

There is a credit each month, certainly ; but the works that are provided for in the consolidated revenue come in all of a heap after the lapse of six months. Then for the ensuing half-year there is a loss, a debit. In that way our financial credit is injured.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER : How is it to be remedied ?

MR. DOHERTY : It can be remedied. The Colonial Treasurer should see that the amount allotted out of the consolidated revenue for the year to the Public Works Department is paid month by month to that Department.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER : Would not that be giving big patronage to the Public Works Department ?

MR. DOHERTY : You already do that. You book the same amount of money, only under different circumstances.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER : We ear-mark it.

MR. DOHERTY : But you ear-mark it in the same way for roads and bridges.

THE PREMIER : The method is in use in the Eastern States.

MR. DOHERTY : I am greatly obliged for that information ; I shall look further into it. I do not think it is necessary for me to urge, as I believe the policy has already been enunciated by the Colonial Treasurer, that the proceeds from the sale of Crown lands made or created by the advance of public works should not go into the general revenue funds, but should be credited as a sinking fund for the reduction of our public debt. It is for public works we borrow money on the credit of our State ; and the public works having created the value of that land, I think the loan account should be credited with the proceeds of sales of such lands, and the amount should appear as a sinking fund for the reduction of our public debt. I think the suggestion is one worthy of the Colonial Treasurer's attention, even at this late hour. I wish now simply to express the hope that to-morrow morning we shall hear of better results in regard to the railway trouble and that the unanimity which has characterised this House will have a beneficial effect on the men ; so that the anxiety which seems to hang over us all will be dispelled. It will be due to all sides of the House, but particularly to the seven

gentlemen occupying Labour seats, if the strike is settled. We might have expected our friend who has constituted himself the leader of the Labour party—because no gentleman in the House has had so varied an experience from such different positions in the House as he has had —

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS : What about your gem ?

MR. DOHERTY : The Minister for Public Works, in speaking of the member for Boulder, characterised him as "a perfect gem." It was quite a mystery to me why he did, although of course I thought it was right, seeing that the member for Boulder sits on the Government side of the House. I asked for an explanation of the term, and it was pointed out to me that a perfect gem is cut with 256 faces. I thought that hardly went far enough, because to represent the member for Boulder adequately would require 365 faces, or one for every day in the year. Finally, at this very late hour, Mr. Speaker, I must apologise to you for my neglect of that phrase which is necessary to the honour of the Chair ; but I have been, I assure you, addressing so many public meetings of late that I had forgotten the phrase which is due as a mark of respect to the Chair. I thank hon. members for the cordial and kindly manner in which they have listened to me.

MR. R. HASTIE (Kanowna) : The hon. member who has just sat down struck, I believe, a responsive chord in his reference to the desirability of non-party government. I believe that everyone of us is fully convinced that it is possible for people under certain circumstances simply to support that Government which they believe to be the best. No man in theory advocates party Government ; but if an example were wanted to show how the practice of it pans out, it is to be observed by those who heard the last speech ; for the hon. member delivered probably one of the most useful speeches that has been delivered in this Chamber. The manner in which he handled figures has certainly not been eclipsed by anyone. Yet the hon. member was present in this House during the last two years, when all this tremendous financial muddle was going on ; and he does not appear to have



opposed the Government responsible for it. He allowed all this muddling to go on. I feel quite sure that had this House been divided into anything like equal parties—and party government implies something like an equal division of parties—that very great muddle could not have occurred. I wish to refer, in passing, to the compliments which have been paid to those who sit on this (Labour) bench; and I really must ask why it is so. Over and over again several hon. members have declared that every section of the House has agreed especially to thank these people here. What did they take us for? Did they think we were going to do something wrong? I feel in the same position as a man would feel if a friend came along and said to him, "You are a very nice fellow; I feel quite sure you are not going to pick my pocket or strike me." I do not think that man would feel complimented, and I confess candidly we do not relish the very complimentary terms in which various members have spoken, because it seems to us that you must have taken us for very evilly-disposed persons. ("No, no.") The hon. member who has just sat down strongly advised those who were new to Parliamentary life to hurl no mud. If I should do so I would certainly not be following the example of that hon. gentleman, for he spoke well practically of everyone. I wish to explain the position in which we are placed. Some time to-day I did so, but I should like to go a little bit farther. The member for the Murray (Mr. George) in his speech last night, referring to this party, said that we represented not only our constituents, but represented Labour and represented certain organisations; and he went on to say that because we represented a particular interest we should not be counted when the numerical strength of the voters represented by the two sides of the House was spoken of. I do not know why. It is possible for us to agree with Ministers on many questions and at the same time to hold on other questions views with which Ministers may possibly not agree. But if we do claim to be a party, surely it is only fair that we should be placed in the same position as other hon. members. The member for the Murray further proceeded to indicate practically what he had heard from many parts of the country—

that the Labour party do not say definitely whom they will support, but sell their votes to the highest bidder. I think those were the words he used. He asked, how did we know but that the Labour party might support the other side?

MR. W. J. GEORGE (in explanation): I rise to say that I think the hon. member must have misunderstood me. If my words bear any construction such as that I said the Labour party could be bought, it was certainly not my intention that the words should bear that meaning, and I regret it more than my words can express.

A MEMBER: Bought by concessions.

MR. HASTIE: I do not mean that the hon. member had any ulterior meaning, any ulterior view, in the words he used. He meant, bought by superior concessions from the other side. But if the hon. member will think of the position we were all placed in a month or two ago, he surely will not draw that conclusion; for at that particular time, there is no doubt, the last Government would have offered at least as many concessions for our particular support as the gentlemen now in office. We certainly did not consider the question, and very largely we refrained from doing so, because there was one important consideration, even more important than those of the ordinary position in which we stand. There had been a referendum of the people, and that referendum declared it was absolutely necessary for the country to have a change of Government. We recognised that in the same way as, I am glad to say, it has been ultimately recognised by most of the members of the House; and this present Administration was accordingly allowed to have a chance. The main reason that we were desirous of a new Ministry is the absolute necessity for a good many changes in the administration of public affairs. The hon. member who spoke last pointed out a very strong reason why we require to have things looked into. The railways, he said, are the principal asset of this country—he put it very forcibly indeed—and we ought all to remember that as the amount of railway outlay increases, profit from them becomes proportionately smaller. That means, I believe, that the vast majority of the railways we