of promotion by merit and by the aid of a selection board.

Vacancies.

Mr. JOHNSTON asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Are there any vacancies in the commissioned or non-commissioned ranks of the police force that have not been filled? 2, When it is intended to fill such vacancies?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, No. 2, Answered by No. 1.

QUESTION—REPATRIATION, VICTORIA DISTRICT LANDS.

Mr. MALEY asked the Minister for Lands: Referring to the answer given to Question No. 2, of 7th August, in regard to repatriation Victoria District, what is estimated to be the area of Crown lands available for the purpose mentioned, and where is it situated?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: The area available cannot be estimated.

QUESTION—RAILWAY EXTENSION, AJANA-GERALDINE.

Mr. MALEY asked the Minister for Works: 1, Has he received any report from the Engineer-in-Chief in regard to the suggested extension of the railway from Ajana to the Geraldine mines? 2, If so, what was the nature of such report?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: 1, On the 4th December, 1918, the Engineer-in-Chief made an unofficial inspection of the country between Northampton and the Geraldine mines, with a view to the possible extension of the existing Northampton-Yuna Railway, but he was not instructed to, nor did he make an official report regarding the railway. 2, Answered by No. 1

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. Hardwick leave of absence for two weeks granted to Mr. Teesdale (Roebourne) and Mr. Veryard (Leederville) on the ground of ill health, and to Mr. Nairn (Swan) on the ground of urgent private business.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Sixth Day.

Debate resumed from previous day.

Mr. R. T. ROBINSON (Canning): I am found to-day supporting the Government, not because I agree with their policy, or do not agree with their policy, but because repeated changes of Government are not good for the State. It might be expected that I would have something to say

in this House in connection with the sustenance allowance to farmers who are under the Industries Assistance Board. I do not however propose during the Address-in-reply to discuss the matter, because as soon as I receive the files relating to that sustenance, I propose to move a substantive motion in this House that the Industries Assistance Board and the Agricultural Bank be freed from political control. I think that the most important part of the Governor's Speech is that which relates to the cost of living and I hope that the Government are going to be courageous enough to bring forward a Bill to fix prices. I do not know what the result of such a Bill will be and whether it will be effective in fixing prices, but I do consider it will act as a deterrent and a check. Only this afternoon I heard of a case in connection with the freezing works at Fremantle, where fracture was necessary to be purchased. The contractor purchased so many cases at £1 a case and there were so many cases left which he thought he would have a call on. When he came back to buy the remainder he found that a certain other firm, whose name has been well bandied about in Western Australia, had purchased the lot and they demanded from him 37s. a case. If we want an instance of profiteering there is one which has just happened and it is an instance where, if we had a Statute dealing with the subject, that Statute could be used to advantage. The instance I have quoted happened either this morning or yesterday. I hold that although the illustration I have given does not touch the cost of living, the principle of it holds good right through, and there is not a right thinking man in the community who does not hold that all articles which are to be consumed, or are for use by the human creature, should not be sold at the most reasonable price the community should pay. In this respect we have had some controversy in the Press and it has been quite interesting to notice the marked change of my friend the member for Perth. Last session, you Sir, will remember how he came down here and told us that the only remedy for our ills was violent taxation and sudden retrenchment. Now the hon. member has progressed a little with age. He has descended from his flights of fancy to common earth and he informs us that economy, production and work, are the essentials that will save us. The Lefroy Government stood for economy, for production, and for work.

Hon. P. Collier: And practised none of them.

Mr. ROBINSON: And practised every one of them. At this late stage although the member for Perth was not a valiant supporter of the Lefroy Government, I am glad to know the example set by that Government has borne fruit.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You spent more than any Government in existence.

Hon. P. Collier: The greatest spendthrift Government which ever existed.

Mr. ROBINSON: Spent more on what? Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is what we would like to know.

Mr. ROBINSON: While the Premier is keen on the development of agriculture and our country districts—and I do not blame him in that regard, because the country districts are the backbone of the State—he must not forget two of the most important industries that equally form part of the backbone of the State. One of the most vital industries is the mining industry, and I also refer to the timber industry. I do not see much reference in the Speech to the development or assistance of mining. I know that the Premier is in accord with a progressive mining policy because, when I was Minister, before I ventured to go forth with a policy I regarded as progressive, I conferred with the Premier, and he agreed with my proposals. I would like to see some of those proposals put into effect. I wish to call attention to one matter in connection with the Geological Department. The Geological Department is the scientific part of mining. Our skilled geologists go about and measure the earth in a scientific way, and tell us lots of things of great practical use to the miner. The reports of the last two or three years, which have cost the State £15,000, I brought up for printing in the usual way in order to circulate them among the people to whom they would be of use, and I was met with the response by the Premier, "It cannot be done." An outlay of £700 for the mining community "could not be done." Those things should not be. The Government must give treatment to the mining community equal to the treatment meted out to the agricultural community. I am sure my successor will take the same view, and I hope to see those reports issued almost at once; the mining community want them.

The Minister for Mines: You had better send them along.

Mr. ROBINSON: I did, and the Premier remarked that it could not be done. The rule was established by the previous Treasurer that all printing had to be submitted for Cabinet approval before it was brought down. In this case I was blocked by the Premier. Recently I had the honour of opening the scheelite ore treatment works established at Coolgardie, and I hope to see those works extended, because the development of our base metals is one of the things we must look to to make the country progressive. We have base metals from one end of the country to the other. Previously we had no plants to treat and no means to develop them. It is the duty of the Mines Department to see that those things are provided. Before leaving office, I gave a good deal of attention to Collic coal. I have taken great pains in connection with the service of transports and ships carrying our wheat to see that Collic coal was provided, but against its use the Shipping Controller and Shipping Committee have set their faces absolutely. They will

not use Collie coal. I recommend my successor and the Government to pursue the policy I began, and peg away at the Commonwealth and the British authorities until Collie coal is used freely. Instances were quoted of Collie coal having set fire to ship's bunkers. In the department there are records of many instances where coal from other parts of the world has equally caused outbreaks of fire in bunkers. Collie coal should be used for every possible purpose in Western Australia. It is not being used for every possible purpose to-day. It should come into more use locally. Only a couple of months ago Mr. Simms, one of the leading men connected with the Collie industry, had a long talk with me as to an experiment in Melbourne. He took a ton of Collie coal to Melbourne and treated it for the production of gas. We have been led to understand that Collie coal would not produce gas. This ton of coal produced 8,000 cubic feet of gas, and those who worked the retorts, scientific men, said if the retorts had been better it would have produced 10,000 cubic feet. A ton of Newcastle coal will produce 12,000 cubic feet of gas. It therefore occurred to me that if we used a proportion of Newcastle coal, say one-fifth or one-quarter, and the balance Collie coal, we would probably get in the neighbourhood of 11,000 or 11,500 cubic feet of gas. I was most anxious that the experiment should be made here, and suggested to Mr. Simms that the Collie coal proprietors should pay one-third of the cost, the Perth City Council, who use the gas, one-third, and I should advise the Government to pay the other one-third, and to have the experiments conducted under Government supervision. The cost of the plant would have been about £1,500. Unfortunately Mr. Simms contracted the dreaded influenza in the Eastern States and died, and I left office. This, too, I commend to my successor, because we should not stop until we have Collie coal used for every legitimate purpose possible in the State. I trust the settlement of the South-West contemplated by the Premier will not in any shape or form interfere with the karri forests. I utter this word of warning here because I know the Premier's predilection for the destruction of trees and the growth in their place of grass or turnips. Karri, our second most valuable timber, may one day be our most valuable timber. For superstructure it is probably unequalled and unrivalled by any timber in the world. We have millions of pounds' worth of karri. It is a national asset and it is the duty of the House to see, and I trust the Minister who succeeded me will see, that no vandal, whether he be Minister or any other axeman, shall lay his axe to these trees except for proper commercial use. I also commend to my successor the rapid pushing on of the classification of the South-West and the demarcation of the forests, because it will be found when the classification is made that, amongst the forests and up the fertile valleys and slopes in many places where there is no settlement now, it will be quite possible to

make settlement in such a way that we shall get the farms we want for agriculture without interfering with the timber. There is plenty of good land without sacrificing the timber, and the only way to make it available is by a careful classification and demarcation of the forests. The last time a Minister of the Crown, Sir Newton Moore, attempted surveys of the South-West, although he spent a mint of money, he might as well have stayed in Perth and used a blue pencil and rule, because the lands he cut up at such great expense were merely rectangular blocks, irrespective of valleys, contours, or forests. I trust the Government will avoid the mistake of the past, and will follow the contours of the country and refrain from cutting into good forests. Our secondary industries will do much to help the production of the State and the creation of wealth within our own borders. About four million pounds' worth of goods every year are imported into this State, which goods should be manufactured here. Of the four million pounds' worth, over one million pounds' worth are the product of farms and orchards. There is no excuse whatever for the importation of that million pounds' worth, and where the Government are trying to induce settlement, they must be supported by every reasonable man to the fullest extent. I have a short list of items every one of which can be produced in Western Australia. These figures represent the imports for the year ended June last:—tanning barks £12,374, biscuits £26,805, boots and shoes £259,078, butter and substitutes £421,064, cheese £59,967, candles £1,680, cement £14,417, coal £88,655, confectionery £67,326, eggs £3,866, fish £54,589, fruits dried £31,064, fruits fresh £11,949, jams £40,857—I do not see the Minister for Agriculture represented in the House, perhaps one of his colleagues will inform him of these figures—beans and peas £2,835, wheaten flour £1,024, malt £31,759, oatmeal £22,259, prepared cereals £11,127, honey £751, hops £17,233, agricultural, horticultural, and viticultural machinery and implements £64,749, bacon and hams £84,133, lard and fats £7,406, leather £40,429, leather manufactures £14,271, milk and cream £123,231—another item for the Minister.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He does not know anything about it.

Mr. ROBINSON: And does not care.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He cares more than you do.

Mr. ROBINSON: Onions £20,315, pickles and sauces £26,370, potatoes £31,622, salt £6,926, soap £34,421, stearine £11,115, timber £47,271. There are many other items in the list which might be mentioned, but no one will deny that with the exception of boots and shoes and manufactured leather, every line I have quoted can be readily prepared and manufactured in this State. The total amount I have read out is £1,692,000.

The Minister for Mines: On the other hand, some of the items you have mentioned are now sent from here to the Eastern States.

Mr. ROBINSON: In the year 1916-17, when I first took over the office of Minister for Industries, we were importing over £200,000 worth of bacon and hams annually. I see from the returns for 1916-17 the amount was £205,000. As members know, great efforts were made by all sides of the Government to have established throughout the country bacon factories, so that this import might be dispensed with. For the year 1917-18 the import fell to £153,000, and for the 12 months ended on the 30th June, 1919, it fell to £84,000; and I have every reason to believe that during the current year the import of bacon will be very small indeed. The country is, I think, to be congratulated on the fact that there were men in Western Australia who could so foster and encourage local industry as to overcome that importation. And what has been done in the one case can be done in every other. There are established, or in course of being established, several industries of which I desire to say a few words. First the freezing works. Those works at Fremantle will cost about £120,000, and they will be capable of treating 1,500 head of stock per day. They will have a storage capacity of 40,000 carcasses. When completed they will give employment to 200 men directly, and indirectly to many more. I am very glad to observe that the Chairman of the Company, Mr. Alec Monger, has publicly, in order to silence criticism levelled at the company, said to the Government of Western Australia, "If you want to take our proposition to-day without any profit, before the works are completed and much money has been spent, you may take the concern over as it stands."

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Quite generous.

Mr. ROBINSON: It is generous.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: He offers to let us take over our own £60,000.

Mr. ROBINSON: No. So far as I am aware, the Government have not advanced to the freezing company one copper. The company have raised over £70,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are you sure?

Mr. ROBINSON: Absolutely.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is not according to the reports, anyhow.

Mr. ROBINSON: The company have that money, at any rate, and they have not yet drawn a penny from the Government. But I want to say to the Government and the people of Western Australia that the outlook in connection with freezing works is that for the next five years at least there will be a loss on the running of those works.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: There is no occasion at all to build those works at present. All that is wanted at Fremantle just now is cool storage works, which should be built near the wharf.

Mr. ROBINSON: I am speaking from what I have gathered from the gentlemen who are connected with the freezing works, and who had gone into the matter very carefully. A loss is likely to be incurred for the next five years, until a proper basis of working has been reached. As a former member

of the Government, and as a member of this Parliament, I say it is well to allow the pastoralists and the sheep owners who eventually will reap the benefit of the establishment of freezing works, to carry the thing themselves, to carry the loss on their own shoulders, rather than turn the freezing works into another State trading concern involving loss to the people of Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: When you gave this concession, had you not decided to bring down no chilled meat from Wyndham?

Mr. ROBINSON: No. However, the Minister for Works will be able to inform the hon. member definitely on that point. Again, there are wool-scouring, and fellmongering works established at Fremantle, employing to-day some 60 men, despite the fact that the works are not running fully on account of the shipping strike and shortage of freights. Practically only half the plant is being run, but already this year the works have scoured over 10,000 bales of wool. When the plant is complete they will be able to scour 40,000 bales annually, and will employ over 200 men. Here again death has robbed us of a captain of industry, Mr. Marcot, who was over here in connection with the establishment of these works. That gentleman told me that he hoped in February or March of next year to proceed to England and France for the purpose of conferring with his principals regarding the establishment of textile works in connection with that plant in Western Australia. Unfortunately, however, the dread influenza robbed us again: Mr. Marcot fell a victim to it in Melbourne. Another director came over here, and he, too, proposes to go to Europe with the same object in view; and we may hope eventually to see established, through the advent of the scouring and fellmongering works, a complete textile industry in Western Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But you do not take credit for the scouring works, surely? They were there before you took office.

Mr. ROBINSON: Yes, but they never treated more than 2,000 bales in one year. The people who had them were just struggling along. I claim to have been instrumental in interesting the capitalists who control the works now. However, I am not seeking to claim credit for myself personally. I do claim that these industries have been established under the auspices of the Government of Western Australia and with their assistance. I am speaking only as a member of the Government.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But the works had started before you took office.

Mr. ROBINSON: True, but I recommended Mr. Marcot to buy up the concern, and it was bought up. The capital involved at the present time is about £15,000, and the expenditure is growing every day. For example, the company are putting in a plant to produce carbonate of potash and lanoline. If any hon. members have not seen those scouring works, I venture to suggest to them that

it would be quite an object lesson if they were to go down to Fremantle, where I am sure the manager would gladly show them over the works. These works take only the dirtiest wools, and the wool is caught up by the scourer and thrown into the water, and, until it is pulled to pieces, cleaned and dried, and is shot into a fresh chamber upstairs, occupies only two minutes. I am told the wool scoured at Fremantle is as well scoured as any done in Australia. The next industry is lime and cement. The railway from Waroona to Lake Clifton has been completed. Between 150 and 200 men have been constantly employed there, and they are now putting on the finishing touches. Only this afternoon I was at Belmont, where I saw that the work of putting in a siding and making ready the site for the cement works has begun. When those cement works are going fully, they will employ quite 150 men. It is proposed to turn out 35,000 tons of cement annually, and to do this the company will require to bring up over the railway from Lake Clifton no less than 60,000 tons of lime, apart from the lime which they will sell to farmers. To produce cement from the lime they will require not less than 10,000 tons of Collie coal annually. So that it can be seen that the effects of the establishment of this industry in Western Australia have been and are being felt in many directions, helping to create employment for our people. And as each of these industries is established, it will require to use the Government electric current.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government cannot supply any more electric current until further plant has been put in.

The Minister for Mines: Come down and see for yourself.

Mr. ROBINSON: The reason for bringing the lime all the way from Lake Clifton to Belmont to be manufactured there is to be close to a local market and close to running water. Moreover, there is at Belmont a huge deposit of clay, which is required in connection with the manufacture. There has also been established in Kensington-street a glass bottle manufactory, but, unfortunately, this enterprise, too, has been hung up, owing to the shipping difficulty, awaiting since February last the despatch from Melbourne of two or three little details of machinery.

The Minister for Mines: That enterprise did not get much assistance from the Government.

Mr. ROBINSON: No. Not any of these companies have had a penny of assistance in money from the State, though they have been helped by the department of industries as regards smoothing the way. The Minister for Industries is one whom every man establishing an industry in Western Australia should come to as a friend to help him out of his difficulties.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Lake Clifton lime leases were signed before you took office.

Mr. ROBINSON: Yes, but that was all. I venture to say that but for us nothing further would have been done.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What did you do? The credit is due to Mr. Johnson for inducing the people in Melbourne to put their money in.

Mr. ROBINSON: I am dealing now with matters of general interest, and I want hon. members to know what has been done. There are the glass works in Kensington-street, which hon. members can go and see for themselves; the manager will be glad to show them over the works. The company has spent £25,000 there, and only a few details are wanted to start the machinery running. When completed, the works will employ 100 men, and will use every year at least £35,000 worth of Western Australian material in the manufacture of bottles. New glass works do not stop there. We have also another Western Australian company established, with a capital of £25,000, for the manufacture of bottles. They have made a commencement by sending one of their officers to America to study methods there. The Government have facilitated the inquiries in every way. The company have secured a large area at Maylands for the establishment of a factory. The name of this company is the West Australian Glass Bottle Works, that of the other is the Australian Glass Bottle Works. Now I come to the establishment of the general chemical works at Fremantle. Those works are supplying a long felt want in the community. They are producing much that, in the past, has been imported. For instance, we have plenty of magnesite of the best quality on our goldfields. This company is using that for making sord cement, artificial marble, tiles, epsom magnesium salts, and many other commodities. Previously magnesite was brought here from New South Wales. The company is trying manganese, which is used in our mines and in bottle works and steel works and in the Royal Mint, and is making permanganate of soda. Also they are making plaster of Paris from gypsum, and in addition are manufacturing graphite for use in all commercial purposes. For farmers they are turning out a first class cattle lick and are supplying lime sulphur spray for orchardists. They are treating alunite, of which we have large supplies, for potash, and they are treating ambligonite for extracting lithia salts and phosphoric acid. They are manufacturing silicate of soda to be used in connection with soap works, and for weather-proofing compounds and for preserving eggs. I have also induced them to take up the question of ochres. The very morning on which I handed over to my successor, Mr. Scaddan, there came in from Geraldton a set of samples consisting of 14 oxides and ochres, colour pigments. There is no reason why these should not all be manufactured in Western Australia, and I am glad to observe the advent of a company that is turning so many of the natural

products of Western Australia into commercial propositions.

The Minister for Mines: It would be our salvation if we could use our raw material for manufacturing articles.

Mr. ROBINSON: Those are industries that have been established. There are many others in the course of establishment, or in respect of which negotiations are pending and which, I take it, my successor in office will pursue with the same zeal as I showed when Minister for Industries.

Mr. Jones: Do you take credit for the lot?

Mr. ROBINSON: I am not taking credit for anything at all. If the hon. member had listened he would have heard something about his own town. The next matter is the forest products laboratory. The creation of a laboratory was an idea solely of the Government of which I had the privilege of being a member. It was supported by every member of that Government. The negotiations spread over a number of years and resulted in the Commonwealth Government agreeing to the forest products laboratory being fixed in Western Australia. The site has been located at Crawley. The University has agreed to surrender the necessary land, and there has been allocated from the forest revenues of Western Australia £5,000 towards the building. The Commonwealth Government have agreed to erect the building and equip and maintain it. For that purpose they have engaged Mr. Boas, Master of Science, from the Technical School, whom they have sent to America, England, and India.

Mr. Jones: Has he gone yet?

Mr. ROBINSON: Yes, he has been gone some five months. He has to investigate kindred laboratories so that the one established in Western Australia may be, at all events, up to date.

Mr. Green: Who is to control it; the State Forests Department?

Mr. ROBINSON: No, it will be controlled by the Commonwealth Government, who have undertaken the whole of the maintenance. It will cost £10,000 per annum, and we were fortunate enough to persuade the Commonwealth Government that if we found the land and put £5,000 into the building, they should run it. The forests products laboratory will investigate such questions as tannins. Last year Western Australia imported £12,000 worth of tannins. We have enough tannin bark to furnish the whole world. The last time I was at Coolgardie one of the local councillors brought in a sample of leather beautifully tanned from some native shrubs, hemlock, that grow in the Coolgardie district. He told me the tanning properties of these shrubs were so great that only one-tenth of the tannin was required to do the work of the commercial tannins of the world. That question would be decided by such a laboratory as I refer to. Again, there remain for investigation leather, gums, sandalwood oils, resins, etc.

Mr. Green: What have they done in regard to the distillation of sandalwood oil?

Mr. ROBINSON: The position is this: when first sandalwood oil was distilled in Western Australia it was found to be eight per cent. below the British Pharmacopoea standard and, in consequence, when our oil was put on the market the trade journals of England condemned it. At that time Professor Wilmore was in England, and the Forestry Department and Mr. Braddock, who was then investigating the sandalwood oil question, instructed Professor Wilmore to have this matter elucidated by the best English chemist available. The result was that that chemist found he could eliminate from the Western Australian oil the extra others and alcohols that caused it to fall below the British standard. In consequence the Western Australian sandalwood oil can be refined and made equal to the article that comes from India and other places and holds the world's market. Mr. Braddock has been unable to extend his factory, but in due course I am looking forward to that sandalwood oil industry being a very large concern, and to the oil and perfume being despatched from Western Australia to the world. The next stage is in connection with the alkali works. I have mentioned this before, and on that occasion the member for Perth (Mr. Pilkington) was good enough to say that somebody had told him it would never succeed. Those who have faint hearts never win anything. The men connected with the Industries Department were determined to use every effort to establish the alkali works in Western Australia. One thing is certain: In the competition with the Eastern States before the Federal committee Western Australia is the only State that remains in the running, and the one question remaining to-day is whether alkali works can be commercially established on an economic basis in Western Australia. So good were the reports we were able to despatch to Messrs. Brunner Mond in England that, last year, they employed Professor Woolnough to report to them direct. That report reached England about January or February of this year and so satisfactory was it that we were further encouraged by Messrs. Brunner Mond cabling to Professor Woolnough instructing him to ask leave to go to England and discuss the question with them. He was given leave by the University, and he is now in England. Only last week I had a letter from Mr. Russell Grimwade, who is most interested in this Western Australian alkali project, telling me that he was more hopeful than ever that the venture would be a success. That, too, requires a good deal of care. It requires a Minister's constant supervision of details, and the keeping of those people at the end of the world constantly supplied with the information they require. It is interesting to tell the House that, as the result of investigations spread over 18 months, the waters of Lake Preston have been found to contain 4,600 grains of salt to the gallon of water, salt

being one of the constituents necessary to the manufacture of the alkali. We do not know where that will lead us, but if alkali works are established in Western Australia many other industries will follow in their train, because common soda is used in every household, not only of Western Australia but of the Empire. Australia uses 40,000 tons annually. It is essential to the well-being of the Commonwealth that alkali should be produced somewhere in Australia. We have a greater chance of successful production here than have the other States, and I again urge my successor to use his best efforts to see that the alkali works are established. Many inquiries are being made such as in respect of local clays, stones, sands, and ochres. I am glad to say we have in Western Australia to-day no imported tiles. The tiles going on our houses are manufactured in Western Australia. A number of factories here are now turning out a good tile at a cheap rate. The information about sands, clays, stones, and ochres is for the manufacturer and the trader. In these particular lines there is a quantity of tabulated information which those about to embark upon any such ventures would find most encouraging, because it has been proved that clays, sands, and ochres from this State are unequalled in any part of the world for the particular use to which they can be put. I should like to pay a tribute to the gentlemen who comprised the council of industrial development, Mr. C. S. Nathan and Mr. Crocker. Those gentlemen have voluntarily and without pay given me endless hours of time over many of the projects I have outlined to the House. When busy men, holding positions such as these gentlemen hold, can offer their time to the State in this way, we should recognise it publicly and thank them. We are fortunate, too, in having at the head of the Geological and Analytical department an enthusiast and a scientist of the character and standing of Dr. Simpson. I was never afraid to go to him with any new discovery or matter for inquiry. He always welcomed it and was ready to go ahead with all the zeal imaginable in order to find out if any use could be put to any particular article. There was no such thing as the Government stroke about him. I was also particularly indebted to the Conservator of Forests, Mr. Lane Poole. Many of the matters to which I have referred are kindred to the great timber industry. Mr. Lane Poole was always indefatigable in the help he gave towards the establishment of industries in Western Australia. What does all this tell us? It means, as the Minister for Industries has remarked, that we must teach West Australian people to use our local products. The country is full of raw material, and we hope to turn much of that to proper use and profitable production. We want the people of the State to make up their minds to use the West Australian article in preference to the imported one if they can. We have only to look into our own households, the hotels we may live in, and these Houses of Parliament, to see

how many condiments, sauces, and other things that we use are brought in from outside.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Are you sure they are not manufactured in Western Australia?

Mr. ROBINSON: I am asking hon. members the question.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I have a few labels at home which are very interesting. These labels were printed in London.

Mr. ROBINSON: Labels 'are' very deceptive, I know. I do not think it can be said too often that the people of Western Australia should use our local articles. I want to claim the attention of the Minister for Works in regard to one matter. I was out at Osborne Park with the Perth Roads Board a few days ago. We were taken to see a big reservoir at the top of a hill. It is a very fine work and contains one million and three-quarter gallons of water. It is roofed over, but the parts that caught my eye were the barge boards, the fascia boards, the covering boards and inside, the principals, the purlings, the very struts on the tank stand, the regulator house on the top of the building, and even the top of the valve box where the water comes in and out, were entirely made of oregon.

The Minister for Works: When was it put up there?

Mr. ROBINSON: I do not know. It was probably not built in the hon. member's time. I do not think that sort of thing would be done to-day, but it is typical of what is done by everyone else in Western Australia. People use the imported article when we have a very much better article for the same purpose grown locally.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It may be necessary under some conditions to use oregon for principals.

Mr. ROBINSON: The fascia boards, the barge boards and the principals too were made of oregon. We know that karri principals of unusual length can be had at the State mills. The timber there is perfectly magnificent and there is no other way to describe it. There are pieces of timber there long enough to span between 60 and 70 feet in one length, and all this timber can be had from the State mills in the South-West. Without any support such timbers would be capable of carrying a roof of this description. Anyone who requires a superstructure of timber could not do better than use the West Australian karri. I feel sure the Works Department to-day is imbued with the same ideas that I have been trying to put forward, and will never use oregon where the local timbers can be used instead.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Carpenters prefer oregon for working up.

Mr. ROBINSON: But this had not to be worked.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In all probability when this oregon was used the price was 12s. a hundred feet, and the price of karri is 18s.

Mr. O'Loghlen: It should not be possible to bring oregon into this State cheaper than we can supply our own timber.

Mr. ROBINSON: I quite agree with that.

The Minister for Mines: It is not always a question of cheapness of timber in the raw. Timber has often to be worked up afterwards.

Mr. Pickering: Karri has been proved to be a good timber, every time.

Mr. ROBINSON: Karri has been used in many modern places in Western Australia to great advantage. I wish to touch upon another subject, though I do not know what the intention of the Government is in regard to it. I am referring particularly to the Bill dealing with liquor licenses, the nine to nine measure, as we call it. In Western Australia this has become almost a part of our being. The equilibrium has been reached between the trade and the consumers, and no one will be hurt if the measure is renewed. I hope that this will be part of the policy of the Government. I also wish to refer to a matter of great interest to the member for North Perth (Mr. Smith), namely, the trams. I had the privilege of introducing legislation in this respect on one occasion. Everyone must agree that it would be an advantage if in our suburban and metropolitan areas the tramways were carried out in legitimate directions where the population lies. The cost of such extensions should not amount to more than £160,000 or £200,000. I am convinced that no public work could be put in hand that would afford greater means of employment for the unemployed, a quicker means of employment for those who are skilled, and a more immediate return on the capital, as well as a means of improving the health of our population by settling the people at a greater distance from the metropolis.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Would you send the people out to Belmont?

Mr. ROBINSON: Yes.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How can you hope to get the trams out there now, when as Minister you did not succeed? You promised to give them trams out there.

Mr. ROBINSON: I did not think my hon. friend was so short-sighted.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Now you are playing to the gallery.

Mr. ROBINSON: I am not playing to the gallery. Let me tell my short-sighted friend that during the time the Lefroy Government were in office we had the cloud of war hanging over us. Any Ministry would have been mad if they had spent a couple of hundred thousand pounds on tramway extensions during the war, and I should not have associated myself with such an administration. Moreover, I do not know if the Treasurer of the day would have permitted such an expenditure on anything.

Hon. P. Collier: Money is just as hard to get now as it was then.

Mr. ROBINSON: The work could not have been done during the war.

Hon. P. Collier: It could have been done just as well then as now.

Mr. ROBINSON: The Premier has said he can get the money now.

Mr. Green: You promised that the work should be done during the war.

The Minister for Mines: We could not get the rails.

Mr. ROBINSON: They could be supplied from the Broken Hill Proprietary Company. Before I left office I asked the Railway Department to inquire from the Broken Hill Company if they could supply certain rails, and the Minister will see that inquiry on the file.

The Minister for Mines: They are unable to deliver their orders now.

Mr. ROBINSON: It is necessary to bring pressure to bear upon them, and it is the man who pushes who gets the best results. In New South Wales the Government are getting rails for extensions, and in Melbourne the tramways were extended during the war, although no rails were delivered in Western Australia. I suggest that the Minister for Mines should go to Newcastle and make the necessary arrangements to procure the rails. I feel sure that the member for North Perth, who does not indulge in flights of fancy, took a real flight over the metropolitan area this afternoon and arrived safely to earth again, must be an ardent supporter of tramway extensions. In his flight he must have hovered above King's Park and been able to look over his own constituency and mine adjoining, as he was sure to do, and from his height he could see how the trams fell short of their desired destination. He must, therefore, be ready to join with me in urging the Minister for Railways to extend these trams out to the suburbs.

Hon. P. Collier: It is too late to talk about trams now.

Mr. O'Loughlen: We will move a vote of thanks to the candidate presently.

Hon. P. Collier: Could I ask the candidate a question?

Mr. ROBINSON: I did not come here to please the member for Forrest, but I did expect him to agree with the remarks I made about forests and timber generally.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You made a lot of promises about trams and bridges.

Mr. ROBINSON: I made no promises.

Hon. P. Collier: Why, they were printed.

Mr. ROBINSON: I told the people of my electorate that I would never cease to advocate the construction of these things, and I intend to raise my voice whenever necessary on that subject. The same remarks apply to the bridges about which I have been twitted. How could I promise any bridges, although I saw the necessity for them? I saw the necessity for a bridge from Burswood to Perth, for instance.

Hon. P. Collier: And one across to the Peninsula.

Mr. ROBINSON: I hope that both of these works the hon. member will live to see, and when he does see them I hope he will drink to the health of the member for Cannington.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. GARDINER (Irwin): For the first time almost in my political life I can speak to-night untrammelled by the responsibility of office or by the necessity of harnessing my own words so that they will not appear to be disloyal either to my party or to my colleagues, whose views differ from my own very materially. Until six months after the war I was under a pledge so far as politics were concerned, but even had I been a member of a party or even if it had been a party of one, like my friend the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) I owed an obligation to the State so far as the party was concerned, to drink the waters of Lethe, only profiting by the mistakes of past experience. It behoves me, therefore, as it does every other hon. member in this House, to put forward the utmost effort of his capacity. Some of us know the limitations of our capacity; some of us reckon that we are the apex of capacity where frequently we are only the appendix. I recognise there is an obligation on every hon. member's part to put forward the best of his ability to try to help, whatever Government may be in power—I care not whether it be this Government or whether it be a Government from the other side of the House. Looking at the complex questions with which we are faced and the responsibility with which we should face them, any Government in this House has a right to say to every member “We have the right to demand of you the best that is in you, and not to criticise except that criticism be offered with the object of helping.” It has been in that spirit, and I think hon. members will agree with me, that I have tried to approach every question since I have been a member of this House. There are five problems—there are more, but five are facing us at the present juncture. The first, and the one that comes nearest home to us, is our present financial position. The second is interwoven with that, it is our actual relationship with the Commonwealth. The third is our production, and the fourth, which is one of the most vital, is that of the cost of living, and probably the whole of them bear some relationship to the last, which is our industrial relationship. I hope to make suggestions to this House in dealing with these questions, which may have at least the germ of practicability, certainly they will have the salt of sincerity. Let us take the financial problem first. I anticipated a deficit of £636,000 for the year, and it was £652,000. I promised the House that I would try to bring the amount below £600,000, and I venture to say that if circumstances had remained as they were when I delivered the Budget I would have got well below the amount, because, in addition to other disabilities under which we laboured, we had strikes, and the influenza epidemic, all of which had a peculiarly devastating influence upon the finances of the State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The influenza epidemic did not make its appearance here until seven or eight weeks ago.

Mr. GARDINER: Our expenditure in that direction started when I was marooned in Melbourne, and at that time, it will be remembered, the shipping strike had commenced and it prevented many people returning to Western Australia. The actual deficit was £652,000, and that is still a long way from being satisfactory. We have amongst us financial Jeremiahs, of whom Mr. Holmes is the high priest. He says the country has been going to the bad at the rate of £2,000 a day. I am going to ask hon. members, having behind them business experience and common sense, whether that is so. I want to put the House in the position of being bankers for the time being, and bond-holders as well, because, after all, our bond-holders are secured creditors. Under all circumstances, the manager of the bank would call the Treasurer in. He is the man advancing the money, and he would say to the Treasurer “You have gone to the bad to the extent of £652,000. What have you to say?” I would reply to this effect, “Of that £652,000 there was £313,000 for sinking fund and with that amount I bought you practically £338,000 worth of bonds. There they are.” That is an asset against the deficit. Put it on paper, reckon it for ourselves, and we find that the actual deficit gone into space, lost, spent, amounts to £279,000. That is the actual deficit if we had to present a balance sheet the same as a business man has to present his balance sheet when he faces his banker. The banker says “What are you going to do about the £279,000?” That is the question that the House has the right to ask the Government, and I agree with the leader of the Opposition when he says “What are you going to do about it; don't be visionary about it.” I say “Thank God I am not Treasurer to-day; it is not my obligation to tell you.” These are my suggestions and I make them in perfectly good faith. I realise that the information which is in the possession of the Treasurer of the State is not his to lock up. He obtained that information in many instances at the expense of the State, and consequently he too can impart that information to his successor, and it is helpful. He will not be playing the game if he does not say “Here is what I tried to do.” Consequently I am making these suggestions to the Treasurer to-night in the best faith. Speaking from knowledge, we can economise; speaking from a far more intimate knowledge, I am going to say we cannot do it unless every member of the Cabinet has come to the same decision as you have. I am going further than that, and will say, “You cannot economise unless this House is sincere in its expression for economy and demands that the representatives shall carry it out.” When I was Treasurer I found there were plenty of advocates of economy against the other fellow. I found there were plenty of members who, when speaking on the

Address-in-reply, preached economy, while those very members, to enjoy the good opinion of their constituents, were willing to get up in the House and ask the Government to do things that they knew the Government could not do, and which they knew were extravagant proposals. If we cannot get rid of that cant and that hypocrisy, of that desire to keep our seats warm at the expense of the country, we are not going to have genuine economy. If members on both sides of the House say to Ministers, "We are going to pay our way, we must economise," and they say it believing it, and not uttering it as a pious expression, then the Government will get assistance from members. But when the Government are carrying out these ideas, unpopular as they may be, feeling perfectly assured that they will have behind them the backing of the sincere members of this House at any rate—

Hon. P. Collier: Hands up on the other side from all those who ever asked for a shilling.

Mr. GARDINER: I am dealing with the actual deficit of £279,000. We can begin by making a saving of £50,000 on the departments, but to do that we must first get rid of some of the heads of those departments.

The Minister for Mines: Hear, hear!

Mr. GARDINER: We must not increase the salaries of some of them. We must get rid of them. They have to be replaced by men with more up to date ideas, men who have not grown old in tradition and loyalty to red tape methods. We have to stop giving an open cheque and a fountain pen to the Minister controlling domestic concerns. This House for years has been giving an open cheque and a fountain pen to the Colonial Secretary.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: As far as the domestic concerns go, it has never been abused.

Mr. GARDINER: I do not wish to apportion blame because the hon. member knows, if he is conscientious, that what he did was not free from mistake. If we always remembered that when we criticised Ministers, we would not proceed to apportion blame at all. The fact remains that this House has for years been giving practically an open cheque and a fountain pen to the Colonial Secretary to run domestic concerns. Shall I prove it?

The Minister for Mines: Yes.

Mr. GARDINER: I have a return dealing with the years 1902 to 1919. In 1902 the population of the State was 211,973; in 1918 it was 311,121. In 1902 these domestic concerns cost £385,000; in 1919 they cost £880,000. In 1914, when we had 323,000 inhabitants, they cost £708,000, and in 1919 when we had 311,000 inhabitants they cost £880,000. I know all the excuses. There is not a member who can put up one half of the excuses the heads of departments can put up.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Take hospitals and charities: they are all warranted.

Mr. GARDINER: Medical and Health in 1902 cost £98,000, and in 1919 £126,000.

Charities and State Children cost £26,227 in 1902 and £92,297 in 1919. Education cost £101,000 in 1902 and £368,000 plus £15,000 for the University in 1919. That is how we are going on. Members know this and yet, when any of this expenditure is criticised in the House, we get a display of fireworks. Everyone who has at heart the betterment and good government of the people has a right to the endorsement of every man who thinks clearly. What we want in the Colonial Secretary's Department is the expert men and behind them the hard head of the man who sees he is getting value for his money. In a majority of instances, Parliament has put the biggest expending department of the whole State, running into nearly a million pounds a year, practically out of control of this Chamber. Previously the Colonial Secretary has invariably been the representative of the Government in the Upper House, an over-worked man because no man can consider all the Bills brought down and carry on the duties of his office with all these various departments and do the work thoroughly unless he is a superman. From the investigation of Mr. Glyde and myself—it was pretty thorough and a record is still in the department—we made suggestions time after time and what has happened? We got a long minute from the head, and usually the only result I got from the Minister in charge was "The Colonial Treasurer, for your information." I have told the Colonial Secretary, and I repeat it here, that if one half the time had been spent in investigating these departments which has been spent in bolstering them up, there would have been better results. Take hospitals: Why should Kataning and Narrogin have public hospitals and Wagin and Moora assisted hospitals?

Hon. P. Collier: More active representation on the part of the members.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Because they would not keep up their requirements.

Mr. GARDINER: Is there not injustice in that?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is an act of dishonesty in them.

Mr. GARDINER: When these hospitals are given grants and grants only, they are managed by a board, and if that board says Jas. Gardiner is three or four weeks in the hospital and does not pay they see that he does pay because he can afford to. When it comes to a Government hospital, it would stagger some members to learn who does not pay. A suggestion was made that we should put these public hospitals under a board. It is possible to pick out three or four local citizens who would undertake the work, because some men attach more importance to getting on to hospital boards than they would to getting into Parliament. They would take a live interest. There is no control over their expenditure. I asked the man controlling them, "Have you any pride at all in your administration. When you see Narrogin is costing 5s. 7d. a day per patient and

Katanning 4s. 9d., do not you want to know why?" I should want to know why. I made that suggestion because, if we got these local boards, we should have fairly conscientious men who would look into such expenditure. Then we could ask: "Why has your account gone up this month so much more than the other month?" When they put in a requisition for blankets, we could know all about it. When they put in a requisition for instruments we would see that they were marked with the Government brand, and it would be unnecessary to ask as it is now, whether they belonged to the doctors or to the Government. In hospitals alone we can make very substantial savings. I am saying this because I tried. When members know these facts, they will give every Minister authority not to try but to do it. The reason I made the suggestion was that assisted hospitals in nine cases out of ten are carried on properly and pay their way. Take Moora: By subscription we put up a maternity ward. Women go there for lying-in and everyone pays, and the hospital is an institution worth having in the district and fulfilling its obligations. When I returned from Melbourne last August I was a sick man in more ways than one. I said, "I have seen wise to cut down expenditure and you have not done it." The Colonial Secretary's Department at once put in the pruning knife and cut £5,000 off this and £3,000 off that and £2,000 off somewhere else. Let any practical man say if there can be any satisfactory result from this. It shows the head of the department does not know his business and I will prove how he did not know his business. Take the Aborigines. The estimate given me was £3,559. The actual expenditure was £12,462, only 50 per cent. difference!

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You know they cut it down sometimes and then expend it just the same.

Mr. GARDINER: That is what I want to come at. These estimates misled me and the House. When I brought them down, I had a presentiment that they would not be realised.

The Minister for Mines: That does not apply only to one department.

Mr. GARDINER: No, for Fisheries the estimate was £5,657 and the expenditure £5,920. Not much excess there, but why should not men live within the votes they have given? If in private business they did this, they would get the sack, and the great strength of dealing with men like these is to have the order of the sack in your hand. Times without number Ministers have had to shoulder responsibilities like these which they were quite impotent to prevent. For Gaols—I cut them down a bit; we must be becoming a peace-loving lot of citizens—on the Estimates £20,135 was provided and £22,000 expended. Harbour and Light required about £1,000 more than the estimate. Lunacy was put up £1,000, too, but probably there was some justification for this. For Medical, Public Health and Charities,

£157,361 was given poor innocent me, but £176,151 was spent. Members will recollect that the Police Vote was cut down by something like £3 500. I was given £127,193, but they spent £132,157. Do members wonder that my heart got broken when I was trying to do right and this was what I had to shoulder?

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. GARDINER: Before I leave the subject on which I was before tea, I think it only just and right to say that it is the experience of all Ministers that our public service contains men of fine ability and fine integrity, who are very willing at all times to do their best for the State. Now we come to the question of education. The Education Vote is one which this Chamber has a reluctant hesitancy to tackle, because even an expression of opinion that our expenditure on education is extravagant seems to brand one immediately as a reactionary. When the Education Vote is before the House, it finds no more eloquent advocate than the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker). I will do him this justice, that he, like every one of us, wants to feel that in spending this money on education we are as a State getting our full money's worth, and that the children are getting the education which will enable them to meet the outlook of life that we hope is going to be their heritage in this land of ours. In 1902, with a population of 311,000, education cost us £102,359. In 1919, with a population of 311,000, education cost us £389,924, representing an increase of some £280,000 in that term of years. When we called for suggestions of economy, many suggestions were sent in, and amongst them some relating to our educational system; and of these suggestions there were some which clearly showed me—that is, without hearing the other side—that there is a good deal of overlapping in our educational system. I believe I have heard the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) say much the same thing here. When it comes to the question of finding out whether we are getting our money's worth, it is, I think, a fair thing to make comparisons with other States. I have taken the following figures from "Knibbs" of 1918: Queensland has 1,479 schools with 4,017 teachers and 106,373 scholars, costing £484,500, or an average of £5 14s. per child. South Australia has 351 schools with 1,976 teachers and 66,932 children, costing £268,399, or an average of £5 2s. 4d. per child. Western Australia has 604 schools, with 1,613 teachers and 46,049 scholars, the cost here being £305,130, or an average of £7 12s. 8d. per child. These figures show that Queensland educates 60,000 children more than we do, and does it at a cost £179,000 higher than ours; and that South Australia educates 20,000 more children than we do at a cost which is £37,000 less than ours. Those are figures which must make:

us wonder whether we are getting full value for our money. But those figures in themselves do not carry the conviction they should if we do not follow them further. In the matter of technical education Queensland has 365 classes with 8,644 enrolments, and 283 teachers, who receive fees of £12,024; South Australia has 203 classes with 5,335 enrolments and 119 teachers, who receive £3,221; Western Australia has 369 classes with 3,757 enrolments and 103 teachers, who receive £1,058. Since 1912 the Queensland enrolments have increased from 7,851 to 8,644, and in South Australia from 4,760 to 5,335. In Western Australia the enrolments have during the same period decreased from 5,090 to 3,757. That is the position with regard to technical education. As regards buildings, the educational costs of the three States are: Queensland, £96,397 for buildings, or £6 16s. 9d. per head; South Australia, £33,472, or £5 15s. per head; Western Australia £24,863, or £8 5s. 2d. per head. As regards universities, Queensland receives fees totalling £3,588; South Australia £8,388; Western Australia nil. The expenditure on all forms of educational effort per head of population is—Tasmania 13s. 3d., Victoria 16s. 9d., South Australia 17s. 5d., New South Wales 20s. 2d., Queensland 22s. 10d., Western Australia 23s. 10d. By any method of comparison that one chooses to adopt, this is as near as one can really go: and the facts raise in our minds a doubt whether we are getting full value for our expenditure on education. I will go further and say that at the present juncture in the history of all nations, when education is attracting the attention of every man who wants to see his country develop, I am not willing to allow the educational system of this State to be under the control of one man without inquiry. When the Education Vote comes before this Chamber, I intend to ask hon. members to appoint a select committee to examine our educational system thoroughly. I have various reasons for taking that step. Sweden, for instance, has appointed a wonderfully strong committee to examine into the Swedish system of education, which that country thought almost perfect, as we think our system here to be. The city of Belfast has appointed a committee of its citizens to control education. All over Canada committees are being appointed for the same purpose. Every State of the American Union is appointing a committee to go into education. And for this purpose the "Highbrows" are not being selected. The people are saying, "If we want to see what is best in education for our nation, let us take an average of our nation." In most of the States of the American Union they are taking a highly technical man, a lawyer, a newspaper editor, an ordinary business man, and a labour man to form the committee. That is the kind of committee which right through America is now examining the educational systems, in order to see that the community is getting

that for which it is paying, that which will equip its children to take their part as citizens. When I attended the last Melbourne conference I raised a point which is being strongly raised in America to-day. Almost ever since the American States federated, the States have had to do everything in the way of educational effort. And what are they saying to-day? That it is the State's obligation to give primary education, and that the function of the Federal Government begins with technical education. That is the very point I raised in Melbourne. I asked, "Do you think it is a fair thing that the States should go on increasing their educational votes, from which the Commonwealth as a whole benefits so largely?" Tasmania and Western Australia are two States spending large sums in technical education. Tasmania has established a technical school for hydro-electric engineers. Those engineers are going to be a common asset of all Australia. But the responsibility of educating them is thrust upon poor Tasmania for the benefit of the whole of Australia. That is why I want a committee. A question upon which I shall touch later is that the State's obligation ends with giving a good primary education, and that the Commonwealth's responsibility comes in when technical education starts. I think members will agree that it is time we had no mock sentiment on this question. I myself had no education at all. I probably have had less education than any man in this House. But I say it is we men who have had no education ourselves that want to see the best of education given to the rising generation. Therefore, I do not approach this question with any desire to cut down the sum spent on education, if that sum is shown to be properly expended. But I have every reason to doubt that. Next, I wish to refer to some of our loan obligations. In my opinion it is quite possible to save a payment somewhere in the vicinity of £100,000 per annum; and in doing that it would also be possible, I think, so to capitalise as a result the Goldfields Water Scheme that it would give cheaper water to the fields and yet entail no additional taxation on the general taxpayer, as at present it does. If members will bear with me a little patiently, I will deal with what I consider rather a vital matter. I do not think the position of some of these stocks of ours is fully understood by members of this Chamber. We have maturing in January of 1927 a £2,500,000 loan. That was for the Coolgardie Water Scheme. For that we have been paying £75,000 a year in sinking fund, and we have purchased with that sinking fund £1,893,480 of stock. That is to say, the stock purchased shows a face value of that amount to-day. Instead of paying £75,000 a year from now onward we need only pay £10,000 a year on those figures to redeem that loan at maturity. So, if we pay £75,000 a year for another eight years we shall be paying £400,000 more than is necessary to redeem the loan. The fact

must not be lost sight of that if they had followed out the instructions which I, as Treasurer in 1902, gave them, that stock would be represented by the stock the sinking fund was intended to redeem. Then it would not matter what its face value might be. This is the position: Assuming we put the stock we now hold on the market for the purpose of redemption, we might lose in discounts as much as we gained originally. Therefore I think we could float a loan for the purpose of paying off the balance of that loan. Assuming it was £600,000 or £700,000, to redeem that loan from now onwards we could capitalise the Coolgardie Water Scheme at, say, a million pounds and charge them with one per cent. sinking fund, perhaps £70,000 as against £150,000. Of course the suggestion would require careful consideration and a more intimate knowledge than I have at present of the market values of those stocks in England.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Some of those stocks were quoted on Wednesday at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.

Mr. GARDINER: Yes, as those stocks approach maturity they can only be purchased at £100.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Most of those do not reach maturity until 1935.

Mr. GARDINER: Some of them not until 1947 and 1955. We hold £185,000 in British National war bonds. If the suggestion were carried out it would mean the saving of £100,000 a year, and, in addition, if they capitalised the Coolgardie Water Scheme now and said, "We are going to take another 30 years and provide a sinking fund of one per cent. on that," it would enable the Government to give a good impetus to the development of mines using that water by supplying the water at a much cheaper rate than they can afford to do under present conditions.

Mr. Troy: They could also cheapen the water to the agricultural districts.

Mr. GARDINER: That is so. Now I come to the Railways. During the year just closed, the Railways earned £50,000 more revenue than in 1917-18; but unfortunately it cost £118,000 more to work the system.

The Minister for Works: If we had had the traffic we could have earned another quarter of a million without greater expense.

Mr. GARDINER: The community are being taxed something like £300,000 per annum, for what? So that the Railways can be used for developmental purposes? That is not the ideal that has been in the head of the men running our Railways. When the Railway Estimates come on I am going to give a conclusive case in which I made the Railways pay, but in which a poor unfortunate individual who did not know anything about it could not achieve the same result. Instead of the idea of our present management being to encourage traffic on our railways, they do absolutely everything in their power to discourage it. That cannot go on. I hope that when the Minister for Railways puts in a new Commissioner he will at the same time put in some new men as the Commissioner's chief officials. To us considering

the financial position, the Railway figures are absolutely disquieting. One never knows how to make estimates of revenue and expenditure if the departmental figures are to be £50,000 out. I was responsible for their putting up the revenue as high as they did. It realised more than my estimate, but I was responsible, because I was making a comparison. They have got to the stage that, when giving estimates, they try to decrease their revenue and increase expenditure. If we have to make this loss, let us feel that the loss is being made in the development of the State, and that it will not be constantly recurring because of mismanagement or because in the heads of the railway officials there is the thought, "Wait till the traffic is there before we give conveniences." Instead of which they should be going out and offering conveniences to invite traffic. If we take this into consideration I think we can at least look forward to paying off that £289,000 which we were short. Now we come to a far more serious position, namely, our relationship to the Commonwealth, especially in regard to finance. It is of no use sitting down and waiting until the 30th June next year. Whenever I think of the relationship between the Commonwealth and State I get sore and sour. I cannot forget that to-day they are paying us $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on our transferred properties. The Act prescribed that they should pay us by a method to be approved by Parliament. They transfer that sum to our credit and pay us the interest, and that is what they construe into paying us. That is the kind of thing we put up with. Again, I cannot forget that during the war they exacted an indemnity from Western Australia for the men she sent to the Front. Now what do they suggest? They say to us, we are going to cut down your subsidy by 2s. 6d. a year for six years, until it reaches 10s. I will be fair and admit that we simply said "All right, you are going to ruin us." I put this argument to them: I said, "If you are going to ruin us, you will have to take over our deficit, and if you run it as you run some of your own departments the deficit is going to be much bigger under your management than under ours. What are you going to do about it?" They said, "Tasmania and Western Australia are to be entitled to special considerations." But I say I do not always want to have to take charity from the Commonwealth. That is the position. We have to take this position seriously and quickly. It would be a wise thing if we appointed a committee of this House to consider that question. It would be wise if we were to debate it here, and if we arranged that, whoever went to represent the State on that question, had behind him the endorsement of the whole of this Parliament. Because it does not matter who is on this side or that side, we all have to face it.

Mr. Angelo: You promised us a debate on that subject, but it did not come off.

Mr. GARDINER: This is how it is going to leave us: They gave us an estimate of

the increase of our population between the years 1920-1 and 1925-6. Their estimate of our population in 1921 was 341,000, and in 1925-6, 393,000. Of course, they did not then know that the present Premier was going to be in office, or they would have increased that estimate. At 2s. 6d., our loss in the first year would be £42,721; at 20s. in the second year our loss would be £87,881; at 17s. 6d. in the third year our loss would be £135,586; at 12s. 6d. in the fifth year our loss would be £239,067. That is, the loss as between 25s. and what they purpose paying us would be £295,074. Taking it over the term it would be only a little loss of £986,273. The House has to face that position, and it has not much time to do it, as the period over which it will extend will be very long. Occasionally, we are asked how the deficit has occurred. There have been many explanations. The extravagance of the Labour party is given as one, and the incapacity of another party is given as another. Since Federation our domestic expenditure has gone up by half a million. In 1902, we got from the Commonwealth £1,220,000. In 1919 we are receiving £554,000. It was generally thought and accepted that the taxation by the Commonwealth would be limited to customs and excise, and that all other avenues of taxation would be left open. Bless my heart and soul, the Commonwealth have not only exploited every avenue of taxation, but they have taken away some of the money from the public institutions! Just look at the position of our Savings Bank! I am quoting now from memory. In six years, since the Commonwealth Savings Bank has been opened, the State Savings Bank deposits over withdrawals, including interest, have been only £387,000. In the six years the excess of deposits over withdrawals in the Commonwealth Bank have been £1,100,000, and, in addition, we have to keep the security of practically £400,000 at the Commonwealth Bank to protect our own Savings Bank. That means that we are £20,000 a year worse off by reason of the difference between what we could obtain money at from our own Savings Bank and what we are paying now for money. There is a remedy if the people will be loyal to their own bank. How can we say anything if the people prefer the Commonwealth Bank at a lower rate of interest?

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are aware that the State institutions had to appoint a lot of agents who were not suitable.

Mr. GARDINER: That is quite possible. The business of the Savings Bank of Victoria has actually expanded since Commonwealth competition stepped in; ours has gone back. The simple reason is that since the Commonwealth Bank started operations in Victoria, the Victorian Government have put up fine buildings in all the big centres. I do not want members to go on living in a fool's paradise. The term expires on the 30th June, 1920, and as I told them quite plainly and candidly over there—and the late Premier will bear me out—when the

history of the surplus revenue Bill is written so far as the Commonwealth treatment of the States is concerned, a man will need to have a handkerchief in one hand and a tin of disinfectant in the other, the smell will be so strong. Then we come to the encouragement of production. I have just been reading a report of the conference which has been taking place here, and I do wish that our agricultural friends would realise that there are other important industries which require some assistance. I have a recollection that in the first session I spent in this House the whole of the time of members was given up to the consideration of the farming interests. They are vital interests, and I am not going to allow the opportunity to pass without expressing my gratitude to the Labour Government for what they did for the farmers in those days. It is quite true that we must encourage farming production, but with all the Premier's optimism, if we are going to have satisfactory settlement on the land, we must show that a man can make a living and that he can give his wife and family at least some of the comforts which are enjoyed in other walks of life. We must not stop in the development of agriculture. One would think, reading the Press, that all our difficulties were solved because we were going to settle a lot of men on the land.

Mr. Troy: The men who write those articles do not know anything about it.

Mr. GARDINER: What is the good of talking like that to men like us who have put all their money into farming? I have great faith in the agricultural future of this State. The agricultural outlook has to be considerably increased before men are going to rush it. That is the position. I want to give the Premier this tip: In America they are miles ahead of any other place in their efforts to bring about the desired end. They say there that the cost of living is of course influenced by the cost of those things which are produced from the ground. In America they do not have lectures now and again, but they send out men to every farm and the first question that is asked of a farmer is, "Are you yourself living from this farm or off it?" That means in other words, "Are you yourself using at your own table those things that you can produce on your farm or are you buying them?" In America the banks help the farmers. The first great development in this particular phase of intense culture of the home surroundings, came from the negroes of South America. They wanted to build a chapel—they love a chapel nearly as well as they do in Cornwall. Each member of the particular community in South America agreed to put in, say, a quarter of an acre or less of what is known as "truck," that is, vegetables of all descriptions, so that they might pay for the building of their church. As a result of that they developed a little market where all their produce was taken. Gradually that extended until they

found it was profitable to go further, and that is what we want the farming classes of our community to do. I say that with a knowledge of what I am talking about, because the first business I managed was a business where we did a turnover of something like £15,000 a year and 10 per cent. came from cash while the other came from what they produced on the farms. Then in America they go further than that, and here is another hint that I want to give to the Premier. They go to a man's farm and say, "What have you been trying to grow?" The farmer will reply that he has been trying to grow wheat, or corn, or barley, or something else. Then they say "Give us your soil." They carry a small plant about with them and they analyse the soil and perhaps tell the farmer that he is trying to do the impossible, that the land is no good for corn, but is good for some other cereal. The result of all that is that there has been an immense revival in farming in America. Down in Dakota there were a thousand farms thrown up not long ago and to-day they are all in occupation merely because the people who took them up received encouragement and assistance and were able to know exactly what to do with the land. Where the soil varies, as it does in Western Australia, success would be obtained if similar methods were employed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: In other words, information instead of money.

Mr. GARDINER: A little of each. But we must not stop there. I took the trouble to put a pretty substantial sum on the Estimates for the development of gold-mining, but very little of it was spent. I told the mining members that I was relying on them to see that the money was properly spent. We must go back to gold, and I am pleased to think that whilst I was in Melbourne enjoying a holiday, due to the kindly consideration of the present Minister of Education, I was able to do something there for the benefit of the gold industry, because I was partly instrumental in getting the right to export gold. In five months there has been exported 151,000ozs. of gold and the profit has been 15s. 4d. per oz. or a total of something like £120,000. About £80,000 of that goes towards the gold-mining industry of Western Australia and will be distributed at the end of the six months. So there was something I did during that holiday that was of benefit to the State.

Mr. Hudson: You were representing the Minister for Mines.

Mr. GARDINER: I do not care who I was representing; I was doing it off my own bat and my own cheek. We have also copper and tin, and nothing more iniquitous was ever done than the imposition of the war profits tax on base metals during the currency of the war, a tax which took 75 per cent. of the profits. The prices of tin and copper were such at that time that there was every inducement for men to dig out those metals from the bowels of the

earth, but those engaged in the industry said. "What is the good; we are not going to tear our 'guts' out in order to give 75 per cent. of our profits to the Commonwealth Treasurer." Here was another case we took up and fought. We objected to Western Australia, on account of her geographical position, having to send her base metals to Sydney for treatment when by paying the same freight we could send them elsewhere to have them treated at a cheaper rate.

Mr. Troy: Who was responsible?

Mr. GARDINER: It was the same with sugar. We are paying an enormous sum for the production of sugar and for a White Australia policy. We took 44,000 tons of sugar from Java last year and something like 15,000 from Mauritius passes our door to be refined and we pay freight back again. That is how they are penalising us. Fortunately, I was able to bring about a reduction in the treatment charges for copper by something like £1 a ton. Mr. Sleeman told me the other day that the result of our interview was a saving in cost of treatment of something like £1 a ton. There is a sort of sub rosa promise that we shall have a reduction of freight on that which comes from Western Australia. I have made two suggestions to the Premier as to brightening the outlook of the men on the land. We are up against one or two propositions there which may well receive our earnest consideration. We must strive to give the mines cheaper water if we can finance the scheme as suggested. Probably the greatest question of all facing us is the cost of living. Every effort must be made to decrease the cost of production. If we do not decrease the cost of production, it will be a long while before we decrease the cost of living. I want the Opposition to realise this. If the cost of living gets high, it is of no use going to the Arbitration Court to make it higher. I appeared for seven years in the Arbitration Court and never objected to a man trying to get as much wages as he could.

Mr. O'Lughlin: What reply did the judge give you?

Mr. GARDINER: He gave so many replies that I congratulated him on the consistency of his inconsistencies. Every time men got an increase, they practically paid the increase plus the profit. The increases in a majority of instances applied where the profit could be passed on. There are any number of industries where the profit could not be passed on, and every labourer working in such industries was penalised as a result of the increased wages given. The rectification will not come so easily. In America, whence I get the views of the world on this question, the time is coming when they will say capital shall have only a living wage of eight per cent., and there begins the solution of cheaper living. If a man wishes to build a house there is power to go to the man who produces lime and ask the cost of producing it and the profit he is making. They

have the same power with regard to the man who makes bricks, and if they find the profits are being swollen by giving extravagant wages or salaries, the offender gets into trouble. That is the starting point. It is of no use saying we shall fix the price of butter at 1s. 3d. if one man can make 25 per cent. out of it and another only ten per cent. We must go to the base of things to bring down the cost of living. As we say that a man shall have a living wage for his labour, they say to the capitalist that he shall receive only a living wage for his capital.

Hon. P. Collier: Carnegie had something more than a living wage.

Mr. GARDINER: The day after war broke out, the first man to write to the Minister for Mines to get a price-fixing measure before the House was myself, and I was outside Parliament at the time. When I saw how the price of commodities was being raised, I realised it was time to take a hand. We passed a price-fixing measure and it met with a lot of opposition in the Upper House, because there were some men who had a few bushels to sell and wanted the highest price for them. We had a letter sent to us protesting against fixing the prices for profits. The real germ of reducing the cost of living lies in stipulating that there shall be no profiteering by a man accepting extravagant interest for his money. In America they intend to treat him as a usurer.

Mr. O'Loghlen: They have had the Sherman Act there for years.

Mr. GARDINER: The object of that is rather to prevent monopoly. Action has been taken under that law against some of the big trusts.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Unfortunately they are as strong as ever they were.

Mr. GARDINER: Before the war they passed an Act which gives enormous power, and it is still being continued. When we tackle this question, let us try to solve it as a knotty problem. It does not matter who makes the suggestion, whether it comes from this or that side of the House. Let us honestly try to do something which will prove moderately satisfactory.

Mr. O'Loghlen: We are surprised that with all these Ministers and ex-Ministers nothing has been done. It has been going on for two or three years.

Mr. GARDINER: We are past that stage; we are facing a new era.

Hon. P. Collier: A new world for the worker.

Mr. GARDINER: Yes; the end of the war celebrates the birth of a new nation.

Mr. Troy: The birth of justice.

Mr. GARDINER: This question is nearer my heart than most things. We had ideals previously, and found them rotten. We worshipped wealth, position, and power, only to find when the nation had its back to the wall that its greatest asset was men. Let us put on one side all sentimentality and look at it as a business proposition. Take the busi-

ness man: Does not he protect his best asset? If his best asset is men, he must consider men's lives and men's outlook before anything else. This will not be done by destruction. It is not going to be done by holding pre-war ideas about money being sacred.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Wild horses won't drag those ideas from them.

Mr. GARDINER: It cannot be achieved by considering capital sacrosanct. It can be achieved by a recognition of the right of every man, as a result of honest labour, to live in surroundings of peace and comfort, and the man who does not realise this will have a rude awakening. Millions in future are not going to work that thousands may live in luxury, and the task must be approached by both sides in the spirit that will help. I agree with the member for Hants (Mr. Munsie) when he said this result cannot come by revolution. I will tell the House how it can come. The squatter's son and the shearer's son have been fighting side by side, and they have held each other's lives in their hands. If we take an example from them, realising that we hold in our hands the lives of our brothers less fortunate than we are, we shall make this a better world and solve this question. Two methods have been suggested of bringing about a better understanding between capital and labour. A great scheme tried in America is the Whiteley scheme. That gives to employees the right practically, of advising on their own surroundings and as to how their work shall be done, and the best evidence I have of that is from the International Harvester Co. The manager, Mr. McCormack, said as a result of adopting the Whiteley scheme, the efficiency curve had gone up. He said it was strange to see sitting at the same table two red hot socialists and one anarchist, and he added—"They are the best advisers we have got." Mr. McCormack was asked if the position would hold together if prices fell and the company made less profit. The answer was—"Yes, these men are in my consultation and see that they get a fair return, and if I were not making the profit to pay the wages I would not hesitate to say so." He proceeded to give an example of how it worked. There was a general application for an increase of wages all round. It came before the board of employees, who said—"These men have no right to an increase; those men have." That settled the question, and when they settled a question there were no strikes. We have to so work, if we can, than an unjust strike is impossible and a just strike unnecessary. There was a great gathering in England; employers and employees met and agreed to give a living wage, first to the employee and then to the employer, and whatever net profit was left was distributed fifty-fifty between them. It looked a fine solution. If everyone in business did that, the cost of living would soon fall out of sight.

Mr. O'Loghlen: Have you the figures showing what it cost to keep the employer as against the employee?

Mr. GARDINER: No.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Would they live on the same wage?

Mr. GARDINER: I do not know. The war profit tax in Canada provided that a man should make only seven per cent. on his money, and of the residue he was allowed to take up to seven per cent. and no more. I feel, as does every member, the seriousness of the position, and if we can help in any way it is our obvious and bounden duty to do so.

Hon. T. WALKER (Kanowna): I have listened with patience to all the speeches in defence of the Government to learn what, after all, was being done to fulfil the promises made during the war to bring about that better era we have so graphically heard described by the speaker who has just resumed his seat. I have to-night less interest, less delight in parliamentary institutions, and in this Assembly in particular, than I have ever felt in the whole course of my parliamentary experience, and this has been a long one. But it must have been evident to every member who has spoken, and to everyone of us who has listened, that this Assembly, this Parliament, is moribund. It is dead. No one outside takes an interest in it. Not a man in the city of Perth is interested in what we are doing. There is a general feeling that Parliament cannot do any good. Why is this? It is because the general public at large are realising a sad disappointment in their ideals, their leaders, and their parliamentary representatives. They have reached a stage when they feel it is hopeless to expect anything from the utterances of their public men. They are realising the hollowness, the sham and the hypocrisy of those who have obtained high positions in politics, by virtue of misrepresentation and deliberate falsehood.

Mr. Troy: And apostasy.

Hon. T. WALKER: When the Labour Government were in office weeks were spent on this side of the House prognosticating the shipwreck of the State on the rocks of financial disaster. Not a night passed but we heard of the sad doom of this country so long as it was in the hands of Labour leadership and under Labour guidance. The Press shrieked the same tune. They did not sing it, for there was no melody, no harmony in their utterances. They howled it and hurled it at the public. Every night the Minister for Works, and the Premier himself, hurled anathemas at State enterprises, and the operation of the State steamships were the signal for an eternal, an everlasting, unending, and monotonous tune from every politician seeking office. The people believed those who were here uttering their prognostications, their Cassandra-like prophecies, and the Labour Government went out of office. We have had these years since then and what do we find? The Premier himself cannot run his Government unless he brings in the very Treasurer of the Labour regime to support and defend him.

The Premier: Defend me!

Hon. T. WALKER: Yes.

Mr. Harrison: See what it has cost to educate him.

Hon. P. Collier: It would cost a lot more to educate you.

Hon. T. WALKER: Members on that side of the House are everlastingly apologising for the piling up of the huge deficit, explaining it by every other excuse than that it was due to the Labour Administration. They are now declaring to the public, that what they said about Labour incompetency was a falsehood.

Mr. Troy: It must have been.

Mr. Hardwick: Do not forget the four years of war.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is now the explanation from the member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick).

Mr. Hardwick: There were 30,000 men away from the State.

Hon. T. WALKER: Here is the beautiful dweller in the tub who comes out and makes these revelations to an astounded world.

Hon. P. Collier: Get back, into the tub.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member says, "four years of war." We have just heard one of the Treasurers he followed and supported saying it is not due to that. It is the withdrawal of the subsidies from the Commonwealth. It is the Commonwealth encroachment upon our financial preserves. It is the wrongful treatment we have received from the Federal Government. That is one explanation. Every explanation is offered now but that of Labour maladministration. Then we have the Minister for Education in another place everlastingly decrying the Labour Government, saying that all our disasters can be laid at their door, and that the country can never prosper unless there is a new regime either of Liberals or Nationalists. We have it now. What does he say to-day? He says, "We cannot help it; the country is drifting as it is, because we are not the masters of our own resources. The Commonwealth has throttled us and we are at the mercy of exterior despots." That is merely his explanation of the deficit to-day. It was said that if we only got this crowd out of office we should have the stability and the credit of the country restored, and that it was the only possible source of salvation for the country. They said, "Sack Labour; bring us in and we will make ends meet." That was the cry during the elections.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was restored before they were re-elected.

Hon. T. WALKER: Within three weeks, they said, the ledger will be balanced. That was their boast. Where are they now? They are sinking in muddier waters than ever. Observe their subterfuges to the public! The State steamship enterprise was the most heinous of political acts ever perpetrated. The other night, when the amendment to the Address-in-reply was moved, asking for an extension of the steamship service, not only for our own requirements but for overseas commerce, the Premier, the Minister for Works, and others on that side of the House,

said, "It is our policy; we mean it." They said if they could not go as far as the member for Pilbara desired, it was because they had not the means to do so. They were too hard up but were going to do it by-and-by.

Hon. P. COLLIER: What a somersault!

Hon. T. WALKER: Cannot the public see that those on the other side of the House reached their positions through falsehood, through humbug, through deluding, deceiving, and betraying the public? Is not that the reason why the public have lost all heart and faith? The people see now that they did not mean what they said when they told the falsehoods they did, but they got into power by that means, and now are obliged to adopt, in order to live at all, the very policy which the Labour party inaugurated and founded.

Mr. TROY: They have not been guilty of initiating anything yet.

The Premier: I do not know that you have ever done much.

Hon. T. WALKER: If we look at these tricks that have been played in politics during the last few months, not to trace the whole career of Governments since Labour was in office, can we marvel that the country at large is utterly disgusted? If it were not for the disgust of the public, reducing the public spirit to absolute apathy, there would be risings, public meetings everywhere, to order that body back to the place whence it came, as unfitted to retain the confidence of a respectable community one moment longer. I can respect honest opponents of every kind. I know that as there is a mighty distance between the north and south poles, and a contrast between hot and cold, so is there a contrast in principles between the Conservatives and the Progressives. I can appreciate, honour and esteem to the utmost the honest Conservative. He represents one of the forces existing in nature. But I cannot honour, nor can the public respect, that underground engineer, that wire-puller, who has no regard for principle whatsoever, who aims only at the overthrow of one in position in order to take his place. We had the Wilson Government. I could not altogether respect its conduct, particularly in its false representations to the public of the actual position of the State, but certainly from my memory of Mr. Wilson I must say I had more respect for his public career than I can possibly have for some of those who tried to displace him whilst he was alive. He was undermined not by Labour, not in fair conflict, but by intrigue in his own ranks. He was overthrown and with him was overthrown the present Premier. He went out as a result of conspiracy, the underground machinations of politicians seeking only for the vanity of place. It is something to me to think that we have at the head of the Government to-day one who, at that time, from the point of honour and a sense of his own dignity, and the pride of his own integrity, had the moral courage to step aside and keep out of the Government of the day because his chief had been so

ignominiously overthrown. That he should now be back with those supporting him, sitting at the right and left of him, who tried to blot his political career for all time! It is a sad commentary on public life in any country. But there it is. He sits surrounded by those men who undermined him and overthrew him, denounced him, put on him the label "Never to rise again." In no Government was he to be Minister for Lands any more. But now they are with him, beside him. Nothing has changed in the circumstances, in the course of events. Nothing has altered in principle. It goes to show the hollowness and sham of our public life. It is the reason for the apathy or contempt in which Parliamentary institutions are being held by the general commonalty. What shall we now say of that cry which brought about this strange conglomerate, this admixture of every incompatible element in political life into one political team? What shall we say of it? The crowd which cried "National" as a distinction from "Labour," which made it to appear, most shamefully and hypocritically and inaccurately made it to appear, that they represented the only national principle, and that we on this side represented only the disloyal, rebellious, contemptible spirit of anarchy—what shall we say of them? Hypocrisy to the utmost! "Nationalism" is a beautiful name, one that swells the hearts of us all, because we delight to feel that we have reached to national altitudes.

Mr. HARRISON: A splendid ideal if you had only lived up to it.

Hon. T. WALKER: Listen to the Country party marionette—I beg pardon; I should say, Country party leader. It shows to what we are coming when we have to bow in humble reverence before the leadership of one who is chucked into the position because the members of the party are jealous of each other. That word "national" was used as another delusion, another species of dust-throwing into the eyes of the public. And it created tremendous dust. Behind that cloud of dust the real motive, the real tendency, could not be perceived by the public at large. In that cloud of dust, behind that screen shielding them from the general public penetration and gaze, the so called National Party planned a division of the national power and will, a separation wider than there ever had been in the history of this country and this Commonwealth between man and man, a division of the great body of people who have built up Australian greatness. Some were deluded until they left their own fellows, their own class, their own body, their own interests to join with and link up with the eternal enemies by instinct of the whole of the working populace of the Commonwealth. And from that day forth the glamour of applause of the class that exploits the worker in order to live in its atmosphere of splendour, is upon them. They are captives. They cannot return to the ranks they left. So keenly do they feel the

position which they are compelled to defend, that they are obliged to make it appear that they have some right and reason for their action; and they do this by turning round upon all their past, forgetting every step of the ladder upon which they have ascended to their positions, turning round to abuse and calumniate and slander and vilify the party that gave them political life, gave them their first hope of ascension. There is a tendency to catch the atmosphere in which one lives, and to breathe it forth again. We may expect from those new Nationalists—not quite from all, but from some certainly—the greatest bitterness against their own class, the class they have abandoned. I need not tell you, Mr. Speaker, for you know it, that the greatest danger to this movement which is shaking the whole of the world at the present moment, the greatest danger to its ultimate triumph and success, is not in its known enemies, its recognised enemies that confront it, but in the traitors from its own ranks, in those who have left their fellow men for the temporary applause and the little taste of glory that is given them by the other side.

Mr. Davies: What is Willis & Co.?

Hon. T. WALKER: I ask, what is the member for Guildford? It must be evident that no good can come out of assorted or unassorted elements mixed in one vessel, such as we see upon the Government benches. There must be some consistency of principle, some line to work upon, some leading to a definite goal. One cannot have a team of horses pulling in all directions. The horses must go in a direct line, or at least pull upon the same traces, otherwise disaster must result. We cannot have anything but disaster from a conglomeration of principles where "Yes" becomes "No," and "No" becomes "Yes," and doubt is interspersed between them all the way of the journey. One can expect nothing but confusion and disaster from such an aggregation of inconsistent elements, as we find in the present Government, supported, moreover, by no purpose. The Country party are avowedly supporting the Government not from principle, but for what they can get out of them; not because they believe in the Government, but because they hope that the farming industry will be better served by the promises—

Mr. Harrison: Better looked after.

Hon. T. WALKER: What did the hon. member say?

Mr. Troy: He won't come again.

Hon. T. WALKER: I have marvelled that the farming community, the Country party, fail to see how their interests are ultimately bound to be sold by the party they are serving.

Mr. Harrison: We are not always asleep.

Mr. Green: Most of the time you are.

Hon. T. WALKER: The Country party are always in a nightmare.

Mr. Harrison: We are not always in your company.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is very sharp, indeed, and worthy of the leader of the

Country party. I am surprised the Country party cannot see that the one chance they and their constituents have of ultimately becoming contented, prosperous yeoman farmers—if I may use the expression—is to refrain from linking up with the class that represents the exploiters, and to join the class that represents the industries.

Mr. Harrison: We link up with any Government that will give us—

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member says the Country party will link up with any Government. No principle! I am submitting to this Chamber to-night the fact that the farmers are as much to be pitied as the workers are to be pitied, having regard to the extent to which either class are at the mercy of the capitalist section of the community. There was a time—it can be remembered by every member of the Country party here to-night—when a very small area under cultivation sufficed not only for the farmer to live upon, but to bring up respectably a numerous family upon. Now the farmer may have his 1,000 and 2,000 acres, and put the whole under the most intense cultivation; but the more he cultivates the poorer he becomes.

Mr. Harrison: Is this Western Australia, or is it the "three acres and a cow"?

Hon. T. WALKER: It is evident that the more the farmer produces now, the less return he gets. The man who gathered his crop with a sickle was, in a sense, happier and more prosperous than many a farmer of to-day, who has his machines and teams working from one end of the year to the other. What has made all the difference? How is it that all those flourishing acres of golden harvest are not able to give the support, the comfort, the home life, which the modest methods of cultivation afforded in days gone by? Because there is a class that takes from the industry, as from all labour, the surplus created by the human toiler on the farm as well as elsewhere for the swelling of the capitalistic wealth of the country. There are men who started young on the farm and who in their old age cannot find enough to rest upon in comfort and content. Whose pockets have been filled by the produce of millions of acres in this country? Where has it gone? It represents wealth somewhere, but who has got it? Certainly not the farmers or the producers. It is held by the class which the hon. member supports, the class with which he links up.

Mr. Underwood: How is it that that class does not get the squatters' money?

Hon. T. WALKER: Because the squatters also are an exploiting class. Who helps the squatter and finances him? The very class I am referring to.

Mr. Underwood: Who finances the farmer? The bank.

Hon. T. WALKER: To what extent? The fact cannot be disguised that there are classes, two distinct classes, the class that represents the financial functions of the world and the class that creates the wealth of the world.

Mr. Underwood: Does not the squatter create wealth?

Hon. T. WALKER: The squatter himself does not.

Mr. Underwood: You are wrong, he does.

Hon. T. WALKER: The squatter does not create wealth. To the small extent that he does actually create wealth, he does it with the help of the whole community, through the vast areas allowed him for his grazing. It is of no use disguising the fact that there are two classes standing opposed to each other. The leader of the Country party said there were extremists on both sides and that he objected to both. Mr. Hughes, at Durban, said "Damn both the Bolsheviks and the profiteers!"

The Minister for Works: I say so, too.

Hon. T. WALKER: Those are nice phrases, but let us get down to bedrock and see if we have not those two classes with us. Let us see what condemnation has been passed upon those who are termed direct actionists. Take the seamen's strike. What has been said? Why, that there are agitators, and that they are the ruination of the industries of the Commonwealth. I have heard people shriek with horror at the very mention of one big union. It makes people's blood run like icicles, if icicles could run. One big union!—horror! bogey! But what about the federation of employers? The shipping companies constitute only a branch of the one big union of the capitalist. The federation of employers—no horror in that. It is all right, quite the natural order of things.

The Minister for Works: I do not say so, anyhow.

Hon. T. WALKER: There is no horrified cry over the Employers' Federation. It is so powerful that when reason and discretion sought to bring our own local troubles to an end even the State Government were powerless and could not settle the little strike at the Fremantle wharf. The Employers' Federation, as represented by one branch, by the shipping combine, paralysed the efforts of the Government until the Government were driven into the absurd mountebank position, as it has been called, at the Fremantle wharf that solemn Sunday morning of the 4th May. Even in the little local disturbance on the goldfields, the woodline dispute, the Government could have settled that in a week if they had cared to do so. All the elements now present were present then, and the Government could have brought the thing to an end. Why did they not do so? Because there was a combine up there which was not to be disturbed, and so the Government worked together with the woodline companies. When it was proposed to set the men co-operatively opening up new forest belts to supply the mines independently of bosses, the mines said, "No, we cannot trust them; we stand out." And when the mines stood out, the Government stepped in to help settle this local disturbance by

bringing the old bodies in again and going back to the 1916 prices, which might have been done in the first week. In this seamen's strike, also, the Government were concerned, in that they had their own ships, which the seamen had left as they had left privately owned vessels. There was a difference of about 13d. per day in wages, and the Government were asked to pay it on their own ships. Even had it been paid our local seamen would have been getting less than is paid to British and American seamen. But the Government sat still, and said, "No, we will not do it." Why? Because it would have been breaking their compact, expressed or implied, with the private shipping combine.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They have an agreement to down the men's union.

Hon. T. WALKER: That is so. The Government sided with the combine, with their own class, the class they represent. It is the class they stuck to so firmly against the men. And then some Ministers say, "Your seamen will not man the boats to go to Wyndham to save their fellows from starvation." How hypocritical!

The Minister for Works: The Government guaranteed to pay the men whatever might be awarded.

Hon. T. WALKER: What does that mean? Merely that they were standing by the victory or the defeat of the shipping combine. They were pledging themselves to the issue of their class in Melbourne. If the shipping combine lost, the Government would go down also, while if the shipping combine won the Government also would win. That is the attitude all the way through—they stood by the combine.

Mr. Davies: You did the same thing yourself when the Labour Government were in office.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What shipping combine did the Labour Government ever stand by?

Hon. T. WALKER: When I hear these unexpected hissings, I know that the snake is somewhere at hand.

Mr. Green: Do not call him a snake.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not. I am merely pointing out what the Government did, as shown by the facts, by what they themselves say. They say, "Gentlemen, go to work, and if the combine goes down and you are to have the extra pay we will give it, even retrospectively." Standing by the shipping combine! It is that which fires my blood with the determination to fight for those who are misrepresented in the Press and in public. It is a crime for us to unite in such a solid manner; it is the right thing for the employers and the combines and the trusts and the federations to do.

The Minister for Works: It is your part to preach that doctrine.

Hon. T. WALKER: The hon. member knows that I would serve no purpose in my material life by adopting such a course. I advocate what I do and I preach what I do because I have endeavoured to study these

questions, and because my heart will not let me be a traitor to that voiceless community that has only just arisen from serfdom and slavery and is for the first time opening its eyes to the consciousness of its manhood and importance.

The Minister for Works: There is good in the other side also.

Hon. T. WALKER: It is not that I am preaching against individuals. I am not preaching against the Minister for Works as Mr. George. I am certain that Mr. George is as big-hearted as anyone. I know that his motives are good and honourable and honest, and I am not preaching against him, but he is part of a system, and his judgment is biased by that system and he is incapable of looking stern facts in the face. The great body of the people live through years of life without any hope of having more than enough to keep life in the body, sufficient to do the day's work and earn something for the wife and little ones. I have no quarrel with Mr. George, but I wish to goodness he could curb his temper and listen to arguments more kindly.

The Minister for Works: I do not mind argument, but I will not have abuse.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. WALKER: I am not abusing the hon. member.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The Minister for Works is the most abusive man in the House; he has taken the belt for it.

Hon. T. WALKER: I am saying what cannot be denied, and I say afresh, the Government in all their dealings with strikes have acted as the ordinary private boss, instead of recognising the needs of the toiler and the requirements of the wealth creator.

Mr. Davies interjected.

Hon. T. WALKER: There is one thing certain about the member for Guildford, and it is, that he has stuck fast behind a Government who represents combines and the Employers' Federation. He supports and stands by them and abuses the brethren who gave him political existence.

Mr. Green: He turned dog on the man who gave him his job.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Hon. T. WALKER: With the conservative element, which is a natural force, I have to recognise it as I would the positive and negative poles in electricity. It is there, but it always has certain characteristics, the chief one being its callousness and blindness to the real needs of the great toiling masses. Be a little charitable, dole out little bits of help that will see an hour through, but nothing that will permanently uphold life! It goes on the principle that the world is a set going machine and should not be disturbed. Anyone who tries to disturb it is an agitator and a Bolshevik who should be put in gaol, deported, shot, anything to get rid of the man who disturbs our quiet. Let the world go on and the stream flow placidly down. "You men go to work; you men work more and things will be better. Just be satisfied." That is the idea of the Government and it

works out in a hundred different ways. That placid stream upon which the conservative elements float is absolutely unconscious of the terrible sufferings which exist in the world. When the Labour Government were in office they brought in a Bill, amongst others, for the special treatment of inebriates. Provision was made that men should not be sent to gaol for what was a disease—the disease of drunkenness, a disease which could not be helped. Talk about law and order. This Government have never attempted to put this measure into operation. They have allowed it to remain a dead letter, and we have in our police courts in Perth, women, pitiable creatures, with over a hundred convictions for drunkenness, and the Press, the capitalistic Press, the thoughtful Press, run by youths who know no better or an old man who ought to wear petticoats, gloat and glory over the facts. The old woman is sent, for the hundred and thirtieth time, back to gaol for drunkenness. Similarly in Fremantle that phenomenon has happened, and just as casually as anything, three months gaol awarded. I have a case in my mind where a man with many previous convictions recorded against him, was sent to gaol for six months for habitual drunkenness. He had served 21 days for drunkenness and then was charged with habitual drunkenness and sent back to gaol to herd with criminals for six solid months. Where is the heart? The Government talk about being progressive. It has none of the real vital qualities of government. What should the Government be for but to help the weak against the strong, to curb the strength of the wicked-doer. That should be the purpose, the chief function, of government. But we find the Government's arm paralysed in every instance against the profiteer and wrong-doer, and their callous paws, ever placed upon the helpless, the weak, and the suffering. In the Governor's Speech we have down upon our list a measure to deal with the depraved children, the Children's Court and State children. I have had occasion once or twice to visit that court, and it will be a wonder if some of our children are not turned into absolute habitual criminals by the methods pursued by those who are running that court. The children are dogged, as some men are dogged, as the habitual criminals are dogged by the police, until resentment starts even in the breast of childhood against such injustice, which leads them into the pathways of wrong-doing, even in the name of the law. I want to say that, to my knowledge, the officers of some of these children's courts have taken a child from its own mother when the mother herself has pleaded for its care, and given it to the custody of someone else, in that way ignoring the most natural instincts of the maternal breast, entirely ignoring what helps to make a woman deserving of the name of mother in the true sense of the word, and depriving the mother of that sweet consolation of maternity that fits her for the companionship of the

world. It has been done in these institutions. We may expect all this when we find at the head of the Police Department, which is in some respects running rampant, a man who, though not a boy in years, is a boy in experience, a good fellow perhaps, but unqualified in every sense to run such an important department. He presides over the police functions of the State and over those delicate elements of the State that make for the refinement and uplifting of society in our children's courts. I have no objection to Mr. Broun as a man, but I do object to him running that Children's Court where they have their police, women police, and inspectors. He is not a man of the world. He has not a grasp of those principles, the training, or the actual knowledge gathered in the world, to fit him for the post. It shows how callous we are in the government of these things. In our new Attorney General we have a man so bound up in red tape that he must follow step by step all legal precedent to the very utmost, even in a case such as that which I have mentioned, a case of habitual drunkenness. He is raw and new, and has the old instincts and the old trammellings. We have not a Government that is going to improve this country. Whilst I have a profound respect socially for some of the members of the Government and am glad to meet them in private life, I say in their united capacity they comprise disjointed elements, disorganised in principle, with no set purpose except the one to bring people from abroad to dump into this country, instead of helping us to build it up by our efforts. The only salvation preached by the Government is their wild dream of 14,000 soldiers, each man carrying in his waistcoat pocket 500 sovereigns, and with a million following them through the wireless air. In this way we are to become great—a glorious dream, but it does not realise either the hopes of the member for Irwin (Mr. Gardiner) or of any other member who thinks seriously. We have to build the future from what we are to-day, onwards and forwards, absorbing naturally those who come to us of their own free will attracted by our prosperity and our efforts. It is thus that we are to be built. This State could go ahead to-morrow if we had a fearless Government who would say to the magnates in the East who have the wires in their hands—"Hands off, please." Let us build our own destiny, shape our own ends; give us a chance with our own internal wealth to build the future of our hopes and dreams. We can do it, but we cannot be the dumping ground for eastern profiteers or the servile tributaries to what is practically a foreign State, taking from us all our vitals for their own glorification and their own well-being. If we start with such principles to build this State for this State by the wealth of this State, we can accomplish something, and if we are free and unfettered from outside influence, we can govern our miserable profiteers and make them fall into rank with the general toilers of the State,

building up industry by industry's own wealth. We can then build up a democracy that shall be the guide and light to the whole outlooking world. It can only be done by principle that is based upon the bedrock of toil with its honest purpose, with its principle of "live and let live."

Mr. PIESSE (Toodyay): While I recognise that the debate is somewhat wearying, I feel it my duty to endeavour to remove the false impressions, of which members are apparently possessed, regarding the settlement of our agricultural lands. I have listened with some regret, and no little concern, to the remarks of certain members regarding the farming section of the community. The impression seems to be that farmers in the back areas are in a bad condition. The leader of the Opposition, in moving the no-confidence motion, was in error in making reference to the area of land under cultivation this year as compared with last year. According to him, the figures showed a shortage of some 400,000 acres, leaving a total area under crop of 1,600,000 acres. Owing to his lack of knowledge, he conveyed the impression that that area of land was thrown out of use. When the farmers are called upon to make returns of area under crop, there is a column to be filled in, "Cleared land formerly under crop, now used for grazing." All returns show a few hundred acres purposely used for grazing instead of cropping, but give the false impression that this area has been abandoned for the purposes of cultivation. The hon. member would have us believe such area was abandoned in the sense of that of abandoned farms.

Hon. P. Collier: I have no lack of knowledge about it at all and made no such statement.

Mr. PIESSE: May I read the hon. member's remarks?

Mr. SPEAKER: Do you intend to quote from "Hansard"?

Mr. PIESSE: Yes.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not in order in reading from "Hansard" of this session.

Mr. PIESSE: It is difficult otherwise to show that the hon. member's inference is wrong.

Hon. P. Collier: I am not responsible for the inference you drew from my remarks. What I stated is fact.

Mr. PIESSE: It is due to a lack of knowledge of the returns.

Hon. P. Collier: I know the returns.

Mr. PIESSE: I am sure the hon. member had no intention of misleading the House.

Hon. P. Collier: Neither did I do so.

Mr. PIESSE: The statement gives a wrong impression of the area under crop last year, and the reason for the shortage.

Hon. P. Collier: I stated the correct figures.

Mr. PIESSE: The excuse is made that this shortage is due to the war. In a measure it is, due to the war, but not wholly. There were not the men on the land to plant these

acres, but a large percentage of the 400,000 acres is held in grass for grazing purposes.

Hon. P. Collier: The area under crop decreased by 400,000 acres. The area used for grazing increased by 200,000 acres, so there is a discrepancy of 200,000 acres gone right out of use.

Mr. PIESSE: That is not so.

Hon. P. Collier: It is not in the return of areas under grazing.

Mr. PIESSE: In the land, the State has the greatest hope of securing a lasting remedy for its financial condition. Even members who have referred to land settlement have shown they are under a wrong impression. They have no knowledge of the true value of inland areas. I have just returned from a trip through the Lake Brown country, and the settlers there are quite satisfied with their conditions and have great hopes of ultimate success.

Mr. Duff: There are not too many there.

Mr. PIESSE: There are none at all at Lake Brown, but there is a good number north of Nungarin. This district has, in a measure, been condemned by those controlling the Agricultural Bank. Probably this is excusable because the same failing exists there as in this House, namely a lack of knowledge of these particular areas. I venture to assert the day will come when the managing trustee, Mr. McLarty, will recognise that his judgment of that particular portion of the State has been erroneous. If railway facilities were provided, it would prove a great producing district. It has averaged 14 bushels to the acre for three years in succession. Septoria and rust have made their appearance, but, given railway facilities, this will be one of the most prosperous farming districts in the State. The prosperity of those settlers mainly depends on a good water supply and railway facilities. I am glad the Premier has given instructions that assistance through the Agricultural Bank will be of such a nature as to cause this drawback at no distant date to disappear. These farmers cannot successfully carry on without an increased area of cleared land, and it is the policy of the Government to have a cleared area amounting to 600 acres per man. Apart from that, proper fencing must be erected to keep out the rabbits and dogs. This will be done as soon as wire netting can be obtained at a reasonable price. To enable these people to carry sheep on their holdings, advances were necessary. It is essential that an increased water supply be provided for them. This means money but the district cannot be successfully developed without it. The money must be provided by the Agricultural Bank at a reasonable rate of interest. The rabbit pest has been a serious menace in the past but, owing to the careful and constant use of poison, the pest has almost totally disappeared. I had a trip with the Honorary Minister through the Mount Marshall district. This was formerly infested with rabbits, but during the whole day we

were there we saw only one. At Kodj Kodjin poison carts have been used so successfully that a fairly large area of crop, which had been levelled to the ground, ultimately recovered from the ravages of the pest and produced an average of something like 15 bushels to the acre. The careful use of poison carts has undoubtedly freed a good deal of this country from the rabbit pest. It has been said it would be madness to put returned men on these areas. There are, however, many men going there to-day, and there are more anxious to return there. The only stumbling-block in connection with inland agricultural settlement is the lack of railway facilities. All the land abutting on the present railways is securely held, and the owners would not part with it for less than £2 an acre. If we take the properties now in the hands of the Repatriation Board we will find that the prices at which these have been offered exceed an average of £2 an acre. On our three days' trip we did not meet one man who was anxious to part with his holding. The averages for last year were high. At Yorkkrake one man had a small holding of 100 acres and another of 110 acres. The return per acre was 30 bushels. At Kusunoppin, which is not far from Lake Brown, the averages exceeded 20 bushels to the acre. I could quote dozens of instances of high yields having been taken from small and large areas. Referring to the report of the Royal Commission on agriculture, the leader of the Opposition said that it was without justification so far as the available lands in the South-West were concerned.

Hon. P. Collier: The report did not cover the South-West pastoral division. I take it the reference was to the extreme South-West.

Mr. PIESSE: I understand it referred to the available Crown land suitable for agricultural settlement. The Commission flew through the country and only saw a small portion of it.

Hon. P. Collier: They spent many months down there.

Mr. PIESSE: They were only able to see a small section of the country.

Hon. P. Collier: They spent two years on their investigations.

Mr. PIESSE: They based their report on evidence before them. I take it that evidence came from officers of the Lands Department. With all due deference to them I submit that they had very little knowledge as to the full extent of the land suitable for agriculture down there. One large area in particular is only now coming under the notice of the Lands Department. That is the big bulk of country lying east of the Wongan Hills-Mullewa line, starting from the Dowerin-Merredin loop line and running north. That comprises a quarter of a million acres suitable for settlement, with a better rainfall than in the Nungarin area, and it has given an average of 14 bushels to the acre for three years in succession. I have it on the testimony of a reliable farmer, Mr. Thomas Wilding, of Moline, Northam, that land yielding 10 bushels to the acre is worth £2 per acre.

Hon. P. Collier: Does a yield of 10 bushels pay?

Mr. Duff: It only just pays.

Mr. PIESSE: Yes, it pays. We have the testimony of men who have lived there.

Hon. P. Collier: With stock or with wheat alone?

Mr. PIESSE: With wheat alone! That is why I have endeavoured to convince hon. members that the position is really a hopeful one so far as inland settlement is concerned. We have often heard the cry that we have too many railways. What is needed is more railways to open up the vacant areas. How can our country railways be expected to pay big profits, and at the time open up the country? When that great inland settlement took place the settlers, almost without exception, as well as the Lands Department officials, had no knowledge of the local conditions. For the most part the settlers have now mastered their difficulties, and if hon. members will visit this part of the country they will find a comparatively contented colony of farmers. The people are convinced that the future is bright and the country worthy of development.

Hon. P. Collier: If a different impression has obtained in this House it has been due to the fact that hon. members, belonging for the most part to the same party as yourself, have been telling us that great distress has existed there in recent years.

Mr. PIESSE: There has been considerable distress, but when we consider the initial cost of development and the time spent by settlers in learning to overcome difficulties, up to then unknown in the history of land settlement, it is reasonable to expect that there would be some outlay. To-day there is a different condition of affairs and the settlers feel that prosperity is sure to come.

Mr. Troy: How far are they from a railway?

Mr. PIESSE: They are within the ten-mile radius. It is hopeless to farm beyond that. Large yields have been carted over a distance of 12 miles to a railway at a loss, and in addition there has been the wear and tear upon the horses and the destruction of the wagons. It is impossible to carry on farming operations beyond the 10-mile limit. I hope the Government will bring forward proposals during the session to build further railways through the agricultural areas. It has been said that we cannot possibly settle any more people, such as ex-soldiers from the Old Country, but I venture to say that this is just the right type of settler to come here.

Hon. P. Collier: I do not think anyone said we could not settle them.

Mr. PIESSE: There is a danger, if we bring men here who have no knowledge of the local conditions, that we would have unsuccessful settlements.

Hon. P. Collier: They are all without knowledge.

Mr. PIESSE: If men like that come here, there should be a system of education which

would fit them for the land upon which they will settle. The extreme South-West could take a large number of settlers.

Mr. Lambert: Farmers have lost 25 per cent. of their efficiency through sheer ignorance of what science should be applied to their operations.

Mr. PIESSE: That applied more in the past than it does to-day. Farmers are rapidly learning how to overcome the difficulties which formerly they found almost insuperable.

Mr. Lambert: It is beyond the individual, and the State should assist.

Mr. PIESSE: I am loath to advise too much State assistance. I hope the Government will accept the offer of the Imperial authorities, and assist in the settlement on the land of these ex-soldiers. Our Land Acts are certainly in need of revision. A free grant of 160 acres is provided for. Such an area is not necessary in the extreme South-West, and I should like to see it reduced to 50 acres. Intelligently worked either from the dairying or pig-raising point of view that would be ample to give men a good living. They would of course have to be prepared to settle down to intense culture.

Hon. P. Collier: The estates which have been purchased for returned soldiers, nearly all in the South-West, average 300 acres when cut up.

Mr. PIESSE: That will provide for mixed farming as well as dairying and other pursuits. It is then necessary to have 300 acres of good land. I have no personal knowledge of the conditions of the soil in the extreme South-West, but I believe the country is extremely productive, especially around the Nornalup Inlet. A friend of mine living down there tells me that lucerne will grow amongst the timber providing the undergrowth is removed. That proves the richness of the soil and its productive character. The Australian farmer must have a large area to work upon. He has the broad acre feeling, and nothing less than a thousand acres will suit him. In the Old Country 50 acres constitute a large farm, and I venture to say that the extreme South-West very much resembles portions of the Old Country.

Mr. Lambert: Farming in this State is made too much of a gamble.

Mr. PIESSE: It is the nature of Australians to have large areas, big fields, and fine equipment to work upon.

Mr. Lambert: To have all their eggs in one basket.

Hon. P. Collier: Yes, broad acres, millions of them.

Mr. PIESSE: It is not so with Englishmen. Returned soldiers tell us that in England, and particularly in France, they saw farmers doing well on 20 acres, and in Ireland on as little as 10 acres. It would be wise to encourage as much immigration of the right sort as we can absorb, and to settle the immigrants in the South-West. The problem facing this country is our immense,

unsettled South-West. It is a scandal that, intelligent as we are and capable as our experts are, we have been unable to settle the South-West. The stumbling block, no doubt, is the clearing; but that can be overcome. The conditions of our land legislation, which are utterly inapplicable to the South-West, should be amended. I do hope that the Minister for Lands, when he decides to open up the South-West, will hurry along the new railways which are proposed, and that when those railways come before this House hon. members will be seized with the absolute necessity for further railway construction to enable us to settle on the land those men who are so anxious to take up farming.

Mr. Lambert: I presume that defines your attitude on the Esperance Railway?

Mr. PIESSE: In the interests of the Esperance settlers themselves I say that the construction of the Esperance Railway should be deferred, even indefinitely deferred.

Mr. Lambert: We will not vote for one railway in this State until the Esperance line is built.

Mr. PIESSE: In the interests of the country the House ought to annul that resolution relative to the Esperance railway, and build agricultural lines—

Hon. P. Collier: In your constituency.

Mr. PIESSE: No; in the Avon constituency.

Hon. P. Collier: That is next door to you.

Mr. PIESSE: I have for years advocated the construction of the Ucarty-Yorkrakine-North Banded railway. I hope I shall have the pleasure soon of taking a train load of members through the agricultural districts. The leader of the Opposition once travelled through my district, and, notwithstanding that his vision was limited to three or four miles on each side of the railway, the area under cultivation staggered him. That journey considerably enlightened the hon. gentleman, and I hope he will speedily come to the district again and be further convinced. I wish to congratulate the member for Canning (Mr. Robinson) on the interesting and instructive speech he gave the House this afternoon. Undoubtedly, that gentleman has rendered good service to the State as Minister for Industries, giving encouragement to those desirous of investing capital in the establishment of secondary industries here. His speech this afternoon was extremely valuable. I regret that the hon. member has not been given more credit for the work he has done. I hope that, like the Under Secretary for Lands, hon. members and also the Managing Trustees of the Agricultural Bank will have their eyes opened at no distant date as to the capabilities and possibilities of our great inland areas.

On motion by Mr. Troy debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.8 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 19th August, 1919.

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

QUESTION—INFLUENZA, TRAVELLING PERMITS.

Hon. R. J. LYNN (for Hon. V. Hamersley) asked the Minister for Education: Has the time not arrived when the policy of permits to leave the city for the country should be abandoned?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: The regulations regarding permits were cancelled on Thursday last.

QUESTION—TRAMWAYS, INDUSTRIAL AGREEMENT.

Hon. J. E. DODD asked the Minister for Education: 1, Whether, under the last agreement made between the Government and the tramway employees' union, provision was made for the appointment of a reference board or committee, representative of both parties, to advise on matters concerning the working of the tramways? 2, Has the committee been appointed? 3, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, No. 2 and 3, See No. 1.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION (Hon. H. P. Colebatch—East): In regard to the question raised by Mr. Sanderson, on Thursday last, I should like to explain that it was purely an inadvertence that those balance sheets were not sent along to this House at the same time as they were sent to another place.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the 14th August.

Hon. H. STEWART (South-East): I desire to express regret at the loss we have sustained by the death of the late President. I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your elevation to the Presidency, a position for which you are eminently fitted. Also I wish to welcome Dr. Saw after his war service in defence of this country. I am glad of the opportunity of extending a welcome to Mr. Pantou, and I feel sure that he will