

wanted to assist the prospector, and I want to assist him now just as much. I would give him all the assistance in reason, but you get people asking for unreasonable things. The agricultural industry and the mining industry should go hand in hand; there is plenty of scope for both industries.

On motion by the Colonial Secretary, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 8.50 p.m.

Legislative Assembly, Wednesday, 3rd August, 1910.

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

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE.

Mr. J. B. Holman (Murchison) took and subscribed the Oath of Allegiance to His Majesty King George V.

LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION.

Mr. S. ADDAN (Ivanhoe): With the permission of the House I desire to announce that, by resolution of the party sitting on this side of the House, I have now the honour of occupying the posi-

tion of leader of the Opposition. I trust that I will recognise the responsibilities of the position due not only to members on this side of the House but also to those sitting opposite, and that I will conduct myself in a manner to my credit and to the credit of the party who have done me the high honour of appointing me to the position.

The PREMIER (Sir Newton J. Moore): May I be permitted to offer my sincere congratulations to the member for Ivanhoe on the distinguished position to which he has been elected. I feel sure that he will continue to observe those high traditions of the office which by the member for Brown Hill have been carried out in a manner that commands respect from both sides of the House. The announcement of the resignation of the member for Brown Hill, while to be regretted, was not altogether unexpected, and I feel sure that I am voicing the opinion of every member of the House when I say that I trust the respite from the active duties and worries entailed on the leader of a party will result in his being completely restored to the best of health. During the time the member for Brown Hill has been leader of the Opposition I think I may say that although we have striven mightily in the House, we have always been able to meet as friends after the House has adjourned; and I am particularly gratified that, after five years of sitting opposite to each other, the same good feeling prevails between us as obtained when first he congratulated me on my being made a Minister. I offer every congratulation to the member for Ivanhoe, and I feel sure that in every way he will uphold the dignity of the position to which he has been elected by the members of his party.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the Premier:—1, Report of the Government Labour Bureau to 30th June, 1910. 2, Goldfields Water Supply Administration—Report of specialists on the corrosion of the steel main. 3, Goldfields Water Supply Administration

—Report of the departmental board on the corrosion of pipes. 4, By-laws passed by the Kimberley Goldfields Road Board. 5, Commonage by-laws passed by the West Kimberley Roads Board. 6, By-laws passed by the Armadale-Kelmscott Roads Board.

QUESTION—STIRLING ESTATE.

Mr. HAYWARD asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has the Minister received a report from the Advisory Board in connection with the Stirling Estate? 2, If so, will the Minister please inform the House what his intentions are in regard to the estate?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes. 2, I propose to give effect to the recommendation of the board in respect to the reduction of prices of some of the lots, by placing a sum on the Estimates each year to recoup the Agricultural Land Purchase Account to the extent of the difference between the instalments of the purchase money payable under the original prices and those that will be payable under the reduced prices.

QUESTION — RAILWAY ADVISORY BOARD'S REPORTS.

Mr. MONGER asked the Premier: When is it the intention of the Government to place upon the Table of the House the reports of the Advisory Board as regards the Wickepin Railway Extension and the Quairading Railway Extension?

The PREMIER replied: The information will be made available as soon as possible after the reports have been received and considered.

QUESTION — RAILWAY WORKSHOPS ARBITRATION AWARDS.

Mr. GILL asked the Minister for Railways: 1, Is he aware that the Railway Department refuse to pay painters (casual hands) the extra one shilling per day outside the 20-mile radius, as laid down by the Arbitration Court? 2, Is he aware that the department have about 30 men employed at the Midland Junction workshops doing painters' work at 8s. per

day which the Arbitration Court ruled should be paid for at 10s. per day? 3, Will the Minister see that the award is enforced in the Railway Department in the future? 4, Is it a fact that the Railway Department have been cited to appear before the Arbitration Court for a breach of the award in connection with the Amalgamated Engineers?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, Painters are included in the industrial agreement made with the W.A. Amalgamated Society of Railway Employees' Union of Workers under the Arbitration Act, in which it is provided that the wages of the casual hands shall be regulated by the head of the branch concerned. The minimum rate provided for painters in the agreement is 9s. 6d., while casuals are paid a minimum of 10s. 2, There are a number of labourers employed under the foreman painter at the Midland Junction Workshops receiving 8s. per day who are engaged in painting repaired wagons (which work is regarded as the least skilled in the shops) cleaning grease and dirt from locomotives, and cleaning and preparing work for painters in the car shop, etc. This practice applies on all railways. 3, It is not considered that the award applies to the Railway Department. 4, Notice has been received that the department is to be cited before the Arbitration Court by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers for alleged breach of the industrial agreement.

QUESTION — ESPERANCE DISTRICT, LANDS WITHIN GOLDFIELDS.

Mr. HUDSON asked the Minister for Lands: 1, Has Mr. C. W. Nener's application for land North of Esperance been refused on the grounds that it is within the boundaries of the Dundas Goldfields? 2, If so, will the Minister arrange with the Mines Department to have the land in this locality inspected as is now done in other districts? 3, As land required for agricultural purposes is granted in the Geraldton land district subject to the consent of the Mines Department, will

similar consideration be given to selectors who require land between Esperance and Norseman? 4, If not, why not?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, Yes; but he has since been granted \$40 acres outside the goldfield. 2, It is not deemed advisable to alienate rural lands within goldfields, but such lands are available for selection under Miners' Homestead Lease conditions. 3, The land referred to in the Geraldton land district is the Northampton mining district, and the conditions are different to those on the goldfields. 4, Answered by No. 3.

QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL BANK, ADVANCES ON MACHINERY.

Mr. BATH asked the Minister for Agriculture: 1, What action has been taken to give effect to the third paragraph of subsection (d) of Section 28 of "The Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Act, 1909"? 2, What sum of money has been lent by the Agricultural Bank under subsection (d) of Section 28 of "The Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Act, 1909"?

The MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE replied: 1, The provisions of the Act have been brought under the notice of manufacturers, and advances have been made for the purchase of locally-manufactured machinery on approved securities. 2, Approved, £1,100. Advanced, £569 17s. 6d.

QUESTION—EDUCATION ENDOWMENT LANDS.

Mr. BATH asked the Minister for Education: What area of land has been set apart for the purpose of educational endowment under "Public Education Endowment Act, 1909"?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1,878 acres 2 roods 28 perches.

QUESTION—FINANCIAL AGREEMENT LEAFLET.

Mr. COLLIER asked the Premier: 1, Is it a fact that a Cabinet leaflet author-

ised by the Government in support of the "Financial Agreement" at the recent Federal Elections was printed at the Government Printing Office? 2, How many copies were published? 3, Was the Department paid for the work, and if so, what amount? 4, Were Government servants employed distributing this leaflet?

The PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, 55,000. 3, Yes, £24 16s. 4, In one or two country districts I understand some copies were distributed.

QUESTION—PRESIDENT LOUBET LEASE.

Mr. COLLIER asked the Minister for Mines: Why was no action taken to prosecute the person concerned in the fraud on the Mines Department in connection with the President Loubet lease, Davyhurst?

The MINISTER FOR MINES replied: Because the Crown Solicitor, having exhaustively investigated the facts of the case, was unable to advise proceedings be taken.

QUESTION—MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY, TAXATION.

Mr. HEITMANN (for Mr. Troy) asked the Treasurer: What amount of taxation for the year ending June, 1910, was paid by the Midland Railway Company of Western Australia, Limited, under the provisions of the Land and Income Tax Act?

The TREASURER replied: The assessment book for land tax is open to inspection (Section 45), but the assessment books for income tax are not open to inspection (Section 46). So far as assessment for taxation, either of private individuals or companies, may be lawfully disclosed, the information should be obtained in the manner prescribed by the Act, and not made the subject of questions in Parliament. I have already intimated to the hon. member my reply, and have promised to take the necessary steps to secure the information.

QUESTION—INCOME TAX EXEMPTION.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Premier: In view of last year's surplus, is it the intention of the Government to increase the exemption in the income tax?

The PREMIER replied: It is not proposed to do so.

QUESTION—BUSSELTON JETTY.

Mr. O'LOGHLEN asked the Minister for Works: 1, What is the estimated cost of the Busselton jetty? 2, What has been the approximate cost to date? 3, Has a contract been signed by the W.A. Jarrah Sawmills Company to pay to the Government in wharfage dues the sum of £2,000 a year for ten years?

The PREMIER (for the Minister for Works) replied: 1, Jetty and approach, including dredging—£24,107. 2, £11,729. 3, Yes.

QUESTION — FREMANTLE HARBOUR TRUST COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. MURPHY asked the Premier: 1, Are the names of the gentlemen appointed as Commissioners under "The Fremantle Harbour Trust Act, 1902," suggested to the Government before appointment? 2, If so, is the suggestion made by an individual or an organisation? 3, If by an organisation, what constitutes the privilege of suggestion? 4, The names of the organisations (if any) who suggested the present Commissioners? 5, Will the Minister consider the advisability of substituting election by public bodies interested in place of, as at present, Government nomination?

The PREMIER replied: 1, It has been the practice in the past to receive and consider suggestions from representative commercial organisations; but purely as a matter of courtesy to such bodies and to assist the Government in the selection of the best possible men. 2, Answered by No. 1. 3, There is no privilege; see answer to No. 1. 4, Chambers of Commerce and the Chamber of Mines. 5, It is not proposed to alter the existing arrangements, which it is considered adequately safeguard the public interest.

QUESTION—RAILWAY EMPLOYEES AND ACCIDENTS.

Mr. SWAN (without notice) asked the Minister for Railways: Will the return as to accidents to railway employees, which was called for on the 8th December, 1909, be laid on the Table?

The MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: Yes.

BILLS (5)—FIRST READING.

1. General Loan and Inscribed Stock; introduced by the Premier.

2. Health; introduced by the Minister for Mines.

3. Licensing; introduced by the Attorney General.

4. Workers' Compensation Act Amendment; introduced by Mr. Hudson.

5. Tributaries; introduced by Mr. Walker.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.*Third Day.*

Resumed from the previous day.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. Mitchell): I should like first to congratulate my friend opposite on the high position to which he has been elevated, and I am sure he will maintain the dignity of the position of leader of the Opposition which has for so long been ably and well filled, and with credit to this State, by the member for Brown Hill. There is no doubt that the position of leader of the party in opposition is not a very enviable one. I hope it will not always be the lot of the member for Ivanhoe to fill that position, although I trust it will be a considerable time before he gets to this side of the House. The most prominent feature in the Governor's Speech was the reference to the straightening out of the financial position. The result of the year's financial operations which ended in a balance of £210,000 on the right side, must meet with the approval not only of members of this House but of all the people of this State. Ministers are expected to keep down expenditure, and the Government are expected to live within their means. We have endeavoured

voured to do that, and with most gratifying results. It goes without saying that the work of the Government has been made more difficult by the want of funds, but it will be admitted even by members opposite that during the past three or four years we have managed to do much greater things than were done before—although we have had to put up with a falling revenue—and have wound up this year with a credit balance.

Mr. Heitmann: You have not seen the other side of the ledger yet.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The other side will be found equally good. The member for Brown Hill referred to loan expenditure. I will not enter into details concerning this question, for the Treasurer will refer to that aspect of the finances; but, if the interest on the loan indebtedness has increased in the past two years, surely it must be remembered and will be admitted, that the revenue has been increased by the expenditure of those loan moneys. The greater portion of the money spent from loans has been put to good use, and invested in reproductive works, and a great deal of revenue has been derived from the trading concerns—railways, and others. If the earnings are increased, surely it goes without saying that the proportionate cost must also increase. If we spend our borrowed money wisely, surely there can be no objection. Apparently, however, the member for Brown Hill objects to the spending of borrowed money, even on reproductive works. The benefit which has been derived by the people from the expenditure of loan moneys greatly outweighs any loss that might have been occasioned. It may be that some of the money has not been put into reproductive works, but this does not apply to any material extent. Loan expenditure for the purpose of surveys and improving land for settlement is protected. For the first time in the history of Western Australia loan money expended on works which cannot be described as being directly reproductive is protected by annual payments to a Loan Account in order to wipe out the expenditure in 20 years. This of course we collect from our pur-

chasers. That is evidence that we desire to finance fairly, and that loan money spent by the Government should be protected to the full. Is there a person in the State who will say that the loan expenditure in the past has not been wise?

Mr. Heitmann: It has not been wise by any means. What about the £100 on the agricultural dinner?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The expenditure has been wise. If our railways were offered for sale to-day they would fetch far more than the amount of our loan indebtedness.

Mr. Underwood: The old platitude.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I repeat that the railways would fetch far more than our total loan indebtedness. It would be rather interesting to know how my friend the leader of the Opposition would build railways, construct harbours, and provide the money for many of the things which are necessary to develop a new country. Loan moneys have been expended in the past on works such as these, and will have to be expended in the future. The railways which have been built in the agricultural centres have justified the money which has been spent on them. Is there a member here who would not vote for the expenditure of loan moneys on such works? Is there a member who would say it is possible to develop the agricultural areas without such expenditure? I venture to say there is not. Unless these railways are built it will be impossible to develop our lands.

Mr. Bolton: But the whole of the loan expenditure has not been devoted to agriculture.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Practically the whole of our loan moneys have been spent on railways for developmental purposes.

Mr. Bolton: Public works and buildings.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Our position to-day is entirely due to the expenditure of loan money. We could not have built railways from revenue. This expenditure must continue until the country is opened up and until we have a much greater population. It would be

entirely impossible for 280,000 people to contribute sufficient in taxation to meet the whole of the requirements of the Government and to provide all that is necessary to undertake developmental works we are so much in need of. The past year has shown a slight increase in population and I venture to hope that during the coming year there will be a considerably greater increase. The great work of the Premier in London has called attention to Western Australia's broad acres, and to the fact that this State is a great field for enterprise, and it has drawn that attention to Western Australia that could not have been drawn to it by other means, and I hope that the result will be a large addition to our population. It would be entirely impossible to develop this country without a greater population, and the visit of the Premier to England, I feel sure, has made immigration possible. Quite apart from that, the attraction which we now put forward of cheap land with facilities for development should draw population. Members opposite know that the Prime Minister himself proposes some scheme of immigration which will mean the introduction to this State of farmers and farm workers. The year has been a very successful one, and members may be guided by the figures published by the banks doing business in this State. From these figures it will be seen that the liabilities of the banks are much greater than ever they were. The increase during last year was some £750,000, which may be considered very large. The banks are far more liberal at the present time than they ever were before; their interest is lower, and the result has been of great benefit to the State. In the district that I represent there were three banks doing business four years ago, while to-day there are twenty banks all anxious to lend money to the agriculturists and the traders. Four years ago it was much more difficult to obtain money than is the case to-day, and the present position of things must make for rapid development. From one end of the State to the other the same thing applies; the banks are all desirous of lending money. They have all ascertained that according to its productiveness the

land is cheaper in Western Australia than it is in Victoria or South Australia, and the result is that the security is much better, particularly since we have been facing the same markets with wheat and fruits. It is gratifying that they are at last realising that Western Australia is a place wherein to invest their capital. The liberal advances which are now being made by these institutions mean very much to the worker in every occupation in life. It is gratifying that the banks are not only lending money but that they have reduced their interest. The member for Brown Hill referred to my trips into the country. I believe that it is necessary that a Minister should visit the various centres of the State, both agricultural and mining. During the last year I had the opportunity of visiting many goldfields centres as well as districts nearer the coast, and everywhere I was hospitably received, particularly at Kalgoorlie and other goldfields. I propose to visit these places from time to time, because I desire to encourage land settlement among the people who have been on these fields for some years. It goes without saying that when one travels about the country it is necessary to relate what the Government are doing. I doubt whether the member for Brown Hill would expect me to say anything against the Government to which I belong. It is the custom, even amongst members opposite, to speak in commendation of the party to which they belong. I have travelled with the Prime Minister, Mr. Fisher, and I noticed he had a few words to say about the party to which he belonged. Ministers have to justify their existence, and if they did not go into the country the people would not know quite as much about them. The object of Ministers in visiting country centres is to do what they can for the people there. My object in going to the agricultural centres of the State, at the request and often accompanied by some member opposite, is to hear the wants of the people and to endeavour to gain sufficient local knowledge to enable me to make the conditions under which they live a little brighter and a little more prosperous. The work of development cannot be done by the Minister in his

office in Perth. The member for Brown Hill insinuated that the Ministers were not workers. All I can say is that if he wants a holiday he had better not again become Minister for Lands. He once had the honour of occupying the chair I now fill, and his photograph makes a nice addition to the decorations of the office. The hon. member knows well when he says that Ministers in getting about the country are not working, that such is not the case; but I do not know whether it is worth while replying to the criticisms on the Government made by the member for Brown Hill, and particularly on me, as head of the Lands Department. I do not know that I have said anything that would detract from the credit that is due to any of my predecessors. I venture to say I have not. I know that Mr. Throssell, when Minister for Lands, introduced the Agricultural Bank Act, or was responsible for its introduction, and I suppose no other measure has ever been introduced to Parliament that has done so much for land settlement. It would be wrong of me if I did not admit on every occasion that this great work was not mine, but the work of my friend, Mr. Throssell. During my term of office it is perfectly true that I have liberalised the Agricultural Bank Act, and probably its operations may still be extended. The Act to-day provides an opportunity for the worker who has limited means. When the measure was introduced and Mr. Throssell was the Minister for Lands, the goldfields were being developed and attention was almost entirely turned to gold production. We know that it was the development of the goldfields that made agriculture possible, and when that development ceased to be as active as it was in the early days, we realised that it was our opportunity to develop the broad acres of this State and we seized that opportunity. Surely there is nothing to hinder me from saying that it is due to the present Government that agriculture has been made a prominent feature in Western Australian development. That was our opportunity just as it was Sir John Forrest's opportunity to develop the goldfields. I hope it will be realised by members that whoever occupies the posi-

tion of Minister for Lands will need to know something of the people who work the lands of the State. During the past four or five years extensive settlement has taken place, and it is necessary for the Minister to see what the people are doing in the various new centres. The work of the past year connected with land settlement has been more active than has ever been the case before, and that is probably due to the fact that we have changed our methods of selling. Hon. members know that land is now classified and prepared for settlement after it has been surveyed. The system of survey before selection applies almost altogether to Western Australia, and it has been most satisfactory. Under the system which obtains we survey land before it is thrown open for selection, we have it classified, and we colour the plans so that every applicant may know what he is getting. We tell him that so many acres are of first class, so many acres are of second class, and there is sometimes some of third class. We not only do this, but we also make roads through these areas, put down dams every few miles, and we set against each block the fact that the Agricultural Bank will or will not advance. This method is reasonable and right and I think it is what might be expected of the Lands Department, where land settlement is for the moment the first thing in the mind of the people. It is due to these improved methods that we have had the rush for land which has set in. During the past eight or nine months we have been selling only first-class land; but notwithstanding this, our selections for the year were 1,891,000 acres. We sold 1,414,000 acres under conditional purchase conditions, and no less than 238,000 acres were given away as free homestead farms. Pastoral lands have also been taken up during the year to the extent of 10,668,000 acres. There has been activity on every hand. During the past year an altogether new system has been introduced in connection with land settlement, but the results have been satisfactory, notwithstanding the fact that there are some disappointed applicants. This is particularly the case where there were several applicants for one holding

and they had to appear before the Land Board.

Mr. Holman: It is a marvellous thing how the strangers always get the preference.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We sold 1,414,000 acres during the year, but we surveyed 2,600,000 acres, so it ought to be possible for the people who want land to secure it. There are now something like 700,000 acres of land surveyed and thrown open for selection.

Mr. Holman: Where is it?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: If the hon. member will come to my office I will be only too pleased to show him.

Mr. Holman: I went there with you and for three hours you could not show me a block.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member knows that I did show him land open for selection, and I will do it again if he comes to my office.

Mr. Holman: I am sick of your office.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: We are always exceedingly pleased to see the hon. member at the Lands Office. Last year we surveyed 800,000 acres roughly more than was sold, so we have a considerable area of land surveyed that has not been sold, and a good deal of this area is open for selection and may be taken up at any moment, while a great many of these blocks have Agricultural Bank advances fixed against them. The amount of land surveyed during this last year constitutes a record for land survey in Western Australia. During 1909 in New South Wales 2,000,000 acres were surveyed, and during 1908 in Queensland 2,210,000 acres, against 2,600,000 acres in Western Australia last year. I do not know what they did in the other States for the past year, but I think when we get the figures it will be found that Western Australia has done more in this direction than has been done by any other State of the Commonwealth. We have 60 surveyors and 30 assistants employed in cutting up land, and it is hoped that we will have sufficient land to satisfy the requirements of all applicants in the State and those people to whom the hon.

member referred as having recently arrived. It will be rather interesting to know to whom the hon. member refers when he says that preference is given to newcomers. It is not the case. Hon. members know that the Land Board appointed under the Act are not controlled or influenced by the Minister.

Mr. Holman: I know their decisions have been upset two or three times.

Mr. Hudson: And the first board got the sack.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would ask the hon. member to make his speech when his opportunity comes.

Mr. Holman: Then make correct statements.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Every statement I make is correct, and I am prepared to lay on the Table any papers the hon. member may require in connection with land applications and appeals. At any rate we are doing this work for the people. We are preparing the land in a way that was never dreamt of at the time my friend was a Minister. We offer the people land already surveyed and showing what advance will be made against it. They may have these blocks now. To-morrow morning the hon. member can secure a farm if he desires one.

Mr. Hudson: It is a fair interjection to ask why you dismissed the first Land Board?

Mr. Holman: And why you upset the decision of the second one?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The work of surveying this 2,610,000 acres has been carried out at a cost of only £2,600 more than was spent during the previous year when only 1,770,000 acres were dealt with. Loan moneys are protected by the Lands Department. It has been said time after time that surveys are made from loan moneys. That is perfectly true. We passed an Act in the House last session which gave me the power to use loan moneys for this purpose, but the Act also provided that these moneys were to be returned during the term of the lease. A lease extends over 20 years, and over the 20 years we return to loan funds the money we take from

loan to prepare the land for settlement, and members know that the price fixed on the land is now inclusive of the cost of survey and that payment for the first three years is never to exceed 6d. per acre per annum. An interesting experiment in land clearing has been made during the year at Denmark, in the South, and at Ludlow, in the Busselton district, for pine plantation. At the latter place a system of clearing with a traction engine was suggested by Professor Lowrie and by Mr. Scott, the Irrigation Engineer, and has been very successful. We called for tenders for clearing at Ludlow and the price asked was £13 per acre, but by means of the traction engine and day labour I think the price will be something under half that amount.

Mr. George: They are doing good work there, but it is not a proper engine.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS : While on the subject of land clearing, I may say that in the development of the South-West it is necessary that some work of this nature should be done. Our wheat lands are very readily taken up and easily improved by the lessee, but settling on land in the wetter portion of the State—the heavier timbered land—is a more difficult problem, and if settlement is to take place there we will need to clear the land in a wholesale fashion ahead of the settler. So I hope this year to face a scheme which will mean the settlement of dairy farmers and potato growers in the South-West. I realise, as members must, that it is impossible to settle men there in the midst of the heavy forest unless the land has first been cleared for them, and I hope the scheme when submitted to the House will meet with the approval of the House and that it will enable the department to face the work of clearing farms for settlement. This work is not so necessary of course in the wheat belt, but it is very necessary where timber is heavy. Dairying has not advanced as we expected it would in this State, and this is simply due to the fact that our dairy lands are so heavily timbered. The land needs to be cleared and drained and the Government will have to face some system of settlement there

under the Agricultural Bank Act, perhaps with some special assistance from the department, something on the lines of the Yorkkrakine scheme, which will bring about the establishment of many successful dairy farmers in the South-West. During the past year the Agricultural Bank officers have had a very active time. They are responsible for the clearing of the greater portion of the land—at any rate more than half of the land prepared for settlement in Western Australia. Members will readily understand that with the new system of survey before selection and inspection by the Agricultural Bank, the work of the bank is tremendously increased, and that it will be necessary to increase the capital of the bank in order that this business may be carried on and so that the work of clearing and preparing the land may be advanced. A new feature in connection with the bank business has come into existence during the past twelve months. Other banks have been opening up branches through the country districts and have had to seek for business, and as a result £50,000 which was advanced by the Agricultural Bank to some of the 7,000 people who have had dealings with the bank has been repaid. It is not altogether a bad thing—in fact it is a good sign, because it shows that the value of our lands has at last been realised, though it may be questionable whether the transfer of the business from the Agricultural Bank to private banks will be good for the selectors. However, we have been paid off this amount during the past twelve months. The bank has been carefully managed, and I think when the report is presented to Parliament it will be found that enormous good has been brought to Western Australia by the expenditure of the money under this institution. It has done more probably to make the country prosperous than anything else, and without costing the Treasurer a penny, or without any loss; indeed, on the other hand, I think we will be able to show a very substantial result on the operations of the Bank. It will be necessary to increase the capital of the Bank because we have

embarked on a system of State aid to agriculturists which will have to be continued. I would like the system to be applied more liberally and generally to the South-West, because it is down there we will be able to settle a large population. While in the wheat area a man needs a thousand acres, in the South-West he can make a very good living on 160 acres and probably on 100 acres.

Mr. Jacoby: On less.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, it can be done on very much less. The work done by the Agricultural Bank is of course responsible for the export of produce. During the past twelve months something like half a million sovereigns have been brought into Western Australia for wheat and fruit exported. The feature of the year's export has probably been the export of grapes from Mr. Barrett-Lennard's place and through the member for Swan. It will probably surprise members to read the success that attended the shipment of grapes to London, but I am led to understand there is room for tremendous development in this direction. It is hardly possible that Western Australia can grow sufficient grapes to supply the demand of the London market, and the demand there is for grapes, not at a low price but at a handsome price that leaves a profit. Apples also have done remarkably well, and in this direction there is room for unlimited development. Fruit is grown over nearly ten million acres in Western Australia. I do not mean that the whole area is suitable, but the climate is right and a great deal of the soil is right, and during the coming year we hope to do something to further the industry. We have appointed an expert whose business it will be to assist the producer not only to produce but to market. It is a very gratifying thing indeed to find that our fruit is recognised in the London market as the best possible that can be grown. It is very gratifying to me, as an old Western Australian, after listening to the "croaking" that went on for many years, to find that at last the value of our land for fruit production is fully appreciated. Our export

of wheat did not reach the expectations, because the prices fell and the wheat was retained within the State, but the production amounted to nearly six million bushels, and last year 680,000 acres were under crop. This year it is anticipated 900,000 acres will be under crop, and there will be a correspondingly large increase in the production of wheat, because the present season promises to be a very good one indeed. If the promise of this season is realised, with 900,000 acres under crop we shall turn out at least eight and a-half million bushels of wheat, and the export of the surplus, after providing for our own requirements, will provide a good market for our own people in this State. When we remember what can be done by 500,000 sovereigns brought into Western Australia through the export of wheat, we shall be able to appreciate more fully what this increase will mean, and it will I hope bring in a million of money. This money which comes back to Western Australia is likely to be retained here, because the producer, unlike the exporter, does bring the money into the State and circulates it in the district in which he lives, and half a million of sovereigns put into circulation will provide a large amount of employment to the people here. The trouble which we have to face is the want of labour on the farms; for the purpose of development, for the purpose of clearing and fencing, and doing other work of a developmental character. There is also the want of skilled farm hands, and this trouble is keenly felt. I do not know how we shall get on when the harvest comes. Possibly there will be found great difficulty in supplying the wants of the producer. I think we can regard the agricultural development of the past year as extremely satisfactory. It has been made possible by the pushing out of the railways in many directions, and this work will, as members see, be continued, but still there is something else to do to enable our producers to reach the markets of the world. I refer to the freezing and export works which are to be erected at Fremantle and at Wyndham.

Mr. Hudson: And at Albany.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: Yes, and at Albany.

Mr. Heitmann: You did not tell us about the export of lambs.

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: The export of lambs will be made possible by the erection of abattoirs and freezing works at Fremantle. The export of lambs was prevented by the want of facilities, and the Government have determined that these facilities shall be supplied. We propose to erect the facilities at Fremantle. The plant will be erected at once, and I expect tenders will be called within a few weeks. The works at Wyndham are to be erected by the Government, and probably will be run by the Government. The cost of the work will have to be met by the pastoralists. It is proposed that there shall be a small stock tax to cover loss in any possible direction. In this way we guarantee the pastoralists a market, and we guarantee the Treasurer that he shall not contribute any portion of the cost of running the works. The cattle of West Kimberley have increased; the cattle of the Northern territory require an outlet, and we propose to find that in the Kimberley freezing works. The herds of this State now total 850,000 head, and the number of sheep have increased to a total of five millions. It will be impossible for the people of Western Australia to consume 60,000 beasts and half a million of sheep, and we propose therefore that facilities shall be provided in order that the exporters will be in the exact position the producers are in the East. We realise that unless the farmer can have a market for his produce, he will be placed at a great disadvantage. We realise that the producer must be given an opportunity of marketing his stuff, and it is impossible to think that our own people can provide that market for years to come. Therefore the Government have decided to erect the works. I hope to develop the dépôt at Fremantle on the same lines as the Government dépôt is run in Adelaide. The hon. member opposite said something about the price of meat in Western Australia. At Kalgoorlie we have erected abattoirs. When

we erected those abattoirs there were only six butchers killing at Kalgoorlie; there are 16 butchers there to-day. Practically over the whole year the wholesale price of our meat on the hoof is fairly cheap. If any member is enterprising, or if any enterprising person cares to establish a butchering business at Kalgoorlie, he will find that the abattoirs are up to date, and that he can start business with much less capital than before the abattoirs were erected. We propose to erect abattoirs at Fremantle, and these will provide opportunities for all those who desire to enter on a business to supply the metropolitan area. Meat can always be bought cheaply, bullocks and sheep, and the meat should be distributed cheaply, and I believe it can be through the public abattoirs rather than under the present system. People in the metropolitan area must benefit by the erection of these works. It is not possible, and never would be possible, for the producer to go on holding stock indefinitely, because wages have to be paid, and wages are better to-day than they have been, because we export. I do not wish to labour this question further than to say that the works at Fremantle will, I hope, be erected in a very short time. When I am quite certain members will realise the advantages the establishment of public abattoirs gives to the people here.

Mr. Taylor: What will be the cost?

The MINISTER FOR LANDS: They will cost £45,000 to start with. The coming year is chock-full of possibilities, and, if members will endorse the proposals placed before them, opportunity will be brought to everybody in the State. We claim that our progressive and developmental policy has brought opportunities to many people. Many people who four years ago never expected to be independent are to-day independent, and this progress has resulted in higher wages being paid than have obtained in the past. More work is provided for the people than ever before. If members who are enterprising will employ men they will find that wages were never better. The bulk of the people in the agricultural districts are paid better

wages than they ever were before, and I hope high wages always will be paid, because there is no prosperity unless the whole of the people in the State are receiving good wages. The work of the coming year is indicated in the Governor's Speech, and will be submitted to members, and if this policy is endorsed we can proceed along the lines which have been successful. We must have an immigration policy of greater dimensions than we have had up to now. If development is to be pushed on with we must have more people. I do not wish people to come here and displace anyone who is already here, but without more people we can have no real development. I am sorry the member for Brown Hill is not here, because I should have liked to say a word or two in connection with the business to which he has referred, but as he is not here I will let him off.

Mr. PRICE (Albany: I believe it is usual for members to express regret for taking up the time of the House in speaking to the Address-in-Reply. However, I can assure members that I have no apology to make, nor do I intend in any way to curtail my remarks, because I believe this is the time when one has an opportunity if he so desires of expressing himself freely on the actions of those who control the affairs of the country since last we met in this Chamber. And let me at once say, I regret that Ministers saw fit to grant us such a lengthy holiday; I regret it for the reason that it seems to me the holiday which we were given was more in the interests of the Ministers themselves than in the interests of the country. I have heard it stated, both inside and outside this Chamber, that Ministers during the recess were not to be found in their places or in their departments, and that is quite true. Just here, I regret the Premier is not in the Chamber at the present time. I would like to take this opportunity of complimenting or congratulating that hon. gentleman on the distinction which has been conferred upon him at the expense of the State of Western Australia.

Mr. Taylor: It has cost too much.

Mr. PRICE: Well, I am not going to deal with the question of cost, but I do desire to take this opportunity of referring to some portion of the cost of that distinction which has been conferred on the Premier, and I desire to refer straight away to the cost of the cables to the State during the time the Premier was away in Great Britain, cables which were sent not in the interests of the people of the State, but in the interests of a certain political party that was fighting for supremacy in this State. I refer to certain cables sent out to the State in the interests of what was known as the Fusion party, and I say the Premier in using his high office to send cables to the State at the expense of the country. I contend, was usurping power, and was conduct which no Minister has a right to do. The Premier's personal opinion regarding any political party should not be foisted upon the people of the country at the expense of the people of the country.

A Member: It was a prostitution of his powers.

Mr. PRICE: I do not wish to refer to it in such pointed language, but I do desire to say that certain actions of the Ministry during the last Federal elections were such that should bring upon them the contempt of the citizens of this State. I have here in my hand a leaflet upon which certain questions have been asked in the House. This leaflet is published ostensibly as an official document of the Government of Western Australia, whatever may be said to the contrary. It bears the imprint "By Authority; Fred. Wm. Simpson, Government Printer, Perth." I am one of those who strongly supported a contentious political proposal, namely, the Financial Agreement. I favoured that, but little did I think Ministers of the Crown in this State would take that Financial Agreement as a means of assisting a certain political party to return to power. And just here let me point out that I mentioned that Ministers were not to be found in their departments during recess. Almost immediately after the House went into recess we found the Minister for Works, the Attorney General and Minis-

ter for Education, the Minister for Lands and Agriculture, the Minister for Mines and Railways, and in fact the whole lot of them, with the exception of the Premier, who was in London cabling out to the State on the matter—we found the whole of these Ministers touring about the country, some of them in the State motor-car, addressing meetings. What for? They tell us it was on behalf of the Financial Agreement; but they always took care to say "Vote for the Financial Agreement and the Fusion candidates." If members on this side of the House were guilty of such prostitution of their powers, they would deserve to be treated with contempt and contumely by every resident of the State. I would be very sorry to ally myself to any party the members of which were guilty of such acts and such misconstruction of their duties as Ministers of the Crown. However, I find in regard to this leaflet that not only was it printed at the Government Printing Office—which, I now take it, is a jobbing office; because if Ministers have the right to get party political literature printed at the Government Printing Office then I say that another party should have the same right, and the office should be uncompromisingly turned into what the Ministers have already made it, namely, a jobbing office for the dissemination of political literature—not only that, but we find that in addition to the Government Printing Office the police of the State were engaged by Ministers as electioneering literature distributors. The member for Murray lies back with that smile upon his countenance, but before I have finished I will have something to say to that honourable member. The police were called upon to distribute these leaflets, and where the police did not carry out that duty the school teachers were required to do it. Is the Attorney General aware of the fact that a bundle of these leaflets were delivered at the Albany school for the teachers to give to the children to take home? Is he aware that my child, going to that school, was instructed to take one of these leaflets home?

Mr. Taylor: No wonder you are angry about it.

Mr. PRICE: Would the Attorney General like me to use his children for the purpose of distributing political literature on behalf of my political friends? That is what he, by virtue of his authority over the school teachers, has been doing with my children. I protest against it. If Ministers are going to carry on in that way it is high time their actions were made generally known. An hon. member asked why it was Ministers did not have their printing done at a private establishment? Probably because when they were getting it done at a Government office the people would take more notice of it. I would not for one moment suggest that they got it done cheaper: because, of course, they would not fail to pay full union prices. I do not intend to go any further into this matter. I desired to enter my protest against the action of the Ministers in regard to this leaflet, and I have done so, and I sincerely hope that on no future occasion will Ministers attempt to use their power in such direction, even though it were to save the political skin of the gentleman who has been termed the ex-Emperor of the State. There is one other matter to which I desire to refer very briefly, namely, the action of the Ministers during recess in taking it upon themselves to appoint a railway board. During last session a motion was moved by the member for Brown Hill to the effect that a select committee should be appointed to report upon certain railway proposals. On that occasion the Premier spoke very strongly against the motion. I find on looking up the division-list that every one of the Ministers voted against the proposal. In other words the name of every Minister is here set down as voting against the motion for appointing a committee to report upon railway proposals; yet no sooner does the House go into recess than Ministers at once proceed to the appointment of what they please to term a railway board. It means simply that Ministers have taken it upon themselves to become a law unto themselves.

Mr. Angwin: In order to carry out good advice.

Mr. PRICE: I am surprised at the interjection. The reason why Ministers

appointed that board must be palpable even to the member for East Fremantle. They appointed the board to save their own political hides. They wanted to shelter themselves behind some body, or some persons who would not be amenable to the House. Why? Because they intended to refuse to do something which they believed a majority of the House would call upon them to do. I say at once that in my opinion the railway board which was appointed by Ministers immediately this House went into recess was appointed for no other purpose than to retard, and, if possible, condemn the construction of a railway to the Port of Esperance. That is why that Board was appointed.

Mr. Hudson: Ministers declared themselves before ever the board investigated.

Mr. PRICE: They have declared themselves all over the country. I do not want to touch upon the historical trip of the Minister for Lands. It will be within the memory of honourable members that a trip through the country over which the Esperance railway is proposed to be laid was made by this railway board, accompanied by the Minister for Lands.

Mr. Holman: Did they go as the Minister's guests?

Mr. PRICE: Honourable members must not be too inquisitive. I repeat that in my opinion the railway board was appointed for no other purpose than to condemn the proposed Esperance railway. If Ministers believed that it was necessary to have a railway board why did we find that every one of them voted against the motion of the member for Brown Hill last session? What has since happened to bring about this unanimous change of opinion immediately the House went into recess? Can it be that the agitation worked up in regard to the Esperance railway had any influence upon them? In my opinion it had, and this board was the result. However, I do not intend to further stress that matter. I desire now somewhat briefly to refer to a subject largely dealt with by the Minister for Lands when addressing the House this evening. And let me at once say that I am very much disappointed

with that honourable gentleman's utterances. I thought we should have heard something definite and explicit as to the whole of these Ministers touring about intention of the Minister in regard to his department. I had almost brought myself to believe that the progress and prosperity and future development of the country wholly and solely depended upon the Minister who is at present in charge of the Department for Lands and Agriculture.

Mr. George: And do they not?

Mr. PRICE: Do they not! After listening very carefully to his speech this evening I failed to discern any suggestion even, by the Minister in regard to the future development of the State. All that he told us was as to what had been done. Now I am going to refer to one thing that was done during last session of Parliament, as showing how even the Minister for Lands—and I regret that he is not in his place; it is, I believe, quite a usual thing to launch a bolt and then get out of the Chamber—however, I desire to draw attention to a measure which was passed through the House last session, and which contained at least one clause, the operation of which must have been well known to the Minister for Lands, but which was so clouded over and so wrapt up that honourable members were hardly likely to recognise its import until the Act came into operation. The Bill to which I refer was for an Act to further amend the Transfer of Land Act. It was put through this House last session and among other sections of the Land Act affected by the amending Bill was section 80. That section is really one to protect homestead farms from being assigned or seized or in any way dealt with until notification is received that the Crown grant can issue. As a matter of fact the section protects the individual holding the homestead farm in so far that the farm cannot be taken from him until the issue of the Crown grant. Under the amending Bill to which I refer the effect of section 80 of the Land Act was expressly nullified, with the result that whereas until the 1st May last the owner of a homestead farm could only mortgage it to the

Agricultural Bank, at the present time the associated banks are prepared to take mortgages on homestead farms immediately they are taken up and the permit to occupy is granted to the holder. I regret exceedingly that the Minister for Lands should have brought in to this House a Bill containing a clause such as the one I have referred to without pointing out to members the effect such a clause would have on the settlement of land in this State. It means this: if the associated banks can accept a mortgage over a homestead farm a debt collector can step in, the farm can be seized and sold, and that is a position which the liberal land laws of this State protected the settler against under the old regime. This has been deliberately altered by the action of the Minister himself. The Minister for Lands is conversant with banking usages and has a thorough knowledge of the Transfer of Land Act, and he must have realised when he brought the Bill in he was taking an action which must eventually lead to many holders of homestead farms losing their properties. After all, if the holders of farms are prepared from mortgaging those farms to the associated banks and are only allowed to mortgage to the Agricultural Bank they are protected against that reckless expenditure which unfortunately too many farmers are apt to indulge in. I say that with a full recognition of the importance of the statement. Farmers are prompted to spend money in the purchase of agricultural machinery by travellers, although there is no doubt the expenditure would not have been indulged in were the farmers prevented from mortgaging their holdings. In this connection I may point out that in New Zealand a measure was introduced recently to protect the homes of the settlers in that State, homes up to the value of £1,000. Despite the fact that the Minister for Lands has been instrumental in abolishing the protection hitherto existing over homestead farms, I hope the day is not far distant when we shall have here a measure similar to that introduced into New Zealand whereby farms of all kinds up to the value of £1,000 may be protected for the wives of settlers. In

the course of his speech this afternoon the Minister for Lands challenged members on this side on the question of the land available for settlement. I will not say he gave members the lie direct, but he said that a large area of land was available for settlers in this State. Let me assure members that within the last two months while large advertisements were appearing in the daily papers stating that so many thousand acres of land were available in certain specified districts, applicants for land were being taken by responsible officers of the Lands Department or the Agricultural Department and introduced to the manager of Dalgety & Co. They were told there was no land available through the medium of the Lands Department, but if they wanted land they might be able to procure it from that firm.

Mr. Monger: Is the hon. member perfectly in order in referring to Messrs. Dalgety & Co.?

Mr. PRICE: Have Dalgety & Co., members of the boodling brigade, the supreme royal right of kings that I must not refer to them? Who are they, what are they? I am surprised at any member asking if I am in order in referring to Dalgety & Co. I am pointing out that the firm received special privileges at the hands of civil servants who actually took along desirable immigrants and introduced them to the manager so that they might secure land. That is a statement. I am prepared to prove.

Mr. Monger: I would like like to see the proof.

Mr. PRICE: I can assure the hon. member I can prove it. Moreover, I am prepared to prove a further statement, that within the last three months some sixteen intending settlers came to this State from Queensland but twelve of them returned because they could not get land here in accordance with the advertisements scattered throughout the Commonwealth by the Western Australian Government.

Mr. Heitmann: That is not an isolated case.

Mr. PRICE: It is all very well for the Minister to say that certain land is avail-

able. I admit that a certain area is available, but if one goes to the Department and tries to secure it, he finds the land is of no use for the purposes required, he will be told it is a poison lease, a pastoral lease or that some application is in for it. On the latter question I will have something further to say before I close my remarks.

Mr. George: Go on.

Mr. PRICE: I can assure the member I am going on. I am like him in that when I have something to say I intend to say it. The position I wish to make clear to this House is that the Government are continually publishing advertisements in the Press in this and the other States and the old country pointing out that land is available in this State, while at the very time the advertisements appear, desirable settlers who pay their way into the State apply to the Department and fail to get any land suitable for agricultural purposes.

Mr. George: That wants inquiring into.

Mr. PRICE: It does. It is a statement of an absolute fact. Moreover, one man who was taken to the manager of Dalgety & Co. and introduced to him can be procured at any time. That man paid his fare here from Queensland, he put in for three different lots of land and appeared before the Land Board, he is a man with a family and has been on the land all his life, but he was unable to obtain a suitable block from the Department. He was one of the applicants for some land thrown open along the Midland line in which certain members of this side of the House took an interest.

Mr. Heitmann: They are sorry for it now.

Mr. PRICE: I believe they are for they found it is not what they expected. This man put in for three lots, was referred to the Board and then an officer of the Agricultural Department—a responsible officer—told him there was no land available and therefore took him along and introduced him to Dalgety & Co. This is not an isolated case.

Mr. Heitmann: Where is the Minister of this Department?

Mr. PRICE: I do not know where he is, probably outside the

Chamber wondering how he is going to answer such a charge. The charge is definite enough and it is high time these facts were brought to the knowledge of the public when we find the Premier has been spending months in England assuring people there that there is ample land available here. The land is here but its administration at the present time is a curse and a disgrace to the people of the State. There is the trouble. The trouble lies only with the administration. I am one of those who when the Treasurer brought down his Loan Bill and pointed out that he required certain money for immigration purposes, spoke strongly in favour of it and said I regretted the Government had not made the sum three times as great, provided always that they introduced into the State desirable settlers. I certainly would not have taken that stand had I been aware, or even suspected, that people would be brought into this State and find on arrival that they were unable to secure land. Possibly the Minister for Lands may reply that the reason no land is available is that it has been decided that land should be surveyed before selection. That, however, cannot alter the fact that the advertisement pointed out that certain land was available.

Mr. George: And was it surveyed before advertising?

Mr. PRICE: I presume it would be surveyed or what right would the Minister have to issue advertisements stating that such land was available. He would have no right whatever to state that certain lands were available if they had not been first surveyed; that is if he has been carrying out in its entirety the policy of only allowing lands to be selected after survey. I say if he has been carrying that out, I do not say definitely whether he has done so or not.

(Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.)

Mr. PRICE: When the House adjourned for tea, I was referring to the fact that the present Government had been guilty of publishing advertisements of a misleading character. The full import of such action can only be gathered when we take into consideration the fact

that the Government, and rightly so, are endeavouring to induce immigrants to flock to this State. I have already stated that I supported the Government last session in their loan proposals as far as they related to extending the immigration policy. We were assured by the Premier at the close of last session that steps would be taken to reorganise the office of the Agent General in London, and to secure to this State a proper and more desirable class of immigrants than have hitherto been coming here. Whether that has been done or not is open to very serious question. To my own knowledge at the present time a large number of immigrants who are arriving in this State are of a most undesirable character. I do not say the whole of them, but some of them are. Within the last fortnight or three weeks I have been brought into touch with a couple of immigrants who made certain allegations regarding their treatment since their arrival in the State, and I regret to say that upon investigation I found that these immigrants at the very time they approached me—and I may say I interviewed the Acting Premier with regard to their case—were under the scrutiny of the officers of the Criminal Investigation Department, and they are not alone in that position. I take it hon. members read the Press, and they will have seen that within the last week one of the female immigrants had determined to marry an Afghan.

Mr. S. F. Moore: She was a nominated immigrant.

Mr. PRICE: It matters not whether she was nominated or brought out directly at the expense of the State. I would like to point out that nominated immigrants are assisted, and therefore should be as clean and as desirable citizens as those who come out wholly at the expense of the State. Whether nominated or brought out at the expense of the State, I do not think the hon. member for Irwin is prepared to say that we should bring them here to marry Afghans or other aliens. We were assured prior to the Premier's trip to the old country, and during his stay there, that he was seeing to it that only desirable immigrants were coming to this State. Some-

how I am inclined to believe that the Premier looked at matters during his stay in England through other glasses. It may be he was influenced by his overwhelming desire to emulate the deeds of that champion gorger and guzzler of the Commonwealth, Sir George Reid.

Mr. Heitmann: Deeds that won the Empire.

Mr. PRICE: Feeds that won the Empire. We find on reading the Press reports that the Premier stated he saw no poverty in the old country, and that everything was happy and bright. I regret to say that if he saw no poverty there, he can see some in this State. I am sorry to say that it does exist here.

Mr. Heitmann: Right in this village.

Mr. PRICE: I do not know whether this is a subject for hilarity, but it may surprise members to know that there are starving people in Western Australia, and that immigrants are brought into this State to starve. If the Premier does not know that, then I do. The statement was made by the Minister for Lands this evening that the effect of this influx of immigrants was to keep up wages. I am surprised at the Minister making such a statement, because if he will only apply to the recognised Government authority the officer in charge of the Labour Bureau, he will be assured that recently owing to the influx of immigrants the wages of farm labourers have been reduced from an average of 25s. a week and found, to £1 a week and found, and for weeks past not a single job has been notified at the Labour Bureau for ordinary farm labouring work for wages exceeding one pound a week. Prior to the influx of immigrants specially selected by the Premier so we were informed—

Mr. Collier: Of the proper sort.

Mr. PRICE: I am reminded that they are immigrants of the proper sort specially selected by the Premier. Prior to that time wages were 25s. a week, and it was rare indeed that any jobs were marked up at the Labour Bureau where the wages offered were less than 25s. I say again that I believe in the influx to this State of as many desirable immigrants as can possibly be brought out. I also realise it is almost impossible to say

that every individual will prove desirable, but I do contend that the proportion of undesirables brought into this country is out of all reason, and far above what we should reasonably expect. Moreover, what can we hope will become of these immigrants when land is not available for them at the time they arrive in the State. I have already pointed out that land is not available for those people who have paid their passages to this State. I have made the assertion, and I am prepared to prove it, that men have had to apply to Dalgety & Co., having been recommended to that firm by officers of the Agricultural Department. If such treatment is meted out to individuals who come to the State prepared to pay their way, and who have made a success of farming in other places, and who wish to extend their operations and try their luck, if I may so put it, in this Western State, when we find that those men cannot get land, what is the situation in which the immigrant finds himself? In too many cases he is forced into the labour market. We see in the city of Perth men who are prepared to take work at any wage whatever rather than tramp about the streets. Just here I desire to protest most emphatically against the predilection of the Government or the Ministers to provide employment in Government departments for immigrants from the old land whose expenses have been paid by people already in the State. If any of these favours which at present are granted to the immigrants are to be scattered around, then let some of our own people who pay their way here receive a proportion of them. At the present time such is not done. Men who receive the first consideration are the men whose passages have been paid, and who come to this State at the expense of the people here. I notice that the Minister for Lands made a special point of the fact that the Government had entered upon a great policy of loan expenditure in connection with our lands. We are asked to believe that this is the height of statesmanship. Surely the Premier after hobnobbing with the statesmen of the Empire will now realise that statesmanship hardly consists of selling the public es-

tate and borrowing money to develop it. Where can that policy of statesmanship eventually lead us. If we sell the land on the one hand, and borrow money on the other then the day must eventually come when ruin and chaos will overtake us. Whilst I admit that the possibilities of this State are almost inconceivable, I also realise that the policy of the Government is not calculated to lead to the eventual benefit and progress of the State. We are assured that it is impossible to develop the lands of the State without borrowing so to do. We are also assured that the Federal Government cannot carry on its duties without borrowing, but to-day we find that they are making strenuous efforts to do so. I do sincerely hope that the Government of the State will take a lesson from the Government of the Commonwealth, and endeavour to carry out from ordinary revenue many works which at the present time are paid for entirely out of loan. We are told that as the loans have been expended in the past so they will be in the future, and that the Government intend to carry on that policy. Again I repeat that I trust that the Government will endeavour to carry out some of their public works from revenue rather than from loan. We are told that amongst other works at present being carried out by the Agricultural Department is the clearing of a considerable area in the South-West portion of the State, and, really, if we listened to the Minister for Lands we would be led to believe that the only land in the State suitable for dairying or closer settlement is to be found in the South-West portion of the State. Has the Minister forgotten, or is he unaware of the fact, that there is land equally good in the Southern portion of the State? And whilst on this point, I feel somewhat strongly the action of the Minister. I regret that he has not sufficient courtesy to attend this Chamber after closing his speech when a member, even though one of the least among the fifty of the House, is passing certain remarks in regard to his department. I regret the Minister has not that courtesy which will enable him to hear what I say, and I represent what is largely an agricultural

constituency, and what I have to say partakes somewhat of a personal character. I desire to refer to the fact that during the last four or five months the Minister for Lands has deliberately ignored the Southern portion of the State and sought to belittle the representative of the Southern portion of the State. In referring to the intention of the Government regarding freezing works this evening, the Minister said it was the intention to erect works at Fremantle and Wyndham, and when an interjection arose and the word "Albany" was mentioned by some hon. member on the Opposition side, the Minister said, "and Albany." Some time ago a fruitgrowers' conference was held in Perth, and subsequently the delegates to that conference were entertained at the expense of the State by the Minister for Lands. I was invited to be present at that gathering. I went there, I heard the Minister make a speech—

Mr. Heitmann: What!

Mr. PRICE: Well, attempt to make a speech, if the hon. member wishes me to be strictly correct. The Minister spoke at that gathering and pointed to the splendid possibilities of the South-West portion of the State, and he told the delegates there gathered what the Government intended to do in connection with the export of fruit. He said that no section of the State could vie with the South-West portion in the production of fruit, and that the Government intended to provide freezing and export depôts at Fremantle and Bunbury. Subsequently the Minister called upon certain members to respond to the toast of Parliament: and let me say here that I consider the Minister deliberately insulted me on that occasion by calling upon the representative of a mining community to respond to the toast. Never once did the Minister have the ordinary courtesy or the justice to refer to the orchards at present existing in the Mt. Barker district. So far as the delegates to that conference were concerned, such a district might not have existed. The Minister stated he hoped in the years to come the Government would assist people to bring orchards into existence in the South-West portion of the

State, but never once did he refer to the orchards existing at present at Mt. Barker; never once did he refer to the fact that thousands of pounds worth of fruit could be exported from that district if facilities were only made available. I ask—Why was this? Why does the Minister deliberately suppress mention of the orchards of those districts already existing, and which are producing fruit? Is it because this district returns to this House a representative who does not see eye to eye with the Minister? If that is the reason, are we to expect this kind of thing to continue? I say it is cowardly in the extreme if Ministers use their power, or their influence, or their positions for purely party political purposes. Early in my address I had occasion to refer to another matter wherein Ministers had used their power in that direction, and this is another instance. If we are to understand that it is the intention of Ministers to use their positions and their power to oppress, so far as they are able, those districts which fail to return supporters to the Government, it is well that they should make it known, say it on the floor of the House, and not do it by innuendo or inference such as the Minister for Lands has done during the recess just closed. Reference has also been made this evening by the Minister for Lands to the possibilities in regard to the production of pine. The Minister said that at the present time he had a traction engine and a number of men clearing land in the Ludlow district for the purpose of planting pine—clearing land with a traction engine for the purpose of planting pine trees when there are thousands of acres in the Southern section of the State which can be cleared without any traction engine and where it has already been proved pine trees will grow to perfection! Is this a deliberate waste of public money simply to provide the expenditure of certain moneys in those sections of the State which are favourable to the Government's policy and which return to the House men prepared to support the Government. Is that the action of Ministers desiring to do that which they believe to be best, when we find

the Minister for Lands telling us that they are clearing land in the Ludlow district—which, by the way, returns a gentleman who supports the Government—though, as I have repeatedly said in the House, there are thousands of acres in the Southern section of the State which can be cleared for practically nothing, into which there is certainly no need to take a traction engine, and where pine trees can be planted and grown to perfection without any expense being incurred, such as must be incurred in bringing pine forests into existence in the South-West?

Mr. Heitmann: A great policy!

Mr. PRICE: It is the policy of the Government and it is done out of loan funds; the Agricultural Development Vote is used for the purpose. Reference was also made by the Minister for Lands to the possibilities of the State in regard to dairying, and there again I say that the Minister has absolutely failed to grasp the opportunities already existing. As he has failed to grasp the opportunities in regard to the growing of pine trees, so he has failed to grasp the opportunities in regard to bringing into existence the dairying industry. Right through, the aim of the Minister has been to get people on the land, settle them there anywhere, and to say the people are crowding on the land, but when the poor beggars, as I was going to call them—they are very little better—when they get there most of them are only too anxious to get off, that is, most of those who go into those districts where dairying is possible. What is the result of the Minister's experiment in connection with the Denmark Estate? Absolute failure, hopeless failure, a failure which has cost the country thousands and thousands of pounds and which must cost them thousands more.

Mr. Scaddan: What has it cost those unfortunates who went there?

Mr. PRICE: It has cost some of them their lives. It has cost them what little possessions they had, and this is under the administration of a Minister who is continually travelling about the country and prating to the people of their splendid possibilities and what he is doing for them. I recognise and readily admit that

in this country we have splendid possibilities, there are glorious possibilities here, and I repeat for my part that I should like to see thousands of people flocking into the State provided that the Government of the day would only make available for these people land whereon they might settle. I am not prepared to endorse the policy which brings people into this State when there is no land available for those already here, or land made available. The land is here, and only through the maladministration of the laws of the State and the regulations governing our land policy are the people prevented from getting upon that land. I trust that during the present session of Parliament the Government will take into their serious consideration the desirability of bringing about some alteration in the administration of our Department of Lands. I appeal to them to consider the position; I appeal to them because I realise that as a result of the Premier's visit to the old country we may expect that there will be a steady influx of population into this State, and I do not desire that the people who come here shall find themselves compelled to enter into competition with the wage earners already here. I desire that when they land they shall have an opportunity of going upon the lands of the State, and that they shall be enabled to add to the production of the State. I desire that the dairying industry, of which we have heard so much, but which at the present time cannot be brought into existence because the present administration of our Land and Agricultural Departments is not such as to give people confidence or to aid them to bring about the industry will eventually, when the Government have seen fit to bring about an alteration in the administration, not only be brought into existence but be an industry that will successfully compete with an industry of a like character in South Australia. I desire that the Government will when bringing into existence the freezing works which they have referred to, not forget that we have orchards in the Southern sections of the State from which thousands of pounds of fruit can be exported if the Government will only provide the means of

freezing it and preparing it for the markets of the old world. When the Government take steps to bring about this state of affairs I shall welcome the influx to the State of as many thousands of white settlers as choose to come here. I want them because I realise that only by the influx to this State and to other States of thousands of white settlers can we hope to keep this Commonwealth of ours white and I am above all a firm believer, an ardent believer in the principle of a White Australia. I do not want the introduction into this State of the sort of immigrant who will ally himself to any class of alien. May I suggest to the Premier and to other Ministers the desirability and the necessity for the Government providing for the deportation of undesirable immigrants. Surely it must be within the knowledge of Ministers that in Fremantle gaol to-day are a number of individuals who came to this State at the expense of the State, and some of these individuals to my own knowledge and to the knowledge of certain members of the Ministry have been in gaol practically for the whole of the time since they came to this State some two or three years ago. I hope the Government will see their way clear and recognise the necessity for providing for the deportation of undesirables such as I have referred to. I do not intend to take up longer the time of the House. I trust that as the result of the deliberations of members of this Chamber during this session we shall see the State progress and prosper. I am not prepared to admit that the prosperity that we have witnessed during the past 12 months is attributable to the gentlemen who sit on the other (Government) side of the House, because after all much, nay, the whole of the prosperity which has undoubtedly existed in this State must be attributed to a benign Providence rather than the administrative ability of the hon. gentlemen who sit on the other side of the Chamber. If in addition to the blessings which Providence has showered on us Ministers will be guided in some small degree with the expressed wishes of members, if Ministers will endeavour to freely and justly and equitably administer their departments I am convinced there is in

store for this State a period of prosperity and a period which will not only do much to raise this State as one of the greatest producing centres of the Commonwealth, but will eventually lead to the population of this State becoming a happy, thriving and prosperous people.

Mr. GEORGE (Murray): The hon. gentleman who has just addressed the House, in giving expression to his sincere wishes may perhaps be pardoned for the extravagance of his language, for all sides of the House have no doubt fully appreciated the earnestness with which he put forward his case. I do not propose to stand in my position as an apologist for this side of the House for any of the particular matters he has brought before members. But perhaps he and the House will bear with me for a few moments while I just refer to a few of the matters which he has mentioned. I do not know that it has ever been claimed by the Ministerial side of the House, or if it has been done I, for one, think it would be very wrong indeed if it were claimed that from this side of the House alone can proceed the legislation which is acting for good throughout the country, or that any suggestions for the good of the State must necessarily come from this (Government) side. But we all feel or at least we ought to feel, and I hope we do, no matter on which side we sit, that we are here in the best interests of the people of the country, and it would be wrong for any side to presume that from any particular section must proceed the prosperity which is running throughout this land. The hon. gentleman before sitting down spoke very strongly in regard to Ministers going round the country and making speeches and claiming, as it were, that all the good in this country has been caused by legislation brought forward by themselves. I would remind the hon. gentleman that in a good old Book, perhaps one which we do not read as much as we ought to, it says, "The sun shines on the just and on the unjust," and the sun shines in Western Australia and shines on the deeds of both sides of the House. In the interests of the

State, we, all the fifty members of the House, have the right to claim that we do our part in forwarding the interests of our country. A good deal has been said in regard to the immigration policy, and I say distinctly, as I have said in different parts of the country and I hope I shall continue to say it as long as I live, that if immigrants are brought here for the purpose of lowering the conditions of either the labour or the wages of the people already here, that policy is not in the best interests of the State. I do not think there are, and I have not met with people whose desire is to get immigrants into this country so as to cheapen labour.

Mr. Taylor: Queensland has done that.

Mr. GEORGE: With the experience of what Queensland may or may not have done it is for the hon. gentleman and every member to see that we do not fall into the same mistake. Some reference was made by the late leader of the Opposition as to wages being cut down for labourers to 10s. and 15s. per week and found. The member for Albany stated that he had heard from the Immigration Bureau that whereas 25s. per week and found was the ruling wage for farm labourers, that since emigrants have come her the amount has been reduced to 20s. and found. I think that would bear some considerable investigation. I am not questioning the hon. member's bona fides, I am quite satisfied he believes what he has stated. For my part, in the district in which I am situated the ruling wage so far as I have knocked up against it during the last four years has been 7s. and 8s. per day and let the man find himself. That is the wage I am paying, and I know scores of people engaged in the same work who are paying the same wage to-day. For my own part I would sooner pay 8s. per day than have men for 7s. per day, and I would not look at the man at 6s. per day.

Mr. Scaddan: You will find it in the printed papers of the House.

Mr. GEORGE: If that is the case I am sure the sooner it is altered the better for the State. Another matter the hon. gentleman spoke about was in regard to persons going to the Lands Depart-

ment for the purpose of getting land, and not finding it available among the State lands being, as it were, sent to Dalgety & Co., or others who have land for sale. I have no doubt that some explanation could be given that would be acceptable to all in regard to this. At first sight it does not look right that we should advertise as we do all through the world that we have plenty of land ready and that it should not be necessary, in fact it would be very wrong for State officials to act as introductory agents to private land sellers. Another matter which the hon. member spoke about was the Railway Advisory Board being appointed as he said to block the Esperance railway. This is the first time such a suggestion has been made and I can hardly credit that the hon. gentleman is quite satisfied that is the reason of the appointment. I personally was very glad indeed to hear that a Railway Advisory Board had been appointed. Members will remember that last session in almost the last speech I made when criticising certain expenditure as disclosed by the Auditor General, I stated that it was my intention in the coming session to endeavour to have some board appointed, absolutely independent, to give advice on these matters. That board should be appointed, not with a view of questioning whether members were doing their honest part in the matter but so that members of the House on all sides would feel that the people who were interested in the different routes of a railway would have an opportunity of fairly expressing their opinion and giving local information to a board that would feel itself untrammelled and would be responsible for its actions. Further that the Board would have the benefit of the opinions of those people directly interested and affected when arriving at a conclusion. The particular matter that brought this question so sharply to my notice last session was in connection with a line known as the Wongan Hills railway. So much evidence was sent to me which on subsequent inquiry proved to be correct that it seemed to me that it would be wrong indeed that the route of a railway

should be fixed without those more intimately and closely touched having an opportunity of giving their evidence. Now they have appointed the Railway Advisory Board, and I am glad to see it has been done. I do not wish to take credit to myself, but it is one of those things which, while I occupied the position of Commissioner of Railways, I greatly desired should be done. In regard to this particular board, the point in which it seems to me to be lacking is that there is no representative of the working railways on it. Its members are men whose life experience has not given them that close touch which is necessary to enable them to form a right idea as to what the probabilities of traffic, revenue, and expenditure are likely to be. I think that board should be strengthened by the addition of a representative of the working railways, so that the department which has to run those railways might know something about a new line when they take it over. In connection with the railways of the old country, I know from my experience that they have there an Intelligence Department, and whenever there is a project for building a new railway the whole of the facts are well collected, well read and thoroughly digested before the project is put forward. The railways of England are of course different from the railways in this State, but I may be pardoned if I think that, perhaps, in that land from which I came lessons are to be learned which might be of use in this State. Certainly, as far as the railways are concerned, if this Advisory Board had among its members one from the working railways, and a line was built, the task before the working railways when they took over the line would be very much easier than at present. Another statement made by the member for Albany was that we were selling our land, parting with our estate and developing our land with loan money, all of which he considered a very wrong thing to do and calculated to lead to chaos. As far as I understand, if the land is cleared and otherwise prepared for the settler the cost of that clearing and developing is added to the price of the land, and the person who takes up that land has

to repay it. I do not think that can be very much cavilled at. In any case my answer is that the policy is evidently considered a good one throughout the country, inasmuch as the farmers are borrowing from the bank for the purpose of developing the land, and this very land on which they spend the borrowed money becomes security to the bank. So, it seems to me, provided that we have wise, careful and economical administration in regard to the development of this land, there can be no objection to using loan money for the particular purpose; because if it is not used by the State it has to be obtained and used by the farmer. Now, it may or may not be that this clearing project which the Minister for Agriculture has in hand is being carried on on most economical lines. I daresay it would be advisable that it should be thoroughly overhauled and put into proper trim. But, that being done. I think it is a correct thing for the Government to carry out such a project, provided the cost is added to the price of the land and met by the men who eventually get the advantage of it. If a man takes up land to clear it by his own labour with such appliances as he can get, he cannot clear it and get it into condition as cheaply as can be done with an efficient plant directed by a man proficient in his own particular work. The member for Brown Hill, in speaking last night, made reference to the last loan issue as not being satisfactory. If we were discussing a vote of want of confidence this might be a question upon which we could let off a great deal of fireworks; but, if hon. members will call to mind their own experiences it will be realised that there are times when we want loans, when we must have the money, although, perhaps, we have to pay bigger interest than would be demanded at certain other times. The money market in London is not entirely governed by all the circumstances which operate in Australia. The fact is that there are at present in Great Britain undeniable securities offering bigger interest than we propose to pay: and, naturally, people like to have their money invested closer at home than

across the seas. So the question of quibbling, if I may use the term without offence, at the last loan is really a matter which is hardly worth the time it takes. We cannot alter it. We want the money, and we have to take it on the best conditions on which we can get it. And to the question of getting this money, it does not matter which Government are in power; they have to be guided by their financial advisers in London. It does not matter whether it were Labour Government, or Moore Government, or Forrest Government; it lies with the financial advisers in London. The member for Brown Hill also said that if we reach a position which will take 35 per cent. of our revenue to meet the obligations of borrowing, then that position will be serious indeed. I think the conditions of taxation in Western Australia to-day are very serious indeed for anybody who has to feel the burden under which persons with property in the various municipalities are labouring. Those persons know well that the taxes are very heavy in proportion with the rents obtainable; and now, in the metropolitan area, the heavy charges in connection with sewerage gives me reason to think that the persons who have no property at all have the bigger end of the stick. We want all the care we can get in regard to dealing with revenue or loan money, and I hope myself that the burden of taxation will be made a little less stringent. I could cite instances of great privation during the last two or three years owing to the fall in rents and the increase of taxation; but hon. members will probably know a great deal of that amongst themselves and their friends, and it is hardly necessary for me to say anything further on the point.

Mr. Angwin: That is because the Government are demanding increased taxation on the part of local authorities.

Mr. GEORGE: If I were quite sure that the whole of this responsibility rests upon this particular Government I should have a lot to say; but I am constrained to say that the conditions of our political life, and the conditions of the progress of our State, would lay a

burden, perhaps, on any Government that might occupy those chairs.

Mr. Angwin: That is mere supposition.

Mr. GEORGE: It is only by supposing things and getting men of experience to knock those suppositions down that we get at the truth. The hon. member for Brown Hill also laid great stress upon matters in respect to which he said if the State Government did not step in the Commonwealth Government would do so. I think the Commonwealth Government as at present constituted have shown a keen desire to step in in connection with State functions; and I take it that hon. members representing portions of this State, whichever side of the House they sit upon, are somewhat jealous of the rights of this State itself.

Mr. Scaddan: From our standpoint they are the people of the State.

Mr. GEORGE: Well, we are the representatives of the people of this State, and are in closer touch with those people than any Federal representatives can be; and I take it that hon. members on both sides of the House are equally jealous and desirous of conserving the privileges of the State. This is the place in which we live, and I do not suppose they are desirous that we should be governed in all matters by a Government who do not care very much for us. The member for Brown Hill also stated that we were advertising the popularity of the Premier for the purpose of throwing a glamour over the present Government. I do not wish to throw any glamour over them. I take it they are just as we all are in our different walks of life. We take up our respective work and proceed much along the lines prepared for us by those who have gone before. We succeed in correcting some errors that have been made, and which perhaps did not appear to be errors at first, although they are clearly seen to be so now. In many ways we profit by the work that has been done by the people before us, and as far as this Government are concerned, if they were so foolish as to take it to themselves that any prosperity we have here to-day is entirely owing to their work, they would be foolish indeed. I do not think they are

in any way oblivious to the fact that the foundation of the prosperity of this State was laid before ever they came into office, perhaps before some of them came into Parliament. And those who come after them will profit by their work in the same way as they have profited by the work of their several predecessors. One think I wish to touch upon is in regard to our land legislation. You can hardly pick up a newspaper of this State but what you will see advertisements of land taken up under conditional purchase, and now thrown upon the market. And it is stated in these advertisements that the Agricultural Bank will advance so much money and so forth: and the advances of the Agricultural Bank are really being used as an inducement to get people to buy the land from those who have taken it up for purposes other than those for which our land legislation was supposed to be framed. This land has been taken up, not for the purpose of utilisation, but for the purpose of exploitation. People have secured these blocks of land—personally I do not know how they got them—and the next thing is that they look round to find someone to whom they may dispose of the land. One can see advertisements in the papers that such and such a place at Goomalling, or Wongan Hills, or Quairading, or somewhere else, so many hundreds of acres of conditional purchase lands are for sale, that so much has been paid on it and that the Bank will advance so much on it, apply so and so, land agent. That is opposed entirely to the principle upon which we should deal with our lands. Personally, if it were at all possible—it is not possible in this State—I would like to see the State stick to these lands and lease them out. That is not practical now, but what is practical is that if a person applied for conditional purchase land he should not be allowed, on any subterfuge or trickery, to part with it until he has done his work on it. If a selector happens to die and his widow has to sell, that is another matter. I want legislation, if it is possible to get it, to stop the blood-suckers, I cannot call them anything else, who

take up land under the liberal land laws with no intention of doing a stroke of work, but who intend to hold it for sale to someone else who comes along.

Mr. Collier: Our present Act prevents that.

Mr. GEORGE: If there is the power in the Act it is the duty of the Government and the land administrators to see that the Act is properly carried out.

Mr. Holman: We complain that they do not carry it out.

Mr. GEORGE: I am with you in the idea that they should do so. What I am anxious to do is to try, if we have the power, and see that this business is stopped. I know of instances of people who have taken up land without the slightest intention of putting a single tap upon it. I know what I am talking about.

Mr. Scaddan: Have you called the attention of the Minister to these cases.

Mr. GEORGE: No, but I will do so; in fact, I am drawing his attention to it now, and I am doing so as nicely as I can so that he will not take offence. Another matter, which has been mentioned by the member for Albany, is that a number of people have come to the country and have been unable to obtain land. If that statement is absolutely correct it is wrong for us to get the people here. There should be some explanation given, and I have no doubt one will be given before this debate closes. I know of Western Australian born people who have applied for land in this State, time after time, and have not been able to get it. There is the case of a man with a wife and two sons aged 22 and 18 years respectively. He is a born farmer, with £500 capital. He made four applications for land but was unable to get any. What I would like the Minister for Lands to see is this, that whilst it is right that immigrants who come here as the result of our advertisements should have land and be attended to, it is equally right that Western Australian born men, or men who have come here on their own account, should have a fair chance. Without wishing to make unkind references, I would remind members that in connection with certain lands on the Midland line two gentlemen were some little time ago able to

obtain certain blocks. Their qualifications as farmers were probably equal to mine when I went on the land; but I do not think their experience is quite equal to mine now, for they cannot show the corns I can or the same empty pockets. These blocks were applied for by others, one of those who applied being a Western Australian, whose father came here 60 or 70 years ago. He was a thoroughly good farmer and was recommended to me by a member of this House as manager of my place. He has been seaching for land for four years but has not been able to get a block. There may be faults on his side which are responsible for the trouble caused him, but if a man in this State cannot get land after trying for four years, and is now prepared to take a billet instead of going on the land, how can we expect to satisfy the immigrants we are trying to get here. Considerable trouble has been caused by indiscriminate road closing. Roads have been closed in different parts of the State on representations made to the Lands Department. I do not blame the department entirely, but applications have been combated by others whose interests have been affected. When in the case of an agricultural area land is sold and taken up, with certain roads surveyed, not a single one of these roads should be allowed to be closed until all the landowners in connection with the area have been consulted. The member for Brown Hill also dealt with the Railway Department and he seemed to take a certain amount of alarm from the fact that the receipts had increased £128,000 and that the expenditure had increased £124,000. I take it that these figures are taken from the Treasury. They are the Treasury balances, practically the same as the bank balances given to us by our bankers, but they do not represent the exact position so far as the railway working is concerned. They do not represent the position which would be shown if the working railways, instead of being a State concern, were a concern managed as a private business, for the figures taken by the Treasury represent simply the amount paid in and the amount paid out. They do not show the true position of that great concern. Even if they did show

it, however, assuming that the figures showed the actual trading figures, where is the cause for alarm, the cause for the member for Brown Hill to be alarmed. Surely to goodness if we can spend £124,000 a year extra in finding employment for the people coming here we should be satisfied if we get it back with only a small addition. We have receipts increased by £128,000 and we have spent £124,000 in wages to earn them, and for my part I would not mind spending £1,000,000 of money if I were finding employment for those in the State and circulating cash, even if I did not get quite one million back. So long as we get our own back what does it matter, for it means that employment has been found, wages paid, and money circulated, and who can tell how much good has been done.

Mr. Heitmann: What about the borrowing policy?

Mr. GEORGE: This is not a question of borrowing, but of actual money paid by you and me and others for work done. For that work done wages have had to be paid. We paid £128,000 for the work and it has cost £124,000 to get it done.

Mr. Holman: They knocked off £30,000 for replacing obsolete stock.

Mr. GEORGE: I am not dealing with that now. I want to impress upon members that there is no cause for alarm. I think I may be allowed to speak with some little authority on this question. It must be remembered that we have earned £128,000 more and have not lost anything in earning it, in fact we have gained £4,000 more than we spent. The sum of £124,000 largely represents wages spent in the State. The member for Brown Hill also referred to the fact that no provision had been made for obsolete railway stock. I noticed with very much regret that, after my term of office ceased, the item was left out of the Estimates. I think it was a correct item to be there. I know the argument may be used that, theoretically at any rate, the department are supposed to keep the railway stock right up to the "knocker" and that at the end of each year the railway stock should be in as good condition as it was

at the commencement of the year. During my regime we tried to carry that out. I have no reason to doubt that the present Commissioner will do the same thing, for it is one of the truest railway traditions. This item appeared during my first year as Commissioner, and it came about for the following reason: our locomotive stock at that time was valued at about £1,250,000 and the life of a locomotive was considered, and is considered by all competent authorities to-day, to be 25 years, even if all the necessary repairs and replacements are carried out during that period. It is considered a safe thing to look upon the life of a locomotive as 25 years, and therefore we took a percentage of the value of our locomotives, and put it down in our estimates as a provision for the day when they would require to be replaced. We also bore this in mind, that as our railways extended, as we required to pull bigger loads and put down heavier rails and have larger trucks, so the small locomotives must necessarily pass out of commission. It is perfectly true that now, with our agricultural lines, much of the light stock can well be used for some considerable time, but even with that the advancement in the science of locomotive building and design is such that it is a wise thing to make, as it were, a sinking fund for those that will pass out of commission. With this rolling stock vote we found we had sufficient engines. A lot of big ones had just come in, and we ascertained that there was a lot of money lying in the Treasury that was not doing us very much good. I do not think the Government had the decency to pay us interest, let alone thank us for that. I "bumped up" against the Auditor General, for I wanted trucks and carriages, and we managed to fix it up, that out of this vote we could buy carriages and build wagons. I got a surcharge and so on, but I got the stock and we put it on the road. That vote has now been taken out of the Estimates and I think it is a wrong thing to do. Perhaps I should not say a wrong thing, meaning a culpable thing, but it certainly is unwise, as the provision for obsolete rolling stock is in my opinion a wise one. It is a provis-

ion which all private railway companies as far as they can fix up. They have what they call a depreciation fund and it is a wise provision which should be carried out. Another thing I notice is that more rolling stock has been ordered. I congratulate the Government on finding the funds for this rolling stock and the Commissioner on having the opportunity of getting what he needs. Under the Forrest regime the system was to build railways and trust to Providence or the Commissioner or the General Manager who was in control in those days to run these railways without extra rolling stock, forgetting that every extra 50 miles demanded a bigger proportion of stock. If my opinion is of value I would say that even if the Government had ordered double the quantity of rolling stock the Commissioner would find that he would have need for it next season, or if not next season certainly the season after. I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything more. The Speech from the Throne which I did not hear but which I have read carries right through it a note of hope and belief in the country in which we live. I think hon. members on all sides are satisfied that in Western Australia we have a goodly land where it is possible for a man if he works and keeps himself straight to work and earn a competency and some thing more than that and to bring up his family well. I think as far as legislation is concerned the probabilities are that if we were to see that the legislation which we have already passed was carried out we could do with less legislation this session than we did last. For my own part I have great faith in the State. I believe in it, I have worked hard in it. I have done well in it and I have tried to lay a foundation which will enable my children to find it a good country. It has its hardships, but for anyone with a stout heart I can safely say that this country is the best I know of on God's earth.

Mr. GILL (Balkatta): Let me say at the outset that I am not going to take up a great deal of the time of the House to-night in discussing the Address-in-Reply. I desire to congratulate the mem-

ber for Murray on the sentiments he expressed. I am sure it is pleasing to note that we on this side of the House have another recruit, but I am afraid that at a critical moment he will be wanting and I advise hon. members not to put too much confidence in his remarks and not to rely too much on the sentiments he expressed with regard to our coming together.

Mr. Swan: He is preparing for an organising tour.

Mr. GILL: At the outset of the hon. member's remarks he made a statement that I am quite in accord with and I think it will be approved by all members. It was to the effect that the improvement in the present condition of affairs in Western Australia is not solely due to the Ministers or the Government but that Parliament as a whole has a right to take a certain amount of credit in connection with the legislation which has been passed and which has brought about that improvement. That is a sentiment we all agree with absolutely. I notice the hon. member for Fremantle, in moving the motion for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply, hinged the whole of his enthusiastic remarks around the action of the Government during the last four years, that is, since 1906. Consequently I say that after hearing these remarks it is somewhat pleasing to find an hon. member on the same side of the House disagreeing with the member for Fremantle, or at any rate giving credit to others in addition to the Government. I thought myself that there was a certain amount of credit due to the Opposition for any improvement that may have taken place during the last year or two.

Mr. Taylor: Providence deserves some credit too.

Mr. GILL: Let the Opposition take some credit, then give Providence a little and the remainder can go to the Government.

Mr. Taylor: There would be little left for the Government.

Mr. GILL: I am willing to admit that there has been an improvement during the last 12 months in affairs generally in Western Australia, and goodness

knows it was badly needed. Twelve months ago things were bad in Western Australia and it was a difficult matter for a man to in any way earn a crust. All these things have improved and a good deal of credit is due to the Opposition for the improvement that has been brought about. If we had gone along quietly and continued in the haphazard condition which prevailed up to twelve months ago, things would not be any better at the present time. Around land settlement a good deal of the prosperity hinges and I as one of the Opposition am going to take credit for a good deal of the prosperity that has been brought about by a little more hustle having been put into the Lands Department. Members on this side of the House have been untiring in their efforts to push and drive the Government in regard to land settlement, not only selling land but also getting it settled and getting improved conditions carried out more fully than was done previously. While admitting that things are improved considerably, I am not prepared to admit that they are all that should be desired. So much has been said to-night during the discussion on the Address-in-Reply in connection with the land question and so much criticism indulged in on the action of the Minister and the Lands Department generally that I think it would be out of place for me to take up much time in regard to the matter; still I must admit that I am of the same opinion as those gentlemen who have stated that we are not getting as much satisfaction out of the administration of the Lands Department as we ought to get. There is undoubtedly a great difficulty at the present time in connection with securing land, and all that has been said to-night about this difficulty I am prepared to endorse, and I could mention dozens of instances where people have tried to get land and have not succeeded. We are told in the Governor's Speech that during the last twelve months 2,600,000 acres of land have been surveyed and of that 1,600,000 acres have been allotted. That leaves a balance of one million acres. Surely it should not be a difficult matter for a person to secure 1,000

acres out of such a huge area as that. A difficulty undoubtedly exists to-day. There is one case that occurs to my mind at the moment which I would like to refer to. It relates to a gentleman in business in Perth with an income from that business amounting to £1,500 per annum, and he assured me that he has been trying to get land for the past six months. He recognises that he might be able to put some of that money to good use in any land that he might take up, and he has told the Land Board that he is prepared to spend £10 per week in that direction, but he assures me he has no possible chance of getting a block of land. He has appeared three or four times before the Land Board. He met me in the street and wanted to know whether I knew more about the matter than he did, and he stated that there was much noise being made about the land which was available and yet it was not possible to secure a block. He wanted to know if I knew the reason why, but I could not tell him. That is the difficulty that has presented itself for some time and it is the duty of the Minister for Lands to see that this state of affairs is remedied as soon as possible. It has been said, and you will hear it every day in the street, that the difficulty arises through preference being given to new arrivals in the State. Whether such is the case or not I do not know. If such is the case it may account for the difficulties presenting themselves to people who have resided here for a number of years and who have made their homes and reared their families here. While dealing with this question of preference I should also like to mention another aspect of it which was brought under my notice. Of course it will be denied, but I am satisfied, although I did not come into contact with the persons affected, that the information which was given to me was reliable. It appears that three young men arrived in the State some three months ago, and I was assured that these three men had passes supplied to them to travel through the country. That kind of thing is not permitted to anyone resident in the State. I did not know that it prevailed

to any extent as far as new arrivals were concerned, but I am assured on good authority that passes were actually supplied to these three people. If this state of affairs exists I can understand the rumour gaining ground through the State that preference is being given to new arrivals. One other aspect that I desire to refer to is with regard to the Land Boards and to the most unsatisfactory way in which these boards are appointed at the present time. We have a number of gentlemen who act in the capacity of members, and I find on looking into the applications going in and the announcement of the Land Boards sitting, that boards are appointed in the various localities to deal with the different applications for the land. Now we have not, as I understand, any permanent boards to deal with applications for land. There are several gentlemen, members of the public service, who are appointed and in whom everyone has implicit confidence. I am alluding to those gentlemen. But the practice is that one member of the civil service is appointed as chairman, and, in the instance of, say, an area in the Avon district, applications go to Northam, where this chairman with two Northam farmers as associates, sits to deal with these applications. I have come to the conclusion that in these circumstances there is no possible hope for an applicant from, say, Kalgoorlie; because he will have no chance against an applicant from the Northam district, seeing that the two local members of the board, being only human, will incline to the local applicant. The position is most unsatisfactory; yet the matters involved are of sufficient importance to warrant the appointing of a permanent board with whom Parliament could deal if they did not carry out their duties. We have no control over the persons appointed to these boards. They are paid a guinea a sitting, and when they have allotted the various blocks of land they have finished with the whole business. A permanent board would be far more satisfactory. I feel convinced that it would give a greater amount of satisfaction than the present system of appointing local men to deal with local applica-

tions. Another question is in regard to the Government re-purchasing estates notwithstanding the great area of land we have in Western Australia. I do not know whether or not the House approves of this practice, but so far as I am concerned I think the Government are doing something absolutely wrong in re-purchasing estates at the present time. It appears to me to be nothing more or less than a design to assist someone to escape the land tax foreshadowed by the Federal Government. I think we have enough Government land of our own in Western Australia, and that we should see that it is duly cut up and distributed among the applicants. If people owning large estates wish to cut them up also and part with them, well and good, but I do not think the Government are justified in re-purchasing those large estates. I do not know under what authority it is being done, but to me it is unsatisfactory that the Government should spend large sums of money in this way without Parliament having one word to say in the matter. I have no intention of dealing further with the land question, but I wish to touch upon that of immigration. A good deal has been said during the last year or two in connection with this matter, notwithstanding which a good deal remains to be said. And, although the Colonial Secretary will not be satisfied with the statement, I am convinced that hon. members on this side of the House are just as desirous as any other members of seeing a marked increase in the population of Western Australia. But we wish to increase it in a manner that will not in any way injure those already in the State. In alluding to this matter the other day the Colonial Secretary inferred that the Labour party are opposed to immigration because their one desire is to keep wages up; and he went on to declare that if they were honest they would say straight-out that they are opposed to immigration altogether. In the course of his remarks the Minister said that the trouble at present was to find sufficient men for the vacancies offering in the country, and that if it had not been for the strenuous work put in by the Premier in London the position in this respect

would have been very much more acute. Now I know that that is absolutely incorrect. I know what the conditions of the country labour market are at the present time, for during the recess I spent a great deal of my time in the country. The Colonial Secretary quoted figures which, presumably, he obtained from the Labour Bureau and which, in at least one sense, were certainly correct; but they are somewhat misleading unless an explanation be given. The Minister did not furnish that explanation, but I will do so to-night. He gave the number of applications for workers during the months of March, April and May, and he stated that in March there were, I think, 358 men required, and that they could not be secured. The figures were somewhat similar for April and for May. Now that statement was probably correct in one respect. The applications were undoubtedly there for the number of men, but that the men could not be secured was not correct. The position is this: Those applications went to the Labour Bureau. There were a large number for men to go out and work in the country. I, myself, know several persons who applied to the Labour Bureau for men. But the difficulty was that while the men were actually available in Perth, no assurances were forthcoming as to how long the work would last, nor were particulars given as to the exact nature of the work. Again, no assistance was offered in respect to railway fares. Consequently the men were absolutely justified in refusing to pay their fares and take their chance of the work being found to be worth having. One gentleman required a number of men to clear some 4,000 acres of land—or so the work was described. As a matter of fact it was nothing of the kind that he required. What he wanted was a number of men to go and pick up stones off the land, at 1s. per acre. There was nothing to assure those men in Perth that they could earn a living wage at the rate of 1s. per acre. If some such assurance had been given them, and if their fares had been paid, there were plenty of men ready to go and face the task. There was a fair amount of clearing offering, but there was nothing to

show whether the forest was green or dry, nor as to whether the clearing was level or otherwise. There was simply the statement, "clearing at 25s. per acre." The men were left in doubt as to whether they could get their provisions from the employer, or whether they would have to cart them 12 or 14 miles from the nearest station. Nor was there anything to show that a reasonable water supply would be available in the locality. And, because the men were not ready to go out on a wild goose chase and, perhaps, take a pig in a poke, the Colonial Secretary declared that there were not sufficient men to meet the demand. I say that there were if only the men had been told what were the conditions of the work. I know of a case which occurred in March, when a farmer, a prosperous man, told me he wanted a man to pick stones off 50 acres of land. I asked, "For how long will you want him?" He said, "About a week. Do you know where I can get one." I said, "No, I do not." And he said, "Well, I will send to the Labour Bureau." I asked him did he intend to send the railway fare for the man and he replied "No." Whereupon I declared that I would send in to the Labour Bureau and tell them what the job really was. I have met several cases of the kind. It all grows out of a bit of a rush just at that time of the year, after which the men are no longer required. Consequently I say the statement of the Colonial Secretary, that the supply was not equal to the demand, was absolutely incorrect. In regard to immigration generally I am going to say very little more. I am satisfied that there is ample room in the State for a large number of immigrants, providing we can get them out on the land. This is the whole position. There is plenty of room in the State for men who are going straight on to the land; but we do not want immigrants dumped in the cities to cut wages. I shall always raise my voice against such a scheme. There is no justification whatever for bringing immigrants into the State during the months of May, June, July, and August, for there is then no demand for men in the country. At the end of April, at the latest, farmers are putting men off for the reason that

they can do no successful burning off after that time; and the men employed during the summer months find themselves free to go and compete in the congested markets of the towns. Consequently I say there is no justification for bringing men into Western Australia during the winter months, when their only hope of employment is to get work in the towns and cities, where they are pitted against Australians and by the very force of their circumstances have to accept lower wages than were paid to those whom they displace. That condition of affairs existed last year, as I showed when speaking on the subject, and it exists to-day. There are dozens of places in Perth where immigrants are working for a lower rate of wage than would be accepted by Australians. It was only yesterday I met four of them who had landed here. They had no intention of going on the land; they knew nothing about it so they told me. They came out here of course. I believe, on the understanding that they would go on the land. When emigrants leave England there is a form put before them, and they sign it stating that they undertake to go on the land when they come out; but they assured me it is a formal matter; no one takes it seriously, and away they come. These persons told me that they had no intention of going on the land. I did not meet all four together, but I met them individually. I happen to live on the road that leads to Wanneroo. Someone was advertising for a man to look after a piggery, and these men were wandering out to look for the job. The same thing obtains elsewhere. Emigrants are displacing others who live here and have homes and wives and families to keep; and if it is to continue as it recently has, then the labour market is going to be flooded; and that means a reduction of pay, because the new arrivals are in a tight corner and have to accept anything to be flooded, and that means a reduction of pay because these men are in a tight corner and have to accept anything offered to them. I do not wish to deal any further with that. I wish now to draw the attention of the Minister for Lands to a matter in his own department,

a matter on which I tried to impress him on a recent occasion, and which has been impressed on me recently so that I take this opportunity of bringing it again under the Minister's notice. We have been paying every attention to the wheat growers, but there are other settlers who need a little attention paid to them, not only in the interests of the settlers themselves but also in the interests of the consumers. I refer to the market gardeners. Some time ago a request was made to the Minister for Lands that he should build an open market. There was a deputation of market gardeners waited on him, and he received the deputation favourably and gave the impression that he would do something. But unfortunately the Minister handed the matter over to the Perth City Council, and though they have had it in hand for two years they have done nothing. The market gardeners are becoming impatient, and they have asked me to see if something can be done. They say they are not getting satisfaction in the markets to-day, and I am sure that if they are not satisfied the consumers are not. The unsatisfied consumer is generally driven to deal with Chinamen, and the only means of getting over the difficulty I can see, and the only means the market gardeners can see, is to establish open markets like those in the Eastern States where people can go and deal direct with the white producers. We all know the difficulty there is in Perth to-day in getting cheap vegetables, and if we want to keep Australia white and to abolish the Chinese, as I believe we all desire, it will be a move in the right direction, and not only that but it will be a great benefit to a large number of settlers who are now fighting and struggling against great obstacles, while it will be also a considerable advantage to the consumer. I drew attention to this matter some two years ago, and I do not know whether the Minister will do anything in the matter. He promised on that occasion to do something, and I hope he will take it into serious consideration now, as it concerns a large number of persons. Market gardeners have now to compete against Chinamen.

Mr. Gordon: They would have to do that in the open market just the same.

Mr. GILL: But they would have the opportunity that the consumer could deal with white men and get his vegetables fresh every morning, which at present is impossible because the retailer has to go to the merchants, purchasing one day and selling on the next, whereas the Chinaman, who grows his own vegetables, hawks them fresh every day, and has an advantage over the white hawker. The white hawker has only three days in which to sell, and has to put on a price to compensate himself for the three days he loses in attending at the market. An alteration in this direction I have suggested will not only be a benefit to the grower, but to the consumer also. There are two or three other matters I wish to deal with. I was going to ask the Minister for Works a question had he been here. However, perhaps one of the other Ministers will make a note of it and get some information. It is with regard to the sewerage works. I notice a reference in the Governor's Speech with regard to the satisfactory manner in which the works are progressing in Perth. I agree that they are pushing on the works very nicely, but there is some information I would like with regard to the price we are paying for the work. I am given to understand that at the outset of this work the contractors were satisfied to tender for the work, generally speaking, at a price that was just about the estimate of the officers of the Public Works Department, that their contract prices did not exceed the estimates except by a very little; but now I am given to understand that the contract prices exceed the estimates of the officers of the Works Department to the extent of 30 per cent. If such is the case it seems to me something like a ring. I do not know whether it is the case, but I would like to get the information from the Minister, and if it is the case, I think it is up to the Minister to take a hand with that ring and do some of the work himself, because that is the only way to get over the difficulty. Rings are formed in other directions, and it is possible that a ring has been formed

for this work, seeing that there are only a few contractors in Perth to deal with the work. I am told we are paying for the last two contracts 30 per cent. above the estimate of the Works Department, and I am told it on authority that should be reliable. However, I would like to get a statement from the Minister with regard to the matter. It would set my mind at rest, and the minds of a few others I know. I wish to say a few words in connection with the railways. We are just now very much inconvenienced, the people of Perth and suburbs, by a trouble in connection with our Tramway Company and their employees; and I believe that the people of Perth and suburbs generally are in accord with the requests and demands of the men concerned in the trouble, that is, in connection with their overtime and their grievance with regard to the minimum rate of pay, and the action of the company in making the minimum the maximum. I believe I am safe in saying that the whole of the people of Perth and suburbs are with the men in their desire for better conditions with regard to their work; but, while such is the case, I wish to draw attention to a condition of affairs in the railways. It has been said to-night by the member for Murray that the extra expenditure in connection with the work of our railways this year was mostly taken up in wages. I do not know whether it is or not, I am of opinion it is not the case, but as I am not in a position to contradict the hon. member I had better leave that alone. Still, while we object to the tramway men working for a minimum and maximum of 8s. a day, the condition of hundreds of men in the railways is that they must work for 7s. 6d. a day minimum and maximum. The Arbitration Court laid down a minimum of 7s. 6d. a day on the understanding that the men were to be classified or graded up; but since that award was given we find that only four of the railway porters have had their rates increased by sixpence a day. So we find hundreds of men working at 7s. 6d. a day, and many of them have been on the work for eight or 10 years, and have passed all the neces-

sary examinations in regard to safe working, ticket inspection, and all the guards' examinations. This is a state of affairs that I think should be rectified. Not only do they work as porters at 7s. 6d. a day, but many of them on the Perth station are running as guards; not for the whole of the time, because if they were run for the whole of the time it would be necessary for the department to pay them the rate for guards; but they run them in shifts of three or four hours at 7s. 6d. a day. If they ran them the whole time the officers would need to pay them the same rate as the guards, but the officers get over the difficulty by running them on short shifts. So we have our suburban train service run by men earning the unsatisfactory rate of 7s. 6d. a day. This must be unsatisfactory to the men, and many of them will leave the service. We all hope when the next harvest comes it will be an increase on the last, and if that be the case the Railway Department will have great difficulty in dealing with it. Yet we find railway men sweating at 7s. 6d. a day while people are supporting the tramway people in asking for more than 8s. a day—a demand with which I agree. But not only are the porters suffering, shunters also are suffering. Those shunters are employed in a most dangerous occupation. There is no more dangerous occupation in Western Australia than shunting, particularly in the Perth yard, which is nothing more nor less than a butcher's shop. No railway yard in Australia is so dangerous to work in as the Perth railway yard.

Mr. ANGWIN: The South-side railway will relieve that.

Mr. GILL: All the railways you build in Western Australia will never get over the dangerous condition of that yard. The only way to do it is to remove the locomotive shops to some other portion of Perth, and to lay out the yards as they should have been laid out years ago. We find shunters engaged in this dangerous occupation in this dangerous yard at the same rate of pay, 7s. 6d. a day. Again this will show how the officers read an agreement, or

misread or misconstrue it. Just before last Christmas an agreement was entered into between the Commissioner for Railways and the Railway Association that labourers and permanent-way men and that class of worker on the railway on starting should work for three months practically on trial at 7s. 6d. a day, and if they gave satisfaction during the three months they should be raised to 8s. a day. Now, I wish to point out how they are reading that. Many men working on the permanent way as casual hands start at 8s. a day, and they work for 12 months and give every satisfaction, and then perhaps a ganger will prevail on them to ask for permanency. A man will sign a form and send it along and ask to be permanently appointed, and immediately he does so he is reduced to 7s. 6d. a day, and he is on trial for three months, although he has worked for 12 months already and given every satisfaction, so much satisfaction that the ganger or inspector has asked him to get put on the permanent staff. That is how officers of the Railway Department read the three months clause in that agreement, taking every unfair advantage. I would allude to the question I asked the Minister about to-day as to the payment to painters (casual hands). His reply was most unsatisfactory. He stated that the award in the Arbitration Court did not apply to painters in the railways. The award should apply to the casual men of the railways, at any rate, and it was because I had this belief that I asked the question. That question applied simply to the casual employees of the department, for the permanent men who are sent out as casual men would be in receipt of an allowance on being away from home, but the casual men do not get such consideration. Certainly the award should apply to them if the department did justice to the men. I will not labour that question, for I daresay the matter will crop up in the Arbitration Court shortly, if the 1s. a day laid down by the court is not conceded by the department. One other matter I would refer to, and that is to that portion of the Governor's Speech which refers to the Trans-Australian

railway. That paragraph states, "Feeling that the delay in beginning the construction of the Trans-Australian railway is fraught, not only with grave injury to the interests of Western Australia, but is also a menace to the safety of the Commonwealth as a whole, my advisers are of opinion that, rather than incur a further indefinite postponement, the project should be undertaken by the two States through whose territory the line will pass."

Mr. Hudson: That is a joke, padding.

Mr. GILL: When the Minister for Works made that speech of his, when he made so much noise in connection with that matter and waved his flag, most people looked on the whole thing as a joke. Several people said it was an after-dinner speech and should not be taken seriously. However, he has kept the flag waving ever since, and evidently prevailed on his colleagues still further to wave the flag. I am surprised the Government should put such a paragraph in the Speech, for it appears to me ridiculous that there should be such a statement put before the public when they knew there was no possible hope of any such idea being carried into effect.

Mr. Hudson: The result is to make Western Australia ridiculous in the eyes of the Commonwealth.

Mr. GILL: Why all this anxiety on the part of the Minister for Works; who is the gentleman who engineered the proposal? Why have we not heard of it previously; what has he been doing during the last 10 years, ever since Federation was initiated; why did he not make a noise when Sir John Forrest was in office, and there were in power a Government for which the Minister for Works has great solicitude; why did he not make a noise then?

Mr. Hudson: Be careful what you say about the Emperor.

Mr. GILL: Yes; I must be. The trouble is that the whole thing is nothing more nor less than a party political move. There is nothing else in it. I quite agree that the work is one which should be accomplished and the line should have been built years ago, but the trouble is that our representatives,

those people who professed to represent us in the drawing up of the Constitution, absolutely neglected their duty. We should have had that railway as a condition of Federation, but they missed their opportunity and now, instead of blaming those who rightly should be blamed, we find the Minister waving his flag for no other reason than to try and discredit the Government in power. The paragraph concludes, "The project should be undertaken by the two States through whose territory the line will pass." Does the Premier really think the South Australian Government will undertake such a proposal, would ever dream of such a thing? Why, they would not give it five minutes consideration, and he knows they would not. Why was the paragraph inserted?

Mr. Hudson: What was the reply from South Australia?

Mr. GILL: The Premier, the Minister for Works, and the Ministry know full well that the South Australian Government could not conscientiously give the proposal five minutes' consideration. The conditions in South Australia are very different from what they are here. I know a good deal of the country through which the line would pass, and no Government in South Australia would live 10 minutes if they sanctioned such a proposal. I realise that the construction of the line to South Australia would be of considerable benefit to us, but I cannot see how it would benefit that State. The country through which it would pass is of no great use to them, and never has been. A great portion of it is a sandy desert that will never be any good. However, I feel that the question of asking South Australia to construct it was never seriously considered by the Government. The objection I have to the paragraph is that it gives a lever to those really opposed to the construction by the Commonwealth of the line to argue against the proposal. It is possible that those who are now wavering, and whose minds on the question are not made up, will vote against the proposal when it is brought down by the Government, arguing that if the work

is not passed the States might do it themselves.

Mr. Jacoby: Will the line pay?

Mr. GILL: I do not think we shall live to see the day when it will pay. Take the experience of the inter-State lines in the East. A few years ago the railways from Adelaide to Melbourne, Melbourne to Sydney, and Sydney to Brisbane were all running at a loss; how can we expect that this line will pay? That is the position. I do not wish to labour the question, but I cannot help repeating that the inclusion of the paragraph in the Speech was no more nor less than a party political move. There was no other object than to discredit the Federal Labour Government and, possibly, by obtaining a refusal from the Labour Government in South Australia, to injure the Labour party there also. Unfortunately, there are times when members accept any excuse to vote against a proposal they do not approve of, and in this case the paragraph in the Speech will provide a fitting excuse for those Federal members who think that if they vote against the line now the two States may possibly construct it themselves.

Mr. Gordon: Mr. O'Malley did not want any excuse.

Mr. GILL: He will vote for the line. I am surprised that the paragraph was ever embodied in the Speech, and I hope the Government will give the people of Western Australia to understand that they were joking when they inserted it. If such is done no harm will result, but if a serious attempt is made to do what the Government profess, it will be a sorry day for our railway, and will injure the prospects of its construction very considerably.

On motion by Mr. Osborn, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 9.40 p.m.