

miles and take many children to school. The vehicles could also be utilised to carry a few passengers, mails, and parcels from time to time. In many instances I am convinced we are not getting the best service from our country railways. I should be glad to see a definite appointment made to control the system, and then to see whether we cannot get more up to date methods introduced. I would like to have seen some mention made in the Governor's Speech of an agricultural college. This question, I understood, was being taken up by the Government. If we did establish an agricultural college in the State it should be one that we could be proud of. It should be in a sufficient area of ground that would leave room for much work to be carried out. The misfortune we have suffered under is that our overhead charges have become too great. The establishment gets overloaded with buildings and it is not in a sufficiently convenient position to attract the number of students required to make it a successful institution. Preparation should be made for a large number of students. They need not necessarily be drawn from within the State, but we should anticipate getting a number from the Old Country or from the outside world. There are many who would take exception to my suggestion that a large area should be set aside, but I would like to stress the point that it should be a large area so that the students would be convinced in their own minds that they had gone through a complete course of training, and at the same time those who would be likely to employ them afterwards would be more convinced of the value of the education the students had received. We would in that way experience greater success. There are many properties which require managers and those in control of them would invariably approach an agricultural college and select students from such an institution. I hope the Government will not lose sight of these facts which I have related. When an agricultural college is established, an area should also be set aside for forestry, because we want every one of the settlers who has a large property to give his attention to forestry. Every one of these estates must give its attention to its own supplies of firewood and its own supplies of wood on its own property for fencing purposes in the future. Hence the manager we shall want to employ will have to be someone who will give his attention to that kind of thing. I mention these matters because, as time goes on, it will be found more and more necessary to give attention to these questions. We cannot expect to give satisfaction to those who are likely to require the services of graduates from such a college, unless the college is established on wide lines. Before I conclude I desire to endorse the remarks made by Mr. Rose to-day, when he referred to the work which was being done by the Ugly Men's Association in the way of educating and training some of the returned soldiers and others who have to await the decisions of

the Lands Department or the military authorities before they can turn their attention to some definite pursuit. I have seen some of these young fellows about town, and felt sorry for them, because time appeared to be hanging heavily on their hands. They are being given an opportunity to learn a little about tinsmithing, blacksmithing and carpentry, and various other things which will be of the utmost value to them, and I feel that the people who are doing such good work are doing more perhaps than those who put their hands into their pockets and give £5, £10, or £20. I thank hon. members for their attention during the opportunity I have had of making these few remarks.

On motion by the Minister for Education debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 9.30 p.m.*

## Legislative Assembly,

*Wednesday, 20th August, 1919.*

	PAGE.
Questions: Pine Plantation, Ludlow	268
Education Inspectorships	269
Prisoners, reformatory treatment	269
Government Power House	269
Immigration Secretary	269
Supreme Court vacancies	269
Bill: Justices Act Amendment, 1A.	270
Address-in-reply, eighth day	270

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

### QUESTION—PINE PLANTATION, LUDLOW.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Minister for Mines: 1, What is the reason for cutting down the large area of pines on the Ludlow plantation? 2, Who was responsible for the planting of the pines, and what was the cost? 3, What is the intention of the department with regard to the denuded area? 4, If this action was necessitated owing to an error in planting, what is the estimated loss to the State consequent thereupon?

The HONORARY MINISTER (for the Minister for Mines) replied: 1, Because they were dying. 2, Forestry Advisory Board, consisting of Mr. Adams, Mr. J. C. Port, and Sir Newton Moore. The cost will be ascertained. 3, Replant with a pine that will grow (viz., Maritime Pine) in the soil and climate of the district. 4, This can only be ascertained when the pines being cut are sold.

### QUESTION—EDUCATION, INSPECTORSHIPS.

Mr. MALEY (for Mr. Griffiths) asked the Premier: 1, When was the decision made to limit the recent appointment to the inspectorship in the Education Department to men under 40 years of age, and by whom? 2, Why was this dominating factor not announced in the advertisement calling for applications for the position? 3, How many applications for the position were received—(a) from men under 40 years of age; (b) from men over 40 years of age? 4, What were the names, dates of appointment, ages on appointment, and positions held immediately before appointment of men appointed as inspectors in the Education Department during the past five years?

The PREMIER replied: 1, The recommendation to appoint a man under 40 was made by the Public Service Commissioner, with the concurrence of the Minister for Education and the Director of Education, on July 21st. 2, It has not been laid down as an absolute condition of appointment that a man shall be under 40, but as there was a thoroughly suitable candidate under that age it was considered that the selection of such a candidate was preferable. 3, (a) One; (b) Ten. 4, No inspectors have been appointed during the past five years.

### QUESTION—PRISONERS, REFORMATIVE TREATMENT.

Mr. ROCKE asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What is the number of commitments made under the reformatory provisions of the Prisons Act Amendment Act, 1918? 2, Is it a fact that prisoners so committed perform their daily tasks in association with ordinarily convicted prisoners? 3, If so, is that method of treatment in accordance with the provisions of the Act? 4, If not, what steps do the Government propose to take to administer the Act in accord with the intentions of the Legislature?

The PREMIER (for the Colonial Secretary) replied: 1, One. 2, The one prisoner has special accommodation and privileges, but associates with the other prisoners in the workshops at his own request. 3, No other method is possible under existing conditions. 4, Proposals are at present under consideration.

### QUESTION—GOVERNMENT POWER HOUSE.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN asked the Minister for Railways: As the electrical plant at the Perth power house is now turning out approximately the maximum supply of electricity, is it the intention of the Government to provide forthwith additional plant which will enable the present consumers to rely on a continuous supply of electric current, and provide for new consumers?

The HONORARY MINISTER (for the Minister for Railways) replied: It is antici-

pated that the existing plant will meet all demands until the winter of 1921, when additional plant will be required, and inquiries in regard thereto are now being made.

### QUESTION—IMMIGRATION SECRE- TARY.

Mr. MULLANY (for Mr. Underwood) asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, In view of the fact that applications for the position of Secretary of Immigration (London Office) were received, and a recommendation made by the Public Service Commissioner some months ago, when is an appointment to be made? 2, Is this appointment being held over in order to work Mr. Kingsley Fairbridge into the position? 3, Has Mr. Kingsley Fairbridge been appointed to a position in the London Immigration Office? 4, If so, what is the position?

The PREMIER (for the Colonial Secretary) replied: 1, The whole question of the appointment of the London Office staff is being reconsidered. 2, No. 3, No. Mr. Fairbridge has been attached to the London Office for a period of six months to further develop a scheme of child immigration. 4, Answered by No. 3.

### QUESTION—SUPREME COURT VACANCIES.

Mr. MULLANY (for Mr. Underwood) asked the Attorney General: 1, Is it a fact that in the *Gazette* of Friday, 14th March, a notice appeared that there was a vacancy in the Public Service for a Master of the Supreme Court at a salary of £765 to £960, and for a Deputy Master at a salary of £504 to £636, the applications for which positions closed on the 17th March? 2, Is it a fact that on 21st March the Public Service Commissioner announced in the public Press that Dr. Stow of the Crown Law Department had been appointed to the position of Master at £756 per annum, and that he would enter on his duties when arrangements could be made for carrying out the work of the Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman and Crown Solicitor? 3, Is it a fact that a notice appeared in the *Government Gazette* on Friday, 16th May, that there were vacancies in the Crown Law Department for a Crown Solicitor and Assistant Parliamentary Draftsman at a salary of £636 to £852 per annum, and a Crown Prosecutor at a salary of £552 to £708, and that applications for these positions closed on the following day? 4, Is it usual for the vacancies in the Public Service to be announced one day, and applications to close on the following day? 5, Has any appointment been made in respect of the two latter vacancies, and if not, why not?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL replied: 1, The notice in question was gazetted on the 28th February, 7th March, and 14th March, and was returnable 17th March. 2, No. The Public Service Commissioner announced that Dr. Stow was the selected applicant. 3, The

notice in question was gazetted on the 2nd May, 9th May, and 16th May, and was returnable the 17th May. 4, No, nor was it in this instance, as shown above. 5, No. The Master, Supreme Court, is on 12 months' leave; the work of the Court does not at present warrant a further appointment beyond the Deputy Master acting as Master, and I am of opinion that the appointment of a Crown Prosecutor is at present unnecessary.

## BILL—JUSTICES ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Attorney General and read a first time.

## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Eighth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr. MALEY (Greenough): Unlike other members on this side of the House, who have spoken on the Address-in-reply, I do not find myself in a difficult position in offering my congratulations to the Premier upon his elevation to the first seat on the Treasury benches.

Hon. P. Collier: Is there no reservation?

Mr. MALEY: None whatever. I can do this if only by reason of the fact that the hon. gentleman is a good Western Australian, and from the fact that after the party had deposed one Western Australian there was still another left.

Hon. P. Collier: That did not stand by the late Premier, who was a Western Australian.

Mr. MALEY: There is some hope that by a process of attrition the few remaining Western Australians may succeed in time to this important position.

Hon. P. Collier: You are very near the end of the list.

Mr. MALEY: There has been a great deal of talk already during the session, but I am of opinion that what the public require in hon. members is that we should get right down to business and grapple with the problems with which the people are being so heavily pressed to-day. With regard to the question of the cost of living, which will be dealt with more fully when the Bill comes before us, I would say that there are many phases of the question of profiteering with which no State Government, or perhaps even the Federal Government, can grapple. There are influences outside Australia which are beyond our control and are operating in the direction of inflating prices to-day. Mention has been made by hon. members of the transactions of the Federal Government in regard to the supply of corn sacks. I do not know whether any legislation that could be introduced in Australia would have any effect in this matter.

Mr. Munsie: Certainly it would.

Mr. MALEY: I am not able to say whether it would or not, owing to the outside influences at work. I should like to quote a state-

ment made by the Minister for Customs, Mr. Massey Greene, in Melbourne on the 28th of last month. It is as follows:—

Prior to the last wheat harvest, owing partly to the rapid advancement of the jute market in India, and partly to the great difficulties in regard to freight, the Government in consultation with the trade decided to purchase all the bags required for harvest operations, and sell them at fixed prices to the farmers. The transaction is now practically complete and all the bags have been sold. It can now be stated that the Government will secure a profit of £117,000 after paying all interest charges. As these bags were imported with the sole object of helping the farmers during a difficult period, the Government has decided to place at the disposal of the Central Wheat Board £110,000 for distribution amongst the wheat-producing States through their respective wheat pools. It will be some little time before the money is actually available for distribution, but ultimately users of the bags will get the benefit of this large sum of money.

When the Federal Government decided, before the last harvest, to purchase the full season's supply for the whole of the Commonwealth, they approached the Jute Supply Association in Calcutta. I may say that I have followed this matter through the Federal "Hansard" and read the various questions which have been asked in the matter. The Jute Association absolutely refused to trade with the Commonwealth authorities. The Commonwealth then had to invoke the aid of the Imperial Government to bring pressure to bear upon the Indian Government, through the Controller, to allow this purchase to be made. It has been definitely stated in answer to questions in the Federal House that even then the association in India only sold to the Commonwealth Government on condition that any surplus would have to be put back through the ordinary dealers in jute goods.

Mr. Munsie: The Minister did not say that.

Mr. MALEY: The Minister stated that in reply to a question.

Mr. Munsie: He never mentioned a surplus.

Mr. MALEY: I do not think any legislation we can enact will have any control over circumstances such as those. I hope the Minister controlling the Wheat Scheme in this State will allow arrangements to be made similar to those which prevailed last year, and which allowed the farmer to pay for his corn sacks through the Wheat Pool. By that arrangement farmers in the State were saved between £7,000 and £8,000 in connection with the purchase of corn sacks. It is a regrettable fact that since the House rose last session the base metal industry in my electorate has closed down and some 400 or 500 men have been thrown out of employment.

Hon. P. Collier: It is a shame that that is so.

Mr. MALEY: It is. I constantly urged the Minister during last session to try and see what would be the state of affairs after the termination of hostilities, and although we have the spectacle of the Minister controlling the Wheat Scheme continually going to Melbourne to attend conferences, no special attempt was ever made by the Minister for Mines to confer with the authorities in Melbourne on this important question.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Minister for Mines has just been there.

Hon. P. Collier: I have stated that the Government should defy the Federal authorities and export base metals.

Mr. Hudson: That is what I advised.

Mr. MALEY: Quite recently the Minister for Mines attended a conference in Melbourne.

Mr. Hudson: I had made arrangements to go to Melbourne, but there were three Ministers already there.

Mr. MALEY: I urged upon the Government throughout last session to take every step possible to ascertain what would be the position of the base metal industry after hostilities ceased. I have given notice of a motion dealing with this matter and perhaps it would be advisable to discuss the question fully when that comes before hon. members. Still I must say now that I am of opinion even though shipping arrangements are so difficult, that it would be possible to revive the industry in Western Australia. I know that brokers would be willing to purchase ore stacked in Geraldton provided a reasonable assurance was forthcoming in regard to the removal of the Federal embargo. This is a very serious matter for my district. It has been responsible for throwing out of employment a great number of men who have had to go elsewhere to seek employment and perhaps take that work which would otherwise have been offered to those who are returning to our shores.

Hon. P. Collier: It affects the whole State.

Mr. MALEY: I will amplify my remarks on this question later on when my motion comes up for consideration. With regard to repatriation, while I have no particular grievance about settling men on any part of the State, whether it be north, south or east, I think that there are parts of the State other than the South-West which should command as much treatment as the South-West is receiving at the present juncture. I have made some attempts to gain information from the Premier, but there seems to be a desire to evade giving replies to questions that hon. members in their advocacy of the claims of their particular districts have submitted to the Government. A week or two ago I asked a question in relation to estates offered for repatriation purposes in the Victoria district. I also asked what area of Crown land was available. The reply was that the estates were not suitable for re-purchase and that an investigation and classification had been made of the Crown lands in the Victoria district. I thought the

time was ripe to convene a conference of the repatriation boards in the Geraldton district and they asked me to obtain information in regard to what was the area of Crown land which was available and I received the reply which I have just quoted, as well as an answer to my second question that the area of Crown lands available could not be estimated. If that was not an evasion of a question which was asked for useful purposes, I do not know what is. I want to refer to the attention which is being given to the South-West. I do not think any hon. member can point to five men who, during the past 50 years, have made money from the land in the South-West.

The Premier: What?

Mr. MALEY: There are any number of men there who have money, but they have made it elsewhere.

Mr. Money: There is not a district which has had less assistance from the Government than the South-West.

Mr. MALEY: They propose to make up leeway now in a hurry. I am of opinion that we have a very valuable asset in the South-West, but it is not going to be determined by this generation or even the next.

Mr. Money: Yes, it is. Where do you get your potatoes from now?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We do not get any at all. They are too dear.

Mr. Money: Where do you get your butter from?

Mr. Munsie: From Victoria.

Mr. MALEY: In the Geraldton district we are paying no less than £24 a ton for potatoes and if that will not stimulate production in the South-West without boasting, I do not know what will. It is not a fair proposition to ask a soldier to spend his life in what after all must prove a disappointment to him. He is entitled to make good and the whole history of the South-West, at any rate that particular portion to which so much attention is being given, is one of heart-breaking failures.

Mr. Money: Cut the South-West off. It will take care of itself. It will find its own destiny. Where do you get your coal from and your timbers?

Mr. MALEY: I do not wish to decry any portion of the State.

Mr. Pickering: You are making a very good attempt.

Mr. MALEY: An assurance should be given to the soldiers that they should have a reasonable and easy chance of success during their lifetime. They should not be made to struggle and the conditions should not be made such that their sons or their grand children may reap the success. The men who are going on the land now are entitled to derive the benefit during their own lifetime.

Mr. Pickering: So they will if they get proper assistance.

Mr. MALEY: I think they can get all they want in other parts of the State where land will readily respond to the axe and subsequently to mixed farming. There are

many returned men who could have found employment in the lead mines of Northampton provided, of course, that industry was kept going. I have no desire to lead anyone to believe that in the cultivation of wheat only a man may succeed in this State. After all wheat growing is about the biggest gamble of the lot. I speak from practical experience and in this direction an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory. In 1914 when my brothers and myself had reached the maximum amount of development and had invested our maximum amount of capital, we did not reap a bag from the 3,000 acres which we had put in. We were faced with the position that we had to get our stock off the land. In the succeeding year our financial advisers were dubious about carrying us on. We scratched as much as we possibly could and in that year the failure was worse than that of the preceding year, but in the next year we were fortunate enough to get a return of 14,000 bags from the 3,000 acres. That shows what a gamble wheat growing is when carried out by itself. Our district is favourably situated for mixed farming. Looking back on our experience, any man who settled in that district, or through the middle districts from Moora to Northampton, could, without undertaking heavy clearing, make 5,000 acres carry at least 1,000 sheep within three years. Freezing works will eventually be established in Geraldton, which makes the proposition the more attractive. A man with 1,000 ewes, and fat lambs for freezing, would be able to make a nice income without the effort required in clearing and cultivating the heavily timbered areas in the South-West. The question of freezing works has been brought into prominence recently. It is remarkable that, in spite of the anticipations of a glut of stock in this State and of the necessity for meeting it by providing freezing works at Fremantle, the metropolitan stock market has been higher in the past month than ever in the history of the State. At this period of the year, when the metropolitan market should be supplied with fat stock from the southern districts, there is nothing reasonable in the way of fat stock forthcoming from those districts to meet the demand. Most of the stock is coming in from the Midland and Murchison districts, although there is supposed to be a drought in the Murchison. This does not speak too well for the South-West, although its champions assert that there are more sheep south of Mingenew than north of it. During this portion of the year, when the South-West should have an abundance of fat stock, it has scarcely a single hoof.

Mr. Pickering: That is not right.

Mr. MALEY: The people in my district would not be at all sorry if the Government took over the control of the freezing works at Fremantle. This would lead those pastoralists, who have made their money in the Murchison districts, to support the erection of freezing works

in their own district. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) stated last night that the Gascoyne freezing works were in the course of erection. Although Geraldton has been deprived of the assistance of very many prominent pastoralists who still have holdings in the Murchison district, and who are supporting the Fremantle proposition, we have £55,000 subscribed towards the Geraldton venture; and we hope in the next month or so to reach the £70,000 mark.

Hon. P. Collier: You have been more successful than the Monger venture at Fremantle. The growers whom it was designed to assist woke up to the fact that their interests were not properly protected.

Mr. Pickering: They had a chance and would not take the shares.

Mr. Robinson: The underwriters are all growers.

Hon. P. Collier: All big growers.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order!

Mr. MALEY: Most of the underwriters are men who have huge pastoral interests in the Murchison district and who, by virtue of that, should have put their money into the Geraldton project.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What assistance did you get from the Government?

Mr. MALEY: I think we shall not require any money from the Government if they take over the Fremantle project.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What did the Government promise you?

Mr. MALEY: Thirty thousand pounds.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: At five per cent. interest, too?

Mr. MALEY: At 5 per cent., I think.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is £130,000. I do not know whether there is any more.

Mr. MALEY: In connection with the dairying industry, I have been engaged during the recess in the promotion of a company in our own district. I took a trip around the eastern districts through Katanning and Narrogin, to see how the various companies promoted there were getting on. When I went to Gnowangerup, the temperature for three weeks had been over 100, and although the country had been practically burnt out by fire—most of the settlers were carting water, and generally the district was in the worst possible condition—the factory was turning out about 15cwt. of butter per week. I do not say that the Gnowangerup factory provides an illustration of how a factory should be built, or how butter should be made; it does not; but it shows that in the driest wheat growing districts butter can be produced. I have been following the report of the Interstate commission and was struck when reading Federal "Hansard" with the remarks of Mr. Gibson, member for Corangamite, who claimed that there were more dairy farms in his district than in the whole of Victoria. He quoted extensively from the Interstate commission's report to show that the dairying industry in Victoria was being conducted under the worst possible conditions, from the workers' point of view, of any in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Mullanly: What can you expect when they are paying up to £4 15s. a year for rent?

Mr. MALEY: The report showed that those engaged in the industry were not earning 25s. a week throughout the year. We do not want that condition of affairs to apply here by repurchasing estates in the South-West at the figures which have been paid for them.

Mr. Munsie: The soldiers are doomed if they take that land at the price.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): There is no comparison. They pay as much per annum for rent in Victoria as would be paid for the land here.

Mr. MALEY: What will be the result in the South-West if these huge sums of money are tipped out there? Will not it create land values? Absolutely. Having succeeded in forming the Geraldton company, we have 400 shareholders holding 4,000 shares and, with the exception of a few townspeople, nearly the whole of them are producers. When we began to call up capital, we approached the Minister for Industries regarding the assistance the Government proposed to give. It was laid down under the handwriting of the Minister that we should get a loan of £1 for every £1 we actually raised. Security was to be taken over the whole of the plant and buildings of the company at 5½ or 6½ per cent. interest.

Hon. W. C. Augwin: The poor farmers have to pay 7 per cent.

Mr. MALEY: The company had to provide sinking fund and interest to redeem the loan in 20 years. They were to be allowed to pay only 6 per cent. to their shareholders out of the profits made—and it is problematical whether any profit will be made—but any profit over 6 per cent. was to be refunded to the Government by way of discharging the loan. The company would not be allowed to use any of the profit over the 6 per cent. to enlarge the plant or premises.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Are you sure, or did not we say it must not be distributed by way of dividends?

Mr. MALEY: I am speaking from memory now but, at the proper time, I shall deal with the matter fully. If the dairying industry is to be established, it will not be done under such methods as that.

Mr. Underwood: Nor where you get six dry months of summer either.

Mr. MALEY: It would be impossible to successfully establish the industry with the class of stock in the State to-day and, unless the Government pay greater attention to providing studs throughout the various districts where the factories are being established, we shall not make any real headway. There will be a tremendous amount of wasted effort if breeding is not conducted on right lines. It is lamentable

that, no matter where we go, this fact applies. The Colonial Secretary visited Narrogin a few weeks ago and was very strong in his condemnation of the inferior stock on the Narrogin State farm. The same thing applies to the Chapman State Farm, where there is still the herd of cattle introduced by Mr. Crawford, who was dairy expert about 20 years ago. Those cattle were put there to give a practical demonstration of how wattle suckers could be kept down by this variety of animal. The cattle have been described as black goats, and that is about what they amount to. The Government would be well advised to appoint experienced breeders—such men as Mr. McKenzie Grant of Geraldton, Mr. Edgar of Gingin, and Mr. Corbett of Gnowangerup—an advisory board in this connection.

Mr. Underwood: It is not so much a matter of the breeding as of the feeding.

Mr. Harrison: Both are essential.

Mr. MALEY: Another practical suggestion I offer to the Minister, whose capacity for receiving suggestions is unlimited; refers to one of the great problems facing the agricultural industry of this State; and that is the cost of production. The Government would be well advised to send abroad a couple of good practical farmers—not departmental officials—to gain the latest information regarding traction power. It is impossible to think that during the war, having regard to the genius applied to traction, something has not been evolved which can be applied on the farms of this State. Certainly the war has demonstrated that horse traction is obsolete. If men of practical farming experience are selected for the task, the gain to the agricultural community would be almost inestimable.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): We now have in this State three of the very best tractors.

Mr. MALEY: Probably they are of a type that has been discarded in America as out of date.

Hon. P. Collier: How long have the Government had them?

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): About four months.

Mr. MALEY: Much of the machinery used prior to the war in the agricultural industry of the Old Country would to-day be considered obsolete. In my opinion the financial position of the State can be restored by united effort on the part of the whole community. I am one of those who believe that the average good sense of Australian industrialists and of the men who represent them will solve the very serious industrial problems with which we are confronted to-day. When the producer does his best and the worker does his best, we shall be on the road to national safety again. To-day it might be said that we are on the verge of bankruptcy, but there is no occasion for despair, since by pulling together we can restore prosperity.

Mr. BROWN (Subiaco): There are three golden rules which every speaker who desires to be effective should observe: first, to stand up; second, to speak up; and, third and most important, to know when to shut up. I disagree with the criticism of the member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) of the speech of the leader of the Opposition in this debate. I think the leader of the Opposition was very fair and impartial, and delivered a criticism of the Ministry and their following which was well deserved. One thing said by the member for Pilbara in which I fully agree with him is that the time is past for party politics. The hon. member stated that the time had arrived for the formation of a party of the electors of Pilbara and himself. The Premier has said more than once that he believes the day of party politics to be past, and that he will do what he can to prevent a continuance of the system. The Minister for Mines at a very crowded meeting held in the Perth Town Hall a few weeks ago emphatically stated that his experience of party politics was such as to lead him to regard the continuance of that system as undesirable. We have also heard from the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) his objection to party politics, and the member for Leonora (Mr. Foley) has stated straight out that he wishes to be relieved from party politics. Further, the member for Menzies (Mr. Mullany) last night expressed his approval of the abolition of party politics. The member for Subiaco is quite in accord with all those speakers, and I hope that in the immediate future there will come into existence in this House a body that will put a stop to the principle of the ins and outs. Nationalism was a suitable name for a special time, but that time is now past. I hope Ministers will stay on the floor of the House, and that in future we shall have in this Chamber, instead of His Majesty's Ministerial advisers and His Majesty's opposition, only His Majesty's Ministerial advisers. During the war we learnt of a territory termed "no man's land," on which friend and foe met to save life, and very often succeeded in doing so. I should like to see a "no man's land" created in this House, so that all the members of this Chamber could meet in the endeavour to save this State from losing self-government. At present we have in this House two well-defined parties—the private enterprise party, who see only through the right eye, and sometimes not very clearly with that, and the State enterprise or Labour party, who mostly see only through the left eye.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What about the Country party?

Hon. P. Collier: They have no eye at all.

Mr. BROWN: Both the parties I have mentioned may be described as one-eyed. These two parties are in the habit of calling each other very disagreeable names. The State enterprise party call the private enterprise party shipping sharks, freezing lambers, manufacturing hoodlums, beef brigands, bread and butter exploiters, and a thousand and one other uncomplimentary terms. The private

enterprise party retaliate by saying that there is no good on the other side, that members opposite are mostly thieves and loafers and blackguards and drunkards and gamblers. After all said and done, what is the use to the community of having those terms thrown about? The time is past for that kind of thing, and both sides should drop it entirely. In connection with national enterprise, the whole community is now called upon to consider what are the public utilities which should be nationalised. I think everyone will agree that nationalisation of railways is the proper thing, inasmuch as it results in equitable treatment of all parts of the country as regards railway facilities. We have had railway nationalisation in Australia for many years, and America and Britain are now deciding upon that system, which tends to prove that it is the right system. If anything requires nationalisation, it is the shipping industry of the whole world. Extreme injury has been done by the profiteering tactics of ship owners during the last five years.

Mr. Jones: You had better come over and sit with me.

Mr. BROWN: If the hon. member will come half way, I will meet him on that neutral ground which I have mentioned. As regards shipping, the enormous governmental transport of all classes afforded to ship owners an opportunity to impose outrageous freights, at the same time telling the people that this was being done because of the dangers to which the ships were exposed. But, as a fact, the whole community paid extremely high insurance charges, so that the ship owners as ship owners incurred little or no more risk than in the days before the war. I contend that a regard for the welfare of the community should have induced the ship owners to be satisfied with reasonable profits. But they have always obtained more than reasonable profits, in my opinion. To-day we are faced in Australia with a stoppage of sea transport which has already extended over nearly six months, with the result that all our coastal towns are in difficulties, and great suffering and want have been inflicted on the people as a whole. Some say that the seamen should have less or more pay, and others say that the ship owners have been getting too much. I am sure that a nationalisation of the shipping industry would bring about the transport of commodities in a reasonable way and at reasonable cost. The ship owners claim that they must have a fair rate of interest on the capital they have invested, but instead of being satisfied with 15 or 20 per cent. on their risk, they want 200 or 300 per cent. Australia should stand out in the matter of State steamships, and I compliment the Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, on his courage in taking upon himself the responsibility and criticism and abuse involved in committing Australia to an expenditure of 11 millions sterling for the purchase of ships. The more ships we have in Australia the safer shall we be from the profiteer. We may have one fight with the shipping boycott, such as is

now being introduced in England by the shipping conference. But if the shipping conference decides that they will not allow shippers to send goods to Australia in the Commonwealth vessels then we, as buyers of the goods, will retort, "We will not buy from those merchants unless we get a fair deal in connection with the ships." Another enterprise which should be nationalised is that of banking. We have to-day all over Australia banks out of all proportion to the requirements. They occupy expensive buildings, have expensive furniture and fittings and costly office staffs. A small community of five million people have to carry them all.

Hon. P. Collier: And in comparatively small towns we find two and three banks.

Mr. BROWN: In Kalgoorlie there are seven private banks and two Government banks, practically not one of them earning a living. If the banking business were nationalised half the people so employed could be turned out of their present occupations and sent to do some useful work elsewhere. In addition, these banks, owing to the expenses and the necessity for making big dividends for their shareholders, charge out of all proportion for the services they render, when we go to borrow money. Many people have more money than they know how to use. They go to that bank which will give them the highest interest, and in consequence that bank has to charge a higher rate than the borrower can afford to pay for money for developmental work. If it were possible for the nation to own all banking, a man with a lot of money might get one per cent. Then the bank might add another  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for administrative purposes, and the borrower would perhaps get his money at three per cent. and do a lot of developmental work, which is at present impossible. Another public utility which should be nationalised is insurance. To-day we are paying excessive premiums for the services rendered. We have 42 insurance companies in this State, everyone of them in an expensive building with an expensive staff, and having to create big dividends for its shareholders. There is no competition in insurance. The companies have a schedule of rates and a schedule of payments, and if a big insurance proposition comes along they split it up and so share the risk. A private system of insurance might have been reasonable in the past, when competition existed, but when no competition exists the nation should take charge of insurance. Another suggestion which I would make is as yet a bit ahead of practical politics. But these things must be spoken of in advance, before we are ready to deal seriously with them. I contend that coal should be nationalised. The greatest mineral the world has is coal. Probably the greatest discovery yet made by civilisation was the discovery of coal with its use for steam purposes, lighting, heating, and for the thousand and one chemicals produced from coal. Humanity does not know what we owe to King Coal. Another thing which, in my opinion, should be nationalised, is land. I

am a great opponent of the freehold of land. I think land nationalisation should be considered in all seriousness. In the past everyone has been trying to get hold of as much land as possible. I have done the same thing myself. But I am living under a social system which I wish to see altered, and I should like to prevent any more land being alienated under the freehold principle. I contend that the principle has been abused. In the very early days conquest was responsible for the distribution of land for services rendered. At a later stage we had purchasers securing the right to use some of that land, and to-day also we have to ask somebody else to let us have a bit of land for our own use. Another feature in connection with the freehold of land is that a man may become the owner of a specially favoured site convenient for public buildings. If that man is to have that benefit over all others he should be made to pay specially for it. I have enumerated four or five public utilities from which I think the people should get the whole benefit.

Hon. P. Collier: The king industries, the base of all other industries.

Mr. BROWN: We are practically living on, from, or by these industries. In connection with land, the day will come when there will be no land for the children, unless somebody else more fortunate is prepared to allow them to have some of the alienated land. The biggest problem we have in the State at the present time is political. The question is, can we maintain our local self-government under existing conditions? This question will have to be seriously considered by every Parliamentarian and by the public. I think the abolition of party politics would put us on the right road to continue local self-government. If we proceed as we are doing the day is not far distant when our money-lending friends will come along and ask us to pay with our own money, and not by further loan money, for the goods that we have had. When that day comes we shall be either taken over financially by the Commonwealth or absorbed and administered as a second Northern Territory or Papua, and that will be the end of us as a local self-governing State. In connection with finance, we have not during the past eight years once balanced our books. We are now going on into the ninth successive year of that sort of thing. During those eight years we have accumulated  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million pounds worth of goods for which we have not paid. It is a pretty awkward position to have to make provision for that great debt. We have a particularly long coastline, and a particularly big territory to develop, and, having regard to our small population, we have developed a little more rapidly than we ought to have done. The Commonwealth now think of reducing our per capita return by half-a-crown per annum for the next six years. If they seriously mean that, we shall have to get some slogan to frighten them from that line of action. I suggest some such slogan as



"Support secession as against absorption." I am not fond of secession myself, but we have a right to live our own lives. We have done what no other Australian State has done in the same proportion, namely, we have put away five million pounds as a sinking fund with which to redeem our loans at maturity. Other States have done hardly anything. A few have small amounts to credit, but in proportion to the amounts borrowed they have nothing like our sinking fund. We might get for our immediate wants a little more revenue. I am sorry the Premier did not mention that we want more revenue. We may get a little more from income tax. I think we shall have to increase that tax and, in addition, get some revenue from an unimproved land tax, and also increase our probate duties. We must get more revenue, because we have to increase the salaries of the Public Service, the railway and tramway men, the school teachers, and the police; in fact, every Government employee except those receiving substantial salaries have to be paid more money. And, as we went back by over £600,000 last year, even with our increased income tax of £190,000,—those items of increase which I have mentioned obtained during only two or three months of last year,—we have to get more revenue from somewhere, and I think the sooner the Premier says where it is to come from, the better for all concerned. I quite agree with the Premier when he states that the first line of defence for national safety is in the farm. Whatever other persons have to put up with, the farmer has always done the hardest work for the smallest comfort. Any proposition for lightening the burden of the farmer will have my support. Moreover, I think the farmer's wife and his children should be sympathetically considered. If railway fares were reduced by 50 or 75 per cent. the farmer's wife would be able to travel to the metropolis and see something other than what she sees on the farm, and she would be able to transact in the town or city a lot of business relating to the farm. Also, if the farmer's children were given the same advantage, they would see something different from what is before them every day on the farm, and in consequence we should have greater happiness and contentment all round. The same thing would apply with regard to maternity cases among the farmers' wives. Every help that can be given by the Government to those wives should be sympathetically extended. The time is ripe for the State Government to take action with regard to the Federal maternity bonus of £5. If that maternity bonus of £5 is necessary to a city dweller, £10 is not too much for the farmer's wife, living five or ten miles back from the nearest town or railway station. I think the time has arrived when we should have some alteration in our Legislature. The single electorate system should be abolished and proportional representation adopted in its place. Tasmania has had proportional re-

presentation for some time, and it seems to me the system affords Parliamentary representation to both majorities and minorities.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is not very successful in Tasmania.

Hon. T. Walker: They talk of abolishing it.

Mr. BROWN: Possibly they are only now beginning to see its benefits. Possibly, also, the party politicians are still animated by the spirit of "I'll hold what I have got." Ministerial by-elections ought to be abolished. They are not required under the Federal Constitution and I see no reason for retaining them under our own. Persons appointed to the Ministry no sooner take office than they have to fight an election, even if they have been elected by the people a month or two before. This costs the Ministers concerned and the country a considerable sum of money. There is a general waste all round.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): This is the only State in which it is done.

Mr. BROWN: With reference to the Initiative, Referendum and Recall, we know well that the old system of allowing the Government to bring forward what measures they liked is not in the best interests of the country. The people should be given an opportunity by the Initiative to bring in any particular form of legislation that they think advisable and should not have to wait for Parliament to say when it will give that measure of reform.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is the particular measure of legislation that we most want.

Mr. BROWN: If we had the Initiative, Referendum and Recall, the party system would die out. We would then have elective Ministries on the floor of the House, and not caucus Ministries as we have had for the last 30 years on both sides of the House. If we were all of one party we should have the benefit of the brains of both sides of the House. When members were placed in Ministerial authority they could remain there so long as their behaviour was as it should be. They would be enabled to obtain a grasp of the details of office in such a way that the departmental officers would endeavour to do better for the State than they are doing now. The member for Canning (Mr. Robinson) spoke about the tramway extensions southward and eastward of the river. He made out a good case for a few thousand people at an expenditure of a few thousand pounds. In my opinion the municipality of Subiaco has a greater claim for tramway extensions than other municipalities. I wish the Minister for Mines to realise that the laying of a tram track and a double track from Thomas-street to Bagot-road, is the first thing that is required to be done, and that the extension of the double track from Bagot-road to the Park gates, which has been promised for five years, should also be carried out. This promise was not given effect to owing to the want of rails and fastenings, but that excuse can no longer stand. Tramway extensions are required along Hay-street

to Jolimont, a part of Subiaco which has been long in want of such an extension. There is a population to be served of about a thousand people, and if the trams were provided for them there would be sufficient return immediately to pay interest and sinking fund. After these works have been completed then the merits of a tramway extension eastward, northward, and westward might be taken into consideration. The Crawley tram track should be continued along the river to Claremont. There is magnificent land there for residential purposes and the settlement that would ensue would, I feel sure, pay for the expenditure on the work. I am also certain that people who settled in that area would be fully satisfied with the homes they could make there. For many years past the metropolitan area has had to put up with a very unsatisfactory water supply. I know it can be said that the bore water is good enough and cheap enough. We tolerated this while the war was on, but will do so no longer. I hope the Government will realise that the people are entitled to pure water and plenty of it. The water at present supplied to us, judging by its disastrous effect upon plant and vegetable life, is likely to prove damaging to the health of the people. If that is so then many of our misfortunes are due to our water supply. In my own home I find that a great deal of damage is done to my lawns and plants by our being obliged to use this bore water.

Mr. Munzie: If you put much of this on it will kill the plants altogether in the summer time.

Mr. BROWN: It is the duty of the Government to give us a pure water supply, and to no longer rely upon this bore water which is so highly charged with minerals.

Hon. P. Collier: When I was in office the engineer estimated that it would take three or four years to complete any new scheme, and that is all the more reason why the Government should undertake it at once.

Mr. BROWN: I draw attention to this matter so that the Government may commence operations immediately, and let the people know that this is being done. It would give a great amount of employment over a period of three or four years and would afford an opportunity to those men now employed in the State Implement Works and elsewhere in pipe-making to continue making pipes for reticulation. This would also be profitable employment and not unproductive employment. Some five or six years ago, when the sewerage system was being brought into operation, the scheme outlined provided for the building of septic tanks in Subiaco. To this the residents strongly objected.

Hon. P. Collier: I had a scheme which provided for the actual completion of the Subiaco sewerage.

Mr. BROWN: A referendum was taken on the subject and the people objected to the septic tanks being placed there. We were told then that we would have to await the convenience of the Government. We

have awaited their convenience, owing to the war and the state of the finances. Now we are not going to wait any longer. I do not say that in the way of a threat. I am convinced that the western portion of the city from the topmost point of Mt. Eliza should have the sewerage and deep drainage.

Hon. P. Collier: The public health demands it.

Mr. BROWN: Not only that, but the people are prepared to pay for the benefits received in place of the insanitary system at present in vogue. A large suburb like Subiaco should be ashamed to let the world know that it is still working under obsolete conditions with regard to its hygienic surroundings. In connection with farming matters, the member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) spoke to the farmers about silos and the bulk handling of wheat. I endorse what he said in regard to the timber used for these storage bins and silos. I am glad to draw attention to the very splendid set of bins that has been installed at the Perth mill. Before agreeing to any other form of construction, members can easily satisfy themselves that these bins meet the case. I hope the farmers will consider the advisability of exporting flour instead of wheat. At present the very bags which are being used are costing the farmers about 6d. per bushel. We have a milling capacity in this State capable of putting through six million bushels of wheat in a year. We require two or three million bushels for local consumption and it is not likely, judging by the returns for the last two or three years, that we shall have much more than six or seven million bushels to export. If we could get markets for our flour we would find employment continuously for these mills and of the staffs employed therein. We would have 1,000 lbs. of bran and pollard from every 3,000 lbs. of wheat which left the State. We want that bran and pollard for our pig feed and poultry feed, and for our dairying industry. We have not been able to get what we require for these purposes in the past. In addition to this use for the offal, we have also to remember its value to the State from the point of view of manure. Everyone who knows anything about the constituent parts of manure for our lands, knows that sulphuric acid forms a large proportion of manurial elements. By keeping within the State 1,000 lbs. of offal for every 3,000 lbs. of wheat we would be materially increasing the value of our lands. I wish the Government would seriously consider, before more unrest and discontent and unpleasantness occur, the arrangement of the voluntary system in connection with our fire brigade.

Mr. Munzie: I think that has been amicably settled at last.

Mr. BROWN: I hope so. A great amount of time was occupied in improving the old system, and it will require care to see that the improvement in the system is not lost. For years past many Governments

have told us that we should have a comprehensive Municipalities Act. As an old municipal councillor myself, I say that there are many anomalies in the Act and many improvements required. I hope that before the session finishes we shall have a new Municipalities Act. A great many in the House and outside it have asked what the policy of the Government is. It appears to me that it is the same that every Government has followed for the last 20 years in this State. I can see no particular difference in it. There may be a few items here and there that are different, but the bold basic principles in the policy adopted by all our Governments has been to borrow extensively, and spend lavishly and quickly.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It is the easiest policy.

Mr. BROWN: It is an easy-going policy and unfortunately for the last eight years we have had evidence of the effects of it. So far as I can see we are going to continue that policy. I hope the House will decide that instead of increasing our loan indebtedness, unless we are going to increase our revenue in some direction, this system of extensive borrowing and lavish expenditure is stopped. We were told by the late Treasurer, the member for Irwin, the other night, that he could effect some thousands of pounds' worth of economies if he were given a free hand. The time is not far distant when we ought to adjudicate between Ministers and the heads of departments in the Public Service. The Minister for Mines a few days ago put forward a very feasible proposition in connection with the claims of the railway men, in which he said if they would appoint a board of three to go into the matter, see what could be done, and place their views before him, he would consider them. If some person or board was able to go through the various departments and tell the Ministers what was required, I think if the Ministers asked the House to support them in any action that they thought it desirable to take, that support would be given. I am satisfied that small payments for services rendered are a failure. The Public Service to-day is over-manned and underpaid, and if the men were of a better class fewer would be required, and better payments could be made and better work would be done, while those others now employed in poorly paid positions would have to find employment elsewhere. I congratulate the Premier on the clear and concise way in which he replied to the leader of the Opposition on the amendment to the Address-in-reply. The hon. gentleman evidently satisfied the whole of the Country party, and when that is done the House must be fairly well satisfied. We should also congratulate the Minister for Works on the splendid effort he has put forward in trying to house all our officials in, I will not say, smaller spaces, but in a more concentrated form. In the past the Government offices have been scattered all over the town.

Mr. Munsie: I wonder what his opinion is of the frosted windows.

Mr. BROWN: I heard there was a disagreement as to whether the light was too strong through the clear glass, or whether it was necessary that the windows should be frosted. If, however, that is necessary, instead of the department frosting the windows the officers used glasses, it would be possible to see whether the officers were asleep or at work. Anyhow, I am certain that the Minister, by the housing scheme which he has adopted, will save a considerable sum of money, and I trust he will go on until he can get all the staffs in close proximity to each other.

Mr. ROCKE (South Fremantle): The true function of government is the provision for the happiness and contentment of the people. There never was a period in Australia's history when so much discontent and unrest prevailed as at the present time, and there never was a time when the occasions were so many to justify the discontent which we find on every hand. How to overcome that discontent, how best to legislate in the interests of the community, is a matter for the Government of the day to consider, and to put into operation. If we are going to find out what is the cause of the trouble with which we are faced, the truth must be told regardless of the consequences, and regardless of the feelings of privileged persons who may be injured. The profiteer is not entirely a product of the war. He was in evidence before the war. In fact a most diabolical gang of profiteers were operating prior to August, 1914. They were working under the style and title of the International Armament Trust. They consisted of 16 huge financial concerns. Five of them were British, seven German, two French, one Austrian, and one Italian. These concerns were not combined for the purpose of the protection of humanity, not even for the protection of that portion of humanity which is known as Belgium. They were combined for one object, and that was to protect their own profiteering interests, so that, when the outrage against humanity was to commence, they could sit back and reap their blood-stained profits. The profiteering which has been going on during the period of the war, and which is continuing now, is but another phase of the conspiracy against the people. From every platform in the Commonwealth and in most British-speaking communities, we have had the cry go forth to the world that the conditions at the close of the war would never be like those which preceded the war. I am not able to find a man or woman to-day who would not gladly exchange the conditions which were ruling in the first half of 1914 with those which prevail to-day. I refuse to believe that the remedy for the unrest lies by way of a blood-spilling revolution, but I must point out that the position is pregnant with the gravest danger, and unless Governments who are in power for the time being take care and legislate in the interests of the

people rather than in the interests of the favoured few, who fatten upon the sufferings of the people, I would not like to say what may result. However, the people are determined that they are not going to suffer and endure indefinitely the conditions they are enduring at the present time. We know that the troubles in the world are caused by the private control of money, so that obviously the remedy is the nationalisation of currency. The statement is sometimes made that the Commonwealth Government have taken some steps in the direction of the nationalisation of currency. But the Commonwealth Government have done nothing of the sort. What the Commonwealth Government did was to open an ordinary branch of a banking institution and over the name of that institution to write the words "the Commonwealth Bank of Australia." There was no attempt at the nationalisation of currency. Certainly the Government did take the people's gold and they gave to the people paper. They proved the point which I desire to emphasise, that the commerce of the world does not rest upon the world's gold supply, but it does rest upon the organised credit of the people. The ancient Egyptians, when they built their pyramids, started at the base. They put in a solid foundation and they built up to the apex. But the financial magnates say that we should not build our pyramids in that way, that we should build them from the apex and make the apex the base and build up and out, and they call the apex the gold production of the world. By manipulation this may be moved so that the pyramid begins to lose its equilibrium and then we have a clash of armies and navies in the mad effort to uphold something which is against

tent of about 70 million pounds and with that he built up the agricultural industry of the country. In the next year he issued a similar sum of paper money which was guaranteed by the credit of the people, and he built up secondary industries; and so on each year until, in the course of a very short time, he had everything so thoroughly organised that he was able to throw into Germany the amount of gold which they needed to satisfy them for their war indemnity. As a result, the industries of Germany were almost paralysed. Germany had no idea that France could recover herself so quickly and pay the debt which was hanging over her head. The thing was accomplished by the nationalisation of currency, and I believe that any system of reconstruction into which we may enter must have as its key the nationalisation of currency, and if we are going to face this problem as it must be faced, I am convinced that we must strike out on new lines. This Government, as well as other Governments in the Australian States, and the Commonwealth, are trying to meet the abnormal state of affairs by methods which were considered inadequate during normal times. No Government has launched out with any concrete proposal which can in any way remedy the position. The Government of Western Australia say that the whole cure for the disease lies in increased production, but that cry of increased production must become a mere platitude if producers are kept away from the markets. We have numberless instances where producers are not able to get to the markets.

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

Hon. T. Walker: The law of equilibrium.

Mr. ROCKE: As my friend the member for Kanowna says, the law of equilibrium.

The Minister for Works: What is equilibrium?

Hon. P. Collier: Balance, which you never had.

Mr. ROCKE: At the conclusion of the Franco-Prussian war in 1870 France found herself bleeding and suffering and in a state of abject terror lying at the feet of the Prussian oppressor, who was then the victor. She was left with what was considered in those days a financial burden which was almost unbearable. She did not know how she was going to carry it. However, France did not sit or lie down and just complain that the burden could not be carried, or the position could not be rectified. She advertised the world over for a man who could come into France and arrange her finances without crippling her industries, and to put her industries and her finances on a sound financial basis. The selection fell upon an Englishman named Law. He made the one and only attempt I know of which has been made to nationalise currency. He called in the gold of the nation and upon that he organised the credit of the nation. In the first year he issued paper money to the ex-

Mr. ROCKE: Before tea I was endeavouring to point out how production is adversely affected by the market-rigging tricks of men known as middlemen, who are parasites upon the community. Those men must be placed under control if we are going to have a system of production which will help us over our financial difficulties. It is often pointed out that the law of supply and demand will create the markets, but the fact that the markets can be rigged by two or three men to the detriment of the whole of the community is proof that there is no such law. Supply and demand are certainly very great factors, but the fact that those factors can be manipulated is proof there is no law of supply and demand. Some time ago we had a famine of onions and potatoes. There were none on the market, although there were plenty in the country. The trick adopted by the middleman was to go to the grower, buy up his crop on condition that he would store it on his premises, and then effect a condition of the market which would bring an enormous profit, and throw the price up to such an extent that it was almost impossible for the people to purchase these very necessary commodities. We have other instances in Western Australia which have taken place within

the last two or three months. In May of this year, we received three shipments of butter by the s.s. "Wyandra," s.s. "Dimboola," and s.s. "Junea." These shipments comprised a supply for the requirements of this State for five weeks. At the end of two weeks, the grocers of Fremantle were notified that they could receive no more supplies of butter, because supplies had become exhausted. I knew then that we had three weeks' supply still in the State, and got into touch with the price-fixing Commissioner of this State, who was just closing his office that week under instructions from the Federal Government. I then got into touch with Mr. Whitton, of Melbourne, the Price Fixing Commissioner for the Commonwealth, and he evidently wired Mr. Rae to go to Fremantle and make an examination to find out whether my statement was correct, and report to him. Evidently Mr. Rae visited Fremantle and was shown empty stores. I received a message from Mr. Whitton in which he said he had received a report from Western Australia, and that there was no evidence that merchants were holding up supplies. During that week, an increase of 2d. per lb. was allowed on the selling price of butter, and immediately the grocers were notified that they could then obtain supplies, because supplies were on hand. As a matter of fact, not one pound of butter had entered the State between the time they said supplies were exhausted and the time they notified the grocers that supplies were available. Again, we have the case of the beef buccaneers of Perth. Some little time ago when they forced up meat to a prohibitive price, it will be remembered that the butchers refused to buy from the wholesale men until the price of meat was reduced to a certain figure.

Mr. Underwood: Did not the seamen's strike have something to do with that?

Mr. ROCKE: No, it was not on then.

Mr. Munzie: Of course not.

Mr. ROCKE: After a little fight between the master butchers and the wholesalers, the wholesalers came to terms and the price of meat was reduced to a level more in keeping with the circumstances. This proved that the high price of meat was not due to supplies at all. It was simply on account of the thieving propensities of the men who controlled the market. Recently, Messrs. Foggitt, Jones & Co. have written to the Press, with an air of injured innocence, wanting to know why they should be attacked by a Federal Labour member for Western Australia. I am not conversant with the subject matter of Mr. Corboy's complaint, but I would like to know if Foggitt, Jones & Co. will deny that, during May of this year when they succeeded in cornering the pig market, they forced up the price of bacon to 1s. 3d. per lb. when Melbourne was quoting 12¼d. or 12½d. These people have posed in this State as philanthropists, a company who were going to do a fine work for the State by creating a new industry

and yet, at the first opportunity, the price is forced up so that the people are again made to pay over and above the value of the commodity.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Were not they sending their bacon to Melbourne?

Mr. ROCKE: I cannot say. The Fremantle Gas Company some time ago evidently found out that there was going to be a curtailment in the consumption of gas. A regulation was issued under the War Precautions Act that gas could be consumed only during certain hours. Gas consumption during the other hours of the day was prohibited, unless residents obtained permission from the Naval Director at Fremantle. Before the date of the curtailment of the consumption, the Fremantle Gas Company took good care to advance the price to the consumer so that, although they would have a lower consumption to cater for, their profits would amount to the same figure, if not more.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Then people should use electricity.

Mr. ROCKE: So we find, on every hand, the people are being crushed between the two thieves, privilege and monopoly. If the industries of the State are to be put on a sound basis, it stands to reason that the market must be made available for producers, so that it is necessary for the Government to take over the services now rendered by the middlemen; that is the Government should take over the means of distribution. It may seem socialistic, but the time has come when the interests of the people must be protected. If the State is to be lifted out of its difficulties by production, it cannot be done if the producers are shut off the market. Dairying has been recommended as one industry which will help the State. I believe this industry will do what is being claimed for it. I need only remind members of the conditions which existed in Victoria in 1890. I remember, in that year, married men were glad to work for 3s. 6d. a day on relief works so that their wives and children would have sufficient food to keep body and soul together. The condition of Victoria then was lamentable. Words would hardly describe the industrial conditions. However, dairying was taken in hand and, by the assistance of the Government, the State of Victoria was lifted from a condition of bankruptcy to a position of affluence. I know men in Victoria whose only means of locomotion in 1890 was a one-man power wheelbarrow; to-day there are few of them who are without a motor car, and it has all been done by the dairying industry. I know there are disadvantages with regard to this industry. It is difficult to get some people to take up the work. It is slavery, and its conditions are not attractive; but I believe, by Government aid, it can be made so attractive that we shall be able to induce our people to undertake the work of providing for this State all the butter, cheese, etc. necessary,

to purchase which we are now sending out of the State many thousands of pounds every week. To do so, we should place under dairying operations, land which is in close proximity to the metropolitan area. By doing that, we shall make up in a measure to the people who are working under disadvantageous conditions, something for what they will have to contend against, because they will be able to enjoy some of the luxuries of life through being in close proximity to the metropolis. There is a large area of land between Fremantle and Mandurah. Attention of the Government has been called to this land which is fine swamp land. At present, Lake Kogolup, in the Jandakot area is being drained and I am told that the principal factor for the successful conducting of the dairying industry there has been proved. They are able to grow 60 tons of maize to the acre and anyone knowing anything about the dairying industry is aware that if the land can be made to produce the feed, that is the principal factor that makes for success. If a dairyman has to go to the fodder merchant for feed for his stock, he is courting disaster from the outset. Regarding dairy produce or any produce of the soil necessary to the people I would strongly advocate that every need of the people in the State be considered before one pound of food stuff is allowed to be exported. For that reason I would like to see the South Fremantle Freezing Works become the property of the people of the State. We then might be able to get some control, and perhaps the Government could be induced to see the wisdom of supplying the needs of their own people before the needs of people outside the State. As to the method of developing various portions of the State, we have our great South-West, of which much has been said, and we have the near North-West. I am convinced that these portions of the State cannot be properly developed by railway communication alone. There are cases of other States which have developed parts of their territory by means of small steamers. That I believe is the surest way to develop the South-West and the near North-West of our State. The North and South Islands of New Zealand have been enormously developed by small steamships. The same thing applies to New South Wales, and to the Gippsland and western districts of Victoria, and also to South Australia. As regards Queensland I cannot speak, not having been there. If we adopt the same system here, the steamships must be under Government control, since in the hands of private enterprise they might become the means of extortion by rapacious people. Even in the matter of protective tariffs we find that the people get no benefit. The protection of an industry to the extent of 40 per cent. means that the manufacturer puts 39 per cent. on his cost to the public. The manufacturer keeps his price only about one per cent. below the cost of the imported article. Thus the manufacturer

reaps the benefit every time, and the consumer has to pay the piper.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Does not the importer reap a profit?

Mr. ROCKE: I do not say that industries should not be protected, but I say that the people should also be protected. From the "Quarterly Summary of Australian Statistics" I have obtained some very interesting information regarding exports during the war period. Nobody denies, nobody can deny, the profiteering which is going on. But it is interesting to learn that through all the distressful circumstances of the last four or five years those people who controlled the means of living did not suffer any of the hardships under which the mass of the people suffered. In the year 1913-14 the export of butter reached 75,795,642 lbs., for which was received the sum of £3,564,925. For the year 1917-18 the butter totalled 72,277,526 lbs., and the money received for that amount of exported product was £4,904,421. From these figures we find that the quantity of butter exported during the last year of the war period was less than that exported during the year immediately before the war by 3,518,116 lbs., whilst the money received for the smaller quantity exceeded that received for the larger by the enormous sum of £1,339,496. During that time the Australian people were not able to obtain supplies of butter, because of the price put on the commodity. The exporters, of course, could get their price and pay huge shipping freights and still make huge profits. A similar position was created in connection with Australian beef, the weight of which exported from Australia during the year 1913-14 was 218,918,606 lbs., for which the money received was £2,652,275. The quantity exported during the year 1917-18 reached only 180,249,301 lbs., for which the sum received was £3,698,693. In this case the quantity exported during the last year of the war period was less than that exported during the year immediately preceding the war by 38,669,305 lbs., but the money received for the lesser quantity exceeded that received for the greater by no less than £1,046,418. Now to take the other side, and find out how these exporters contribute to the revenue of the State. Hon. members who have to make returns of stock for income tax purposes will have observed on their taxation sheets a statement of the values of cattle in various parts of Australia. In the case of Western Australia cattle are valued as follows: East Kimberley £1 15s., West Kimberley £2 5s., North-Western Division £2 10s., North-Western Division south of the Tropic of Capricorn £3 10s., South-Western Division £4 10s., Eucla and Central Division £2 10s., Eastern Division £1 15s. Recently a cattle king, writing in the columns of the daily Press, stated the cost of marketing a Kimberley bullock at Fremantle as £8. If that amount is added to the statement of value as fixed by the Commonwealth Government, the aver-

age value of a bullock from the North-Western Division delivered at Fremantle would be about £10. But the bullock is sold in Fremantle for as much as £34 per head. The beef buccaner pays income tax on the £1 15s. value, but he receives for the bullock £34 less £10 for cost of transport and marketing charges.

Mr. Pilkington: That is not the case. The owner pays on the selling value realised from the bullock.

Mr. Harrison: The bullocks are not all prime beef.

Mr. O'Loghlen: The Commonwealth figures may be as unreliable as Knibbs's.

Mr. ROCKE: But Knibbs's figures are reliable.

Mr. O'Loghlen: They are not worth two-pence, and that has been proved.

Mr. ROCKE: I think the pastoralists should be made to pay on what they receive, and not on the value of the bullock in the North-West.

Mr. Pilkington: The pastoralist does not pay on the value shown on that slip; but on the value he receives.

Mr. ROCKE: The member for Perth may be correct, but I fail to see it.

Mr. Pilkington: It is so.

Mr. ROCKE: Suppose members when making up their income tax returns stated the true value of their Parliamentary allowance, which true value is £150. I wonder what the tax gatherer would say to that. He would not pass that. We have to pay on the full amount of our allowance.

Mr. Underwood: Suppose there are two bullocks, and you get £20 for one and nothing for the other, what is the value of each bullock then?

Mr. ROCKE: There are very few bullocks that fetch nothing. Very few die on the voyage South. I speak of matters as they existed prior to the shipping strike. Of course, all of us realise that very few cattle are now coming down from the North-West; but the present does not by any means indicate the past in this connection.

Mr. Harrison: That being so, your estimate of £39 per bullock is not correct.

Mr. ROCKE: I spoke of £34 as the maximum price. Some time ago the New South Wales Premier was approached regarding the high cost of living, and he pointed out that shipments of food and shipments of other commodities changed hands many times during transit. We know that that was taking place during the war. There was one shipment of barley which changed hands four times in transit, and thereby its value on paper was increased about 400 per cent. And the same thing is going on now. In the interests of the people that class of speculation must be stopped. It is the middleman who is doing the damage all the time. He toils not, neither does he spin; he simply sits down transferring property from one to another and making his profit, and the increased cost is passed on to the people. No doubt the middleman tells a few tales into the bargain. If Governments are really in

earnest about improving the condition of the people, if they really want to lighten the burden of the people, then the middleman must go and the State must take over the work of distribution. Nationalisation of transport is essential also to any successful form of re-construction, because so long as private enterprise controls transport any Government can be defeated at any time. I would strongly advocate, in addition to nationalisation of currency, the nationalisation of all transport services; and then I believe we should be in a fair way to make a great improvement in conditions not only in Western Australia but in Australia as a whole. We are told over and over again that Western Australia leads Australia. It is up to Western Australia now to try to show to the world the way out of a position which is full of danger, which is extremely delicate, and therefore requires very careful handling. Next I come to the liquor traffic. In my opinion, the time has arrived when this question must be dealt with from an economic point of view, when the matter must be lifted above the level of jocularly on which it is so often treated. Every Government occupying the Treasury benches in this Chamber of late years has been approached by people who feel that the liquor traffic is against the best interests of the community. Those people have not requested the abolition of the liquor traffic, or the prohibition of the liquor traffic; but they have asked for amendment of our local option legislation so that the community may at least have the right to say whether the traffic shall be abolished, or continued, or curtailed. No community can afford to drink all or nearly all the money it receives for, say, its wheat. Western Australia has the highest drink bill of all the States in the Commonwealth. In 1914 we spent £2,672,745 on drink. In 1915 it was £2,374,009; in 1916 it was £2,334,890; in 1917 it was £2,155,798, or a total for the four years of £9,537,442, for which the State receives practically nothing in comparison with the benefits received from other industries. And in addition to receiving comparatively nothing, it has a burden to carry in the shape of increased taxation which has to be levied for the upkeep of gaols, asylums, and other institutions which are the direct result of this iniquitous traffic. The Victorian drink bill per capita is £3 5s. 6d., that of Queensland £3 4s. 11d., that of South Australia £2 17s. 5d., that of Tasmania £2 14s. 5d., and that of Western Australia £6 19s. 8d. No community can stand such a drain on its resources. If the Government are truly sincere they must allow the people to say whether or not this traffic shall continue. Nearly every monopoly is denounced from Labour platforms, except the monopoly of the liquor traffic, which is the worst of all because it returns less to the workers per £100 invested. I think the figure amounts to about £7 per £100. The boot trade, the second lowest on the list, returns £28 per £100. Economically, therefore, the liquor traffic is wholly unsound. Last night a returned soldier lost his life on the

Perth railway station. The newspaper report states that he was intoxicated. The man had been away and done his best for his country, and had returned, only to become a victim to this foul thing licensed by the Government. Do the Government really believe that the few pounds received from the liquor traffic is reasonable compensation for the lives lost and for the offences against public decency for which the traffic is responsible? Last Monday night on the Perth railway station it was impossible to get along Nos. 1 and 2 platforms without coming into contact with the vomit from drunken men. It is a disgrace to our State, and should be abolished. The publicans at Fremantle have to close their hotels when a troopship comes in, but the returned men are hurried away to Perth, where they can get as much liquor as they choose. If the hotels are to be closed in Fremantle they certainly should be closed in Perth. If they are to be left open in Perth, so too should they be left open in Fremantle. I claim justice for the publicans, just as I would claim justice for anybody else. To reduce the thing to a farce is enough to make one ill.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It would be all right if they did not send special trains down to bring the soldiers to Perth.

Mr. ROCKE: Yes, it shows that the liquor traffic has a pull which is decidedly unfair.

Mr. Underwood: Perhaps it is the liquor that has the pull.

Mr. ROCKE: I hope the Government will take some steps, if only in the direction of impressing upon the Federal authorities, who at present have control of the public-houses, the need for better arrangements when returned soldiers are in port. We cannot afford to lose the lives of our men. Moreover, the traffic is a very grave menace to the coming generation. I want to see things made as easy as possible for the next generation. We of this generation have had it hard enough, and we want things to be a little brighter and easier for those who are to come after us.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton): After the two socialistic speeches to which we have listened, it is scarcely necessary for a member of the Labour party to carry on in the same strain. To-night we have heard members on the other side stressing the importance of nationalising various industries and socialising others. Let me refer to the change of Ministries which has occurred during the past four or five months. A number of members who could not support the Lefroy Government find no difficulty in supporting the present Government. Yet I have never heard from any of those members anything to show that the policy of the present Government is in any way different from that of the Lefroy Government. Of course anything which the Lefroy Government did and which has since turned out disastrously, is now repudiated by the present Government and its supporters, who

at the same time are ever ready to claim credit for the successes of the Lefroy Government. Much has been said about the influence of the "West Australian" on local politics. The "West Australian" never ceased carping and criticising until it managed to get the present Premier into power. I am not ready to believe that everything in the garden is lovely just because the "West Australian" is going to boost the present Government. The Premier has been referred to as an irresponsible optimist. Quite recently I saw in an illustrated paper a picture of a man falling from the roof of an eight or 10-storied building. So optimistic was he that as he passed each storey he waved his hand and said, "I am still all right." I am afraid that when we reach the end of Mr. Mitchell's term of office the State will get just as severe a bump as was coming to that man falling from the high roof. We have heard a good deal about the cost of living. I do not think the Government can take credit for the proposed introduction of a Price Fixing Bill. The credit belongs to the Labour party, because it was the Labour party who woke up the people of the State to the necessity for action and who clamoured until the Government were simply forced to do something. When the Price Fixing Bill was in the Council some three years ago, Mr. Colebatch declared that any interference with the law of supply and demand was bound to end in disaster. That is the gentleman who, presently, will be introducing the Price Fixing Bill promised by the Government. One of the reasons which have conduced greatly to the high cost of living is the difference in the rate of interest charged by the banks. The Commonwealth Government are condoning that offence, for we find that during the past 12 months the Commonwealth Government in floating a couple of loans, notified the financial people of Australia that if they did not contribute to those loans the money would be taken from them by force. See how profiteering in regard to the value of money is carried on by the Commonwealth Government! Before the war the interest paid on any loan floated by the Commonwealth Government was 3½ per cent., yet when the Government have to threaten to take money by force, they pay a rate of interest two per cent. higher. The world wide custom is for the banks to base their interest charges upon the price of Government stock.

Mr. Underwood: What is the overdraft rate to-day?

Mr. WILLCOCK: About eight per cent. It depends on the value of securities.

Mr. Underwood: It is the same to-day as it was before the war.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The farmers' overdraft rate is seven per cent.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It is peculiar that the farmers can get money from any bank at seven per cent. while the State has to pay at least six per cent.



Mr. Johnston: The Commonwealth Bank does not charge any Western Australian customer more than six per cent.

Mr. WILLCOCK: People have to pay considerably more for their money now than they paid two or three years ago. I have been looking up the value of land and improvements in the Commonwealth. I find the total value is £1,125,000,000; and it is estimated that 60 per cent. of the land and improvements of Australia are mortgaged, and that the rate of interest has gone up one per cent. That would make a difference of over six million pounds paid by the people on their overdrafts to get the same amount of profit as in former years. Last night the member for Mt. Magnet illustrated the greatly increased profits of large companies. During the course of the debate we have heard a great deal about the profiteer. I have heard all sorts and conditions of men, of different political brands, denounce the profiteer. It is always, however, the other fellow who is spoken of. No one ever pleads guilty himself. Not long ago a man I met denounced a profiteer in unmeasured terms. He did not go as far as the member for Fremantle, but he did believe in putting the profiteer up against the wall. This particular individual bought chaff some time ago at £4 10s. a ton, and within a few months sold it for £8 10s. a ton. If he does not feel that it is time for him to get up against the wall he is not a very good judge of what should happen to a profiteer. The Government say they intend to bring down a price-fixing measure. Price-fixing has not worked out advantageously to the people. Prices have been fixed not by the Government but by different firms. The price of sugar has been fixed in that way, as well as the price of kerosene and other articles. It is impossible to get a quote for these things. The price also has not been fixed at a fair rate. The price of butter has been fixed at 189s. 8d. per cwt. or 1s. 8½d. per lb. I have seen the correspondence and invoices in connection with a firm in South Australia which was prepared to supply butter to Western Australia free on rails Adelaide at 1s. 7½d. per lb. The merchant in question was prepared to do business on these lines but was prevented by the price-fixing board of the Commonwealth, which said he would have to pay the price fixed. To buy this butter he would also have had to pay the freight between Melbourne and Adelaide. I have also seen where the merchant in South Australia has done business before on these lines and offered to do so again, but the merchant in Western Australia has been compelled to pay the price fixed. If this is the result of price-fixing it is not much good. Because the maximum price has been fixed for a certain commodity it is not to say that this price is that which has to be charged. If a man could sell a commodity at a reasonable profit he should not be restricted by a price-fixing board. The

member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) referred to the anomalous position of the manager of Dalgetys, who is also chairman of the Fremantle Harbour Trust. I do not suggest that he uses his position there as some unscrupulous individual might do, if similarly placed. It is, however, the duty of the Government not to allow any man to occupy a Government position which he can turn to the advantage either of himself or of the firm he represents. It is a shame that such a state of affairs should be allowed. The Government should remedy the position in the interests of the purity of the commercial life of the State.

Mr. Underwood interjected.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I would take away the management of the steamship service from the Harbour Trust. I stand for nationalisation and think the Government should have direct control of everything. The more direct control they have the more likely are we to get better results.

The Attorney General: The manager of Dalgetys has nothing to do with the management of the ships.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The manager is the chairman of the Fremantle Harbour Trust, and as such exercises a control over the secretary of the Harbour Trust. The secretary of the Harbour Trust and the manager of the State Steamship Service are one and the same individual. It is peculiar that the steamship company represented by Dalgetys here is in competition with the State Steamship Service.

The Attorney General: That steamship company has its own manager apart altogether from Dalgetys.

Mr. WILLCOCK: No, they have their agents, but whatever benefit comes to this steamship company Dalgetys, as their agents, take a share of it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Dalgetys' shareholders reap the benefit.

Mr. WILLCOCK: They are interested, I believe, in the shipping side of the firm. It is hard to say where Dalgetys start and the shipping companies begin. I hope the Government will take notice of what has been said by the member for Pilbara. Men who have anything to do with the shipping on the North-West coast will also be able to supply reasons why this state of affairs should not be continued. The position of Commissioner of Railways has been vacant for about 15 months, although the Government at that time said they were going to appoint a new Commissioner. They introduced a Bill providing for the appointment of three Commissioners. One of these three would have been the chairman of the Commissioners. It was, therefore, the duty of the Government to see that the position was filled immediately. No one outside Cabinet is in a position to state who the next Railway Commissioner will be, and how long a time will elapse before the position is filled. We have seen in the Press that there is an official here from New South Wales, and it is said that he

came here in connection with the position of Railway Commissioner. I do not think it is necessary for the Government to go outside the State in selecting a man for this position. We have just as good railway men here as there are in the other States. I am sure that suitable men are to be found in our own railway service—perhaps not the official who is at present at the head of that service, or those directly under him—and there are sufficient experienced men to take over the position and run the service with benefit to the State and credit to themselves. If we go outside the State to find a man we are destroying the ambition of those at present on the staff. All should have an opportunity of rising in their profession to the highest position available for them.

Mr. Hickmott: They will not be debarred from applying.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If an imported man gets the position they will be debarred from obtaining it.

Hon. P. Collier: They will have the satisfaction of knowing that they applied.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is a very poor satisfaction to a man who has lost the position.

Mr. Green: Whom would you suggest?

Mr. WILLCOCK: The financial position occupied by our railways is a bad one. That is one of the reasons why this appointment should be made as soon as possible. The finances of the State are also in a bad condition. We did not require to go to New South Wales to get a Premier for this State, for we have men here capable of running the State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We had to go to the Legislative Council for one.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We did not get on very well there, and had to come back to the Legislative Assembly. There are men in the service possessing considerable local knowledge, who would not take 18 months of study to be able to run the railways to advantage. There is no necessity to go to either New South Wales, Victoria or America to get a man for this position. The railways are going to the bad to the extent of about £300,000 a year. The Minister in charge said the other day that the coal consumption would cost another £32,000 a year. It is expected that the award which will be delivered in connection with the amendment to the agreement with the railway service will mean an additional expenditure of not less than £100,000. There are many matters in connection with railway administration to which I could draw attention, but I will have an opportunity of doing so when the Estimates come before us. I have referred before to the question of coal transport. Collic coal deteriorates rapidly in quality if exposed to the air. The railway service was in such a sonolent condition that it did not wake up to the fact that there was a woodline strike at Kalgoorlie and likely to be a decrease in the traffic

for a few weeks, but continued to send coal up there according to the normal requirements of Kalgoorlie, and within a few weeks there were hundreds of tons of coal stacked in the yards going to waste.

Hon. P. Collier: Is it from these men that you propose to select a Railway Commissioner?

Mr. WILLCOCK: I did not propose to select the present head of the Railway Department for that position. Railway organisations have asked that men should be specially picked out to watch the railway transport of the State and have nothing else to do but that. This is necessary in order that the coal may be sent where it is wanted, and sent to its destination with the utmost expedition, and, further, that it should reach its destination as clean and in as efficient condition as possible. There should not be a dozen different individuals dealing with coal transport in a dozen different parts of the State. The Railway Department is losing £20,000 annually on that item alone. The present Commissioner of Railways has landed the State in an industrial dispute with the railway organisations which will cost the Government and the country a considerable amount of money. If the Government had hurried on the appointment of the new Commissioner, he might have been able to make some agreement with the men which would have saved a reference to the expensive machinery of the Arbitration Court. Even when the award is given it may not prove satisfactory. So far as the union, of which I have been a member for some 18 years, is concerned, we always obtained a more satisfactory agreement with the Commissioner who was controlling the railways than we could get from the Arbitration Court. We had a painful experience with the Arbitration Court which gave us conditions that even now we have not been able to get rid of, and which have acted to the detriment of every man in the industry concerned for the last 20 years.

Mr. Underwood: Are you in favour of abolishing the Arbitration Court?

Mr. WILLCOCK: No, but I am prepared to alter several of the provisions of the Arbitration Act, and alter considerably the manner in which the arbitration laws have worked out. So far as the court is concerned, it was not established for the purpose of rectifying anomalies or talking over industrial conditions with the employers and the employees. At the present time if a union requires an alteration in the industrial conditions, or any improvements, the employer will say, "Go to the court." The court is not established for that purpose. When two people were unable to agree they would go to the court to settle their differences. At the present time the parties do not try to agree. The employer adopts a stand and deliver attitude and says "Go to the court, and if the court awards you anything, I will pay it." The union to which I belong has got on very well without the aid of the court

for a period of 18 years and many other unions could do likewise if the employers were disposed to meet them and talk over the conditions and come to an amicable understanding. That could be done in 90 per cent. of the industrial troubles which exist at present.

Mr. Underwood: You happen to belong to a sensible union.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We happen to have a sensible employer. In many cases agreements could be arrived at between employer and employees without the aid of the court. I have heard it stated that the union to which I belong is regarded as the aristocrat of labour and that we enjoy the best industrial conditions of any union.

Hon. P. Collier: They are the key union to the service.

Mr. WILLCOCK: No class of men in the State have had their industrial conditions kept down so much as the timber workers. They have been trying for two years to get to the court and they are not there yet, and it has cost them about £2,000 and they do not seem to get any further. If that is the kind of thing that is going to happen, it means that only those unions with big banking accounts will be able to approach the court at all.

Mr. Hudson: You cannot blame the court.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We could make the court more easy to approach than it is at the present time. It really amounts to this, that any crowd of industrialists who want to get there must first go on strike. We have heard also that the policy of the Government is to produce, produce produce, or in the classical language of the member for Pilbara "get work." The member for Greenough this afternoon referred to the lead mining industry. I can assure the House, that this industry is of considerable importance to the constituency I represent, and I do say that the Government should have some constructive policy in view so as to get that industry on its feet again. With Mr. Hickey, a member of another place, I interviewed the member for Yilgarn when that gentleman was Minister for Mines, and the member for Canning when Minister for Mines was also interviewed, and we urged that the lead mining industry should at least be placed on a footing similar to that on which the farming industry is at the present time. If it is good business for the State to have the Industries Assistance Board to foster an industry like agriculture, which has not been a paying proposition during the last four or five years, it is just as good a business to foster the lead mining industry, which we know will eventually be of some direct benefit to the State. Every ton of lead that is produced is produced at a profit. I do not ask the Government to bolster up a mine that will not pay, but with lead at a certain price, the Government should treat the industry in the same way as they have been treating the agricultural industry, namely, to make ad-

vances to keep it going. We have in Geraldine and Northampton mines which are capable of employing a thousand men next week if the Government will go to their assistance either by providing a certain amount of sustenance for the men working the mines, or providing a certain amount of money as an advance on the product. I heard the leader of the Opposition suggest that the State Government should allow the companies to make a shipment of the lead outside the State and see what the Federal Government would do. That is the kind of direct action I am in favour of. The only way to draw attention to the conditions those people are suffering at present is by direct action of that description. Notice will then be taken of us. There is another matter in connection with production to which I desire to refer, and that is coal. There are coal deposits at Irwin, and these have been awaiting the advent of capital for exploitation. There is just as good coal at Irwin as there is at Collie, and the Government should do something to exploit it. The member for Greenough also mentioned the freezing works at Geraldton. The people there are prepared to subscribe the necessary capital, and in fact have almost done so without any assistance from the Government. There have been already 54,000 or 55,000 shares applied for within a few months and sufficient capital would have been raised to place those works on a sound financial footing. When canvassing for shares I have been asked, "What are you going to do for a water supply in connection with the works?" and I have been unable to give a satisfactory reply. I should be able to do so if the Government were only alive to their duty and kept the promises made during the past two years. The late Premier, when he was in Geraldton in August last, said that the Government were prepared to go on almost immediately with the work, and he added that if the freezing works were established a water supply would be made available. But no move whatever has been made in connection with the provision of a water supply. The Government have during the past two years done absolutely nothing except to spend, I think, about £800, during the past five or six months on one scheme, and now they have turned up that scheme altogether without any explanation from the Minister. The Government promised to spend between £5,000 and £7,000 on a water supply, but that apparently has been abandoned and no reason assigned for it. We hear that money is being spent in the direction of providing accommodation for pleasure seekers at Rottnest. We also hear that workers are to have the tramway extended so that they shall not have to walk more than 100 or 200 yards. Yet we have a town of between 3,000 and 4,000 people crying out for water. It is a wonder there has not been an epidemic of serious dimensions in that town. There have, however, been a number of typhoid cases recently and most of those have been directly attributable to the absence of an adequate water supply.

Mr. Money: Is that the Geraldton municipality?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes.

Mr. Money: Why do not they do it?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Apparently they have depended on a rotten reed in the Government, who have not carried out their promise. When the Government promise to do a thing, we expect them to carry it out.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Some Governments; this lot would not.

Mr. WILLCOCK: No. Whenever I approached the Minister for Works on the subject, he said "Do not think because you are on that side of the House, I treat you in any way differently."

Mr. O'Loughlen: Patronising dad!

Mr. WILLCOCK: I am not prepared to be patronised by dad any longer. I do not want his patronage; I want consideration for the just claims of my district. When a town with a population of 3,000 people has been promised a water supply for 10 or 15 years, some effort should be made to fulfil the promise.

Mr. Pickering: Busselton went into debt to get a water supply.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If the Government said definitely they would not carry out the work, the municipality would attempt to do it; but when the Government have promised to do it, it is up to them to keep their promise. The Labour Government did provide a dam at the Buller River and a good supply of water was obtained, but, through the incompetency of the staff of the Public Works Department, the reservoir overflowed, and the works were washed away. Since then nothing has been done to rectify the blunder of the engineering staff. We have heard nothing of the inquiry which was promised, though we were told that those responsible for the rotten construction of that work would be brought to book. We do not know who was responsible, or what has happened to the man responsible for such faulty work. While on the public works policy, I would like to know what the Government intend to do about the harbour works at Geraldton. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick) might be interested to know that the Labour Government had a definite policy. They spent £30,000 to make an aqueduct for the construction of a breakwater to render the harbour safe, but since they went out of power, we cannot get so much as a promise of harbour facilities at Geraldton. If the Government have any scheme it is time they said so and gave effect to it. We shall not be like the Bunbury people, who quarrelled with the scheme that was offered them. Any good scheme will do for Geraldton.

Mr. Money: Any scheme will not do for us.

Hon. P. Collier: The Minister quickly went to Bunbury to rectify it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: He went on his knees and said, "Very well, it will be rectified."

Hon. P. Collier: A sort of "Don't shoot; I will come down."

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, "I will do whatever you wish." In view of what has happened in connection with the Geraldton water scheme, I have not much faith in the Minister's officers; but he has officers to advise him and their advice should be good enough to enable him to form an opinion, and when he has formed an opinion he should stick to it. I hope the present Government will not continue their one-eyed policy for the South-West. The member for Gascoyne (Mr. Angelo) referred to the pastoral areas in the Murchison district, and I was glad to hear that he approves of the subdivision of large areas. I know half a dozen men who have areas of less than 50,000 acres in the Murchison and who are making a good living. It is often said that if land is not held in large areas, it is impossible to make a success of a holding, because when the drought comes, the pastoralists must "go bung."

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): If the area of land held is too small, that is a big difference.

Mr. WILLCOCK: In dry seasons the owner of, say, 50,000 acres with 1,000 or 2,000 sheep out of which he could make a reasonably good living, would find it easier to place them than a man who had to place 60,000 sheep to reduce his flock.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): As long as you keep to the 50,000 acres, you are right.

Mr. WILLCOCK: A lot of holdings should be cut up in the interests of closer settlement and repatriation, and in the interests of the district and the State itself. The Government should devise means of cutting them up. But it is not their policy to cut up these holdings and they do not intend to do it. If they desire to improve the State and to bring about successful repatriation and closer settlement in those areas, they will make up their minds about a policy and give effect to it.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. HARDWICK (East Perth): I approach this debate with a certain amount of timidity and nervousness, because I am rather loth to take up the time of the House at this stage of the debate. I realise how necessary it is to do something to ameliorate the conditions caused by the high cost of the necessaries of life. It is always difficult to speak at the tail end of the debate on the Address-in-reply, after 20 or 25 members have spoken and dealt with most of the important problems, because very little new ground is left to cover. It is a bright spot in our Constitution that, during the debate on the Address-in-reply, we can deal with almost any question which, apart from this opportunity, must be treated by a direct motion. I hope members opposite will not think I am referring to direct action.

Mr. O'Loughlen: If Ministers do not take any notice, what is the use?

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): They take every notice.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are the Whip; we are looking to you.

Mr. HARDWICK: I think the hon. member will find everything in order.

Hon. P. Collier: Yours will be a semi-Ministerial pronouncement.

Mr. HARDWICK: As a matter of decency, such pronouncements are made, not on the floor of the House, but in one's own constituency. That is a right I reserve to myself. I extend my felicitations to the leader of the Opposition on his logical, instructive, entertaining and mild speech.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The lamp posts are frightened of you.

Mr. HARDWICK: I hope it will not be disconcerting to the Opposition if I say I regard their leader as a shining light in a very dismal Opposition. I am inclined to think that when the leader of the Opposition looks across the floor of the House and sees his old colleague, the Minister for Mines, here, he must have an appetite or a hunger to get back alongside him.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What! Mixed up in that company.

Mr. HARDWICK: As time goes on, no doubt he will see the error of his ways and come over here. His speech was very mild, undoubtedly because he, as an ex-Minister, realised the difficulty of the problems which confront the Government at the present time. He is aware that no Premier or Minister of the Crown can afford to go to bed at night and place his head on his pillow in peaceful repose, there to dream and dream only of administrative and political triumph. I have before me a copy of the speech of that old parliamentarian Mr. Charles Moran, who no doubt many old members of this House remember full well. They will remember what a shining light he was in this Parliament. It has been Western Australia's loss that he, taking a suggestion from the ballot box, has remained out of Parliament so long.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It was the Tory element you are mixed up with that defeated him.

Mr. HARDWICK: This is the democratic element. I do not know what the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) thinks of that great speech delivered by Mr. Moran a few nights ago.

Hon. P. Collier: The Press remarked specially it was delivered well after eleven o'clock.

Mr. HARDWICK: That makes it all the better. It proves the truthfulness of the case, because it was before the cock crowed. We have heard a lot about the big four.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There is not a big one amongst the Government.

Mr. HARDWICK: We have a big four on this side of the House.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are you one of them?

Mr. HARDWICK: We have the Premier, the Minister for Mines, the Minister for Works, and my extreme modesty prevents me from naming the fourth. I am inclined to think the functions of an Opposition are not always observed. The Government always welcome frank and honest criticism as sometimes containing suggestions for improvement. I disagree at times with some of the expressions from the other side of the House. During the last week, we have heard such expressions as "snakes," "scabs," and "twisters." Those things do not elevate the tone of Parliament.

Mr. Jones: They were not hurled at you.

Mr. HARDWICK: They are entirely repulsive to me and repugnant to men of honour.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There are some men who lack honour.

Mr. HARDWICK: They do not elevate the tone of Parliament. We see in the columns of the Press articles about juvenile depravity. Surely the women and children of the State look to their Parliamentarians to be on a much higher plane and set a good example. I suppose all the children who can read do read, and it is not very elevating that such things should appear, even in the Press. At times I am inclined to ask if the days of chivalry are past and gone for ever, and if we are becoming entirely abandoned to all sense of honour and fair play.

Hon. P. Collier: Now we know the cause of juvenile depravity, reading Parliamentary debates.

Mr. HARDWICK: Possibly it may be through the reading of Parliamentary debates. Members of Parliament should set a good example to the rest of the community. I am sorry the member for Hannans (Mr. Munsie) is not in his seat to-night. The other evening that hon. member said something about democracy. Poor old democracy, the good old election horse! His breeding is rather "snide," to speak in turf parlance. He is by democrat out of strikes, by revolution from slow-down-on-the-job; or I might say by wharf labourer out of road metal. And this poor old democracy is stabled at the Trades Hall. Recently he was taken to Albany attended by 19 good sports, those who could not get on his back hanging on to his tail. If the Albany election did nothing else, it showed the resentment and disapprobation of the people with regard to disobedience of constituted authority.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What did the West Province election show, on the Upper House roll? If you quote one, quote the two.

Mr. HARDWICK: I am quoting this one; the member for Forrest can quote the other. Any force that seeks to undermine the Constitution, certainly is courting disaster at the will of the people. The unfortunate affair at Fremantle will remain a dark, indelible stain on the pages of time. I extremely regret that the member for Kanowna (Hon. T. Walker) is not now in

his seat. That hon. member the other evening struck all sorts of attitudes and threw his arms about, reminding one of Joseph of old interpreting the dreams of Pharaoh. The hon. member spoke about the apathy of Parliament and the inertia of administrations, and intimated that he felt almost disgusted to be a member of Parliament to-day. Strange to say, however, having made inquiries, I cannot find any trace of his resignation.

Mr. O'Loughlin: He will go out when he wishes. That does not apply to you.

Mr. HARDWICK: The hon. member attempts to impress the Chamber with the idea that he shines out with all that brilliancy and lustre, that uniqueness and grandeur, that characterises the scarlet geranium on the window sill of the garret of one of our Eastern slums, when all that surrounds is vile and wicked. He sees no good in the Government whatever. But I claim it is the duty of every member of the Opposition, especially in such times as these, and I say it is only conforming to the oath of allegiance, to impart to the Government any knowledge he may have. It is the bounden duty of every member of Parliament to do so. I have still green in my memory how two or three years ago, when we thought it imperative that all parties in the House should come together, the only party who refused the invitation were the Labour party. I think that refusal has proved unfortunate for the Labour party.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Your present Premier acted similarly.

Mr. HARDWICK: He did not. All parties were united in the matter with the exception of the Labour party. There is another matter on which I must touch. It affects the member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston). Some rather rude remarks have been cast across the floor of the Chamber regarding the baby doll and teddy bear factory in Narrogin. However, the ex-Minister for Industries has told us how necessary it is for the welfare of Western Australia that we should have every possible industry established here. Even a doll factory at Narrogin must have a great moral effect on the community. If the member for Kanowna were present, no doubt he would explain to the House that a doll factory is a natural antidote to the evil forces of civilisation. That hon. member would point out that the birds of the air and the beasts of the jungle show extraordinary care for their young and sometimes sacrifice their lives for them. Thereupon the hon. member would proceed to argue that the moral effect of the doll factory must be good, inasmuch as dolls impart to the young the idea of protection of offspring. Next I would like to say a word on the farming industry. I am sometimes inclined to think that certain members do not really represent the farming community. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) I am inclined to regard as an aristocrat of agriculture. The man for whom I wish to plead is the poor old cocky away in the back blocks. My sympathy goes out to

the man who is far back. He may come to town to pay his taxation bill.

Mr. Johnston: Or to attend the conference.

Mr. HARDWICK: It is usually the selected agriculturists who attend the conference, the aristocrats of agriculture. However, the outback struggler with salmon gum and eucalyptus is the man for whom we ought to do something. I can imagine such a man starting for Perth. First of all he shakes the wheat out of his whiskers, then he says au revoir to his wife and kisses the baby and nods good-bye to the sheep. Next he travels 25 miles to the railway siding, to find that his train is running two or three hours late. Eventually he gets into the compartment and finds himself all alone there. He wraps himself in his coat because he has no blanket with him, having had to leave it for the remainder of his family. He goes to sleep and dreams of train loads of golden wheat to the Pool and bursting bales of wool to the wharf. He dreams of his sheep depasturing in pleasant meadows and cattle browsing on the hillside. He has visions of motor cars and flying machines—

Mr. Foley: He is a bonzer dreamer.

Mr. HARDWICK: Until presently he arrives at Spencer's Brook or Clackline and is aroused by the shrill voice of a woman crying "Peanuts, 5d. a bag." He shakes his whiskers once again. Bells are ringing—"Meals, 2s. 6d.!" As he has but sixpence it does not take him long to decide between the meal and the peanuts. He has a penny left, with which he purchases a copy of the "West Australian." He remarks, "I must see what wool is fetching, how sandalwood is going, and whether there is any increase in the baby bonus." He comes across a heading "Doings in Parliament." There he reads that Mr. Ben Jones, M.L.A., politician and statesman, has denounced the profiteers in Perth who, he ventures to predict, will end their time dangling from a Manilla rope tied to a lamp-post. Our poor old cocky farmer almost breaks down at the prospect. Can it be, he wonders, that he himself is a profiteer? He wishes he had not ventured on the journey. However, he cannot go back, because the quarantine regulations are in force. He arrives at the Perth station.

Mr. Foley: Where does he wake up?

Mr. HARDWICK: There is no one anxious to carry his luggage, because he has not got any. He meets a confidence man, who, finding that he has no money, promptly drops him. Our friend strolls down Barrack-street and eventually reaches a butcher's shop, where he finds exhibited for sale mutton at 10d., mutton which, according to the member for Hannans, our cocky friend himself sold a week before to Dalgetys at 5½d. While standing ruminating as to who has received the 4½d. per lb. profit, he is nearly run over by a £900 motor car owned by Dalgetys, the middleman and agent.

Mr. Foley: Do you not think the cocky is doing pretty well on nothing at all?

Mr. HARDWICK: Yes, but I am of opinion that we are verging on revolution, revolution not by the overfed men on the Fremantle wharf, but by the farmer. He is not disobedient to the mandates of the people, neither is he using road metal or pistols to enforce his claim, but he sees that, judging by the way wages are advancing, it will be impossible in the near future for him to produce wheat at the price he will get for it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: By how much have rural wages increased during the last five years?

Mr. HARDWICK: I do not know, but I know that unskilled labour in Perth is getting 12s. 6d. a day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I know a lot of them not getting 10s. 6d.

Mr. Lambert: What about unskilled politicians getting a quid a day?

Mr. HARDWICK: If it is a weight on your conscience, why not resign? We cannot expect the wheat grower to continue at present prices. We had an announcement through the week that Collicie coal was costing the Government an extra £51,000.

Hon. P. Collier: Thirty-one thousand pounds.

Mr. HARDWICK: No, I cannot accept that. I have it on the authority of the Minister for Works that the general public will have to pay another £50,000 or £100,000 per annum. Here we find the mining companies and the men combining in one huge profiteering scheme to fleece the people.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Watt fixed it all up.

Mr. HARDWICK: And what a strong protest your side of the House made against it! As long as the miners get over £1 a day and participate in the robbery, nothing is said on that side.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Your leader had no right to fix up such an arrangement. It should have been left to the court.

Mr. HARDWICK: If the thing had happened under other conditions, what a protest there would have been against the action of the company! But so long as the men participate there is no protest from the Opposition. However, as I have said, it will soon be impossible for the farmer to produce wheat at present prices. Look at the men on the "Bambra," men whose trade can be learned in a few weeks, and who are earning over £1 per day and their keep!

Mr. O'Loughlen: Working 20 hours!

Mr. HARDWICK: It is impossible for them to work 20 hours. They could not do it and remain in health. Can it be expected that the toiler on the land is going to continue to produce wheat at a wage of less than 9s. per day—and that out in the wilderness—while seamen and others in unskilled labour draw such large wages as £1 per day and keep? No wonder we had here yesterday a deputation of women protesting against the cost of living! I am inclined to think we should ferret out these profiteers and deal with them. I would willingly assist the leader of the Opposition

in going to Collicie to find out the true facts of the case.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I will show you there 3,000 men working at 9s. 7d. per day.

Mr. HARDWICK: How is it that the miners are getting over £1 per day, those who participated in this unholy combine? Such a thing has never been known since the bush-ranging days of Australia. It is a shame that our friends should sit idly by and allow those profiteers, the workers and the employers, to amalgamate with a view to plundering the rest of the community. I hail with delight the intimation in the Speech that we are to have a Bill for the regulation of the prices of foodstuffs. I hope this debate will quickly end so that we may get to work and find out what can be done with that Bill. Many things will have to be gone into. We are told there is a deal of profiteering going on, but I am afraid we may find that it is not so. Take boots. We are paying a higher price for boots to-day than ever before. The very hides have advanced to such a price that they are bringing more than a bullock would have brought a few years ago. Hides in Fremantle have been purchased at £5. Yet the boots we are wearing to-day have been made from old stocks, and we may confidently expect a rise in price of 50 per cent. in the near future. The Commonwealth Government may refuse to allow any further hides to leave Australia. If they do, it may result in cheaper boots, but at the same time it will mean that the growers of the cattle will have to accept a decreased price for their hides.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How do you explain that last month New South Wales, in competition against the world, sold a quarter of a million pairs of boots to England?

Mr. HARDWICK: Possibly, because in England the price of boots is higher than it is here. I have heard that in Germany the people are prepared to pay £4 and £5 for a pair of boots. If we can afford to send hides out of Australia and get a so much greater price for them, why should we leave that market to America?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Where does your charity begin?

Mr. HARDWICK: Down in East Perth. The people have been for a long time complaining about the high price of boots, but I think we shall have a further increase in price in the near future. The only way to avoid that will be for the Government to prevent the hides leaving Australia. When the Price Fixing Bill is being dealt with by the House I think we should endeavour to regulate, not so much the prices as the profits on certain articles, such as necessary clothing and foodstuffs, while in regard to expensive silks and furs, in my opinion the Government would be wise to allow them to find their own level in the market. The real remedy required is greater energy and increased production. Only recently I heard Mr. Curtin, in the Town Hall, suggest that a census should be taken of all those people

who did not produce anything, who actually did nothing.

Mr. Underwood: Curtin would be among them himself.

Mr. O'Loughlen: If the member for Pilbara could do the work that Mr. Curtin does he would be in the way of becoming a useful member of the community.

Mr. HARDWICK: I noticed by the Press that a number of our Labour friends were on the platform. Another thing which is destroying our national life is the excess of sport that incites the gambling spirit. We have between 800 and 1,000 trotting and galloping horses in this State.

Hon. P. Collier: And they all race in East Perth.

Mr. HARDWICK: That does not concern me. There is too much gambling and too much sport. The 800 or 1,000 blood horses produce nothing. I suppose we might fairly allow one man to each horse, which would mean 800 to 1,000 men producing absolutely nothing. Some people argue that it is a good thing to have these horses to consume the farmers' fodder.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The farmer gets his market.

Mr. HARDWICK: That does not matter. The farmer would be better without a market directed in such channels. This is a matter which should receive the consideration of Parliament in the near future. There has been some slight discontent among members supporting the Government, but that is only natural. At the same time I would charge the Opposition with not being sufficiently optimistic. I form this conclusion from the fact that almost every gentleman on that side of the House represents a mining constituency. No doubt the gold yield is diminishing and as it diminishes their confidence in the country wanes, because they consider gold is the mainstay of the country.

Member: It plays a big part.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. HARDWICK: But I cannot close my eyes to the fact that every ounce of gold taken out of the ground represents one ounce less in the ground, and we shall sooner or later have to fall back on our resources in the pastoral country and the Wheat Belt. Even the Wheat Belt will not thrive unless measures are taken to protect the people in the matter of the cost of living, so that they will be able to buy their commodities at a reasonable price and sell their produce at a profit. Now that the great war is over, I would like to see much closer relationship between the Opposition and the Government. We have an excellent system of education; the people have been educated to think for themselves, and in consequence, the old order of things must go. Things will have to alter, and we cannot shirk our responsibilities. At the same time, the worker cannot change place with the leisured class. There must be more

work, and the way to bring that about is by medium of a tax on leisure. I have previously complained about the Arbitration Act and I complain again. As a member of the Opposition said the other evening, that particular law is dead. It should be dead. The Act is preventing our boys from being taught trades. Mechanics are becoming very scarce. We are unable to find employment for the children. The other day a lady appealed to one of the workshops to apprentice her boy, who was very keen on learning a particular trade, and she was assured that he would have been taken on, only the Arbitration Act limited the number of boys to be employed. I would like to see that useless and antiquated statute relegated to the graveyard of useless and antiquated legislation.

Mr. Foley: Are not the Government paying £150 to some outsider to go to England and get more boys. What are they going to do with them?

Mr. HARDWICK: I have travelled around the world and I was pleased to get back again to the land of my birth. In my opinion, there is nothing to fear in this country. All we need is a policy of progress; we must either progress or slip back.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How would you wipe out the deficit?

Mr. HARDWICK: That is only to be done by hard work and the sweat of one's brow.

Mr. Green: The sweat of whose brow?

Mr. HARDWICK: I hope the member for Fremantle will participate in it. I do not think he has worked very hard at all in his life. We need good government and progressive government and, given this, things in this State will automatically right themselves. After a period of war, which proved a period of great expense and extravagance, a period when commodities were eaten up by the millions of people who were fighting and preparing weapons of destruction, it is only natural that we should find ourselves in the position we occupy to-day. All the greatest thinkers and statesmen of the day advise the people that the only remedy for existing ills is to produce, and the time is not far distant when, for economic reasons, the people of this State will have to think a little more about producing and a little less about indulging in sport. Instead of spending afternoons on the racecourse, they will have to put it into their bit of land producing something. Take constituencies like Northam and York. The people there live under fair conditions, but all are producing something. They have a few acres of land, a cow, or a goat, a pig and a few fowls, and grow vegetables.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You are a three acre and a cow man?

Mr. HARDWICK: As it is impossible to place people in the industries, it is necessary to provide them with employment in production. The industries we shall be able



to establish in this State owing to the high cost of labour—

Mr. O'Loughlen: Oh, high cost! Are you aware we are behind the Eastern States—every State?

Mr. HARDWICK: I am aware the hon. member told us in this House that Tasmanian workers under Arbitration laws are better off than ours. There they worked for lower rates and purchased a cheaper commodity. Until we have a uniform rate of wages throughout Australia, how can we compete with Tasmania which has cheap labour? Did not we try to compete with a jam factory?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The jam factory is all right; the Government advanced the money.

Mr. HARDWICK: But the Government did not look at the industrial conditions which prevailed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They did not look at those in charge.

Mr. HARDWICK: They did not look at the conditions in Tasmania against which State they were competing. As far as we know the factory has been given a fair trial; it has had one or two managers and has not proved successful. I rather deplore this fact. I wish to be optimistic and I cannot find optimists on the Opposition side. They are wedded to mining constituencies and lack the knowledge, faith and confidence in the country necessary to make it progress.

Mr. Jones: Are you in favour of cutting down wages? You say they are too high.

Mr. HARDWICK: I did not say they were too high. I said we were paying high wages, which would reflect on the country in the near future. Presently we will not find men toiling in the farming constituencies from morning until night while unskilled labourers in the city are getting 12s. 6d. a day and coal miners over £1 a day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Coal miners are not.

The Minister for Works: Thirty "bob."

Mr. O'Loughlen: Nothing of the kind, and you know it.

The Minister for Works: They are.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You know they are not averaging half of that.

Mr. HARDWICK: When the price of coal to the people was increased—

Mr. O'Loughlen: They are getting a fair wage and no more.

Mr. HARDWICK: When the price of coal was increased, because the companies and the men participated—

Mr. O'Loughlen: The men are only getting a fair return. This is the cheapest coal in the world.

Mr. HARDWICK: Then, why do not the people receive the benefit?

Mr. O'Loughlen: Your Willie Watt fixed it at midnight.

Mr. HARDWICK: He had the acquiescence of the companies and the men. The

men are participating in the increase mulcted from the people of the State.

Mr. Jones: Do you propose to cut their wages down to 8s. a day?

Mr. HARDWICK: No, the hon. member can give them what he likes. I am striking a note of warning. I have travelled through this country and know how the men growing wheat live, as compared with the men in the City who have picture shows and comforts, which do not exist in the back country. Here our unskilled labourer is paid considerably over £1 a day.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Where?

Mr. HARDWICK: On the "Bambra."

Mr. O'Loughlen: Oh, half a dozen men.

Mr. HARDWICK: And in the coal mines. The hon. member should not forget that this country has been carrying the coal companies on its back for years and, now that the opportunity presents itself and they know they have a monopoly, they impose a price which is exorbitant.

Mr. O'Loughlen: There is only one mine showing a profit.

Mr. HARDWICK: The men agreed with the companies that the price should go up because they were to participate in the dividend. I have demonstrated to the House the necessity for careful guidance in the future.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Come to Collie with me on Saturday night, and I will demonstrate something to you.

Mr. HARDWICK: After my speech to-night, I think I shall probably finish up on a lamp post. The hon. member will not induce me to go to Collie.

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

Mr. HARDWICK: I apologise, Sir. I like to impress on hon. members whatever views I entertain on this question as forcibly as possible. I ask the members of the farming constituencies to keep a careful watch upon the Collie coal people and these companies, and upon every other industry. In my opinion the Country party is bound to grow. If it would widen and broaden its constitution a little, probably other intelligent members would join that party. In the future this party will, I believe, rule the country because of the fact that they are in a position to enforce that economy which is necessary. They will not produce whilst wages are advancing in the way they have been doing in the past.

Mr. GREEN (Kalgoorlie): Permit me, Sir, at the outset of my remarks to render a tribute to the late Mr. Daniel Troy, Chief Messenger of this Chamber. That gentleman occupied the position of messenger to this Chamber for some 15 years. I think I am voicing the sentiments of many hon. members when I say that he was an encyclopædia of knowledge on Parliamentary matters, and it was with deep regret that we all heard of his sudden demise. I am sure the Government will need no reminder to see that something

is set aside by way of a compassionate allowance for the wife and family of the deceased gentleman. I should like to touch upon a matter of vital importance dealt with by the member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick). He said his party stood for production. As a matter of fact that is the third plank of their printed platform. A perusal of that famous little card, hundreds of which were issued and scattered promiscuously in the Ministerial room, showed that when the party was formed the third plank provided for production. Any party that is prepared to place in the foremost position in their programme, increased production, must arrest the attention of any man in the State, and call for prominence and respect to be paid to it. I am taking that as the keynote of a portion of my remarks. If we find on examination that the Nationalist party are doing something to help production, I am prepared to join with that party and assist them. Ever since the dawn of Responsible Government there have been parties which have taught two creeds. One creed has been that the resources of the country should be placed at the disposal of individuals who were prepared to furnish the wealth to exploit any of the natural resources of the country. That party has been in power in the motherland ever since the beginning of Responsible Government. The other party, that on the other hand points to the failures of the legislation of that country and to the system which naturally followed, adopted this as their slogan. They believed that the natural resources of the country should be held by the whole of the people of that country for the benefit of the people. Unfortunately, in the old land and in Europe, that party had secured no voice in the legislative halls. It remained for our forefathers to come 12,000 miles across the sea, leave behind them their relatives and friends and endeavour, under the Southern Cross, to establish a Government which would have a different significance to that in power in the older land. For years we were satisfied, in the Eastern States, to be guided by the questions of protection and free trade. We find that the working classes of the country—after all, the welfare of the working classes and the farmers and all producers is everything—were split by the shibboleths of free trade and protection. It was in the Eastern States that responsible Government was first entered upon in Australia. The working classes in Victoria voted for protection and in New South Wales for free trade. The result was they found that when it came to the betterment of the working man, whilst they lost that big strike which has been, so often quoted, it was necessary to take political action. They said in future they were going to try something new, that their barque was going to be launched to sail in unknown seas, and that in Australia they were going to see if they could not help the people to strike out on new lines which would lead towards better social conditions.

The Labour party then came into power. In Australia that Labour party has had a glorious record until, unfortunately, it was split over the issues raised by the enemies of labour, who endeavoured to divide the workers during the course of the war. I wish to point out one or two things which have occurred to show what has been done by this new party, which has been introduced into politics for the first time in the history of the world. The Labour party established a Commonwealth Government Bank. What has been the result of these functions taken on by the State towards increasing the production of the country? Why was the Commonwealth Bank established by the Labour party? The financial institutions of the country, which previously were utilised towards the advancement of an industry by making loans and indulging in financial business of that character, were owned completely by companies. There were several such banks in existence in Australia whose immediate functions were, not so much to aid the settler and the worker and the manufacturer, but to provide large profits to those controlling these institutions. It was recognised in Australia and other countries that the people who controlled the financial institutions of the country had the whole of its production within their grasp if they could become sufficiently wealthy. On that account the Commonwealth bank was started by the Labour party. I make bold to say that if the Labour party had remained intact, if it had remained true to the ideal that it had in mind when it established the Commonwealth bank, the private banks would not have been in existence in Australia to-day. What was the result of this experiment? The bank was able to act as a kind of policeman over the remaining financial institutions of Australia. It was able to bring into the pockets of the people of Australia sources of wealth that previously went into the pockets of private individuals. The profits of the Commonwealth bank to the 31st December last year amounted to £1,534,000. A former State Treasurer has told me that it costs this State £30,000 to raise every million of loan money that is being raised here. As our loan moneys have been somewhere in the region of a State debt of 41 million pounds, it can readily be seen that if it had been entirely the function of the Commonwealth bank from the beginning of settlement in Australia to raise this money with the financiers of London, Western Australia would have effected a big saving in her borrowing. It would also have meant that the whole of the money spent in that direction would have been saved to Australia. This policy of the Labour Government of helping production by furnishing money for the people of the country, and the profits arising therefrom going back into the pockets of the people, was responsible for the note issue of 54 million pounds. The institution of the note issue was derided by our acting Prime Minister, Mr. Watt, and it was re-

ferred to vulgarly as "Fisher's flimsies." By the irony of fate Mr. Watt was glad to announce at the end of last year that the 54 million note issue was responsible for a large amount of money being saved to the people of Australia. As a matter of fact, at six per cent., that 54 million pound note issue, which was passed entirely on the credit of the people of Australia, meant that £3,240,000 was returned to the pockets of the people. On the opening of the war, after that fateful 4th day of August, 1914, in the great centre of the financial world in London, the Bank of England, Coutt's bank, and other big financial institutions in the Old Country, found it necessary to close their doors during the first three or four days of the war. There was, however, a small branch of a bank representing the people of a small community 12,000 miles away that did not close its doors. It was able to keep its doors open because, although the people behind it were 12,000 miles away, those people represented the whole population of Australia. A policy of that kind assists production. So long as the remaining banks of Australia continue to remain in the hands of financial institutions, that are prepared to call up their money at any time from the producers when a drought is threatened and at a period when the money it required most, so long will it be difficult to give production a full measure of assistance. No country can afford to leave its financial institutions in the hands of the gold bugs who at present control most of them here. Let me return to a State example which is rather hackneyed, but which should be mentioned—the State steamships. I can well remember the derision with which that enterprise was bombarded when first brought into existence by the Labour Government. To my dying day I shall feel proud that I formed one of a Government which was the first Government in the world to declare that if it was practicable for a State to own ships of war it was also practicable for a State to own ships of peace, merchant ships. From the present Minister for Railways, who is now beating the joss that once he worshipped, we learn that in this particular "my Government is in favour of the State steamship policy." How members sitting on the Ministerial benches can fail to render some tribute of gratitude to the policy which this party inaugurated I fail to understand, unless the failure is another illustration of that hypocrisy which is introduced into politics for party purposes.

The Minister for Works: Don't you think the events of the last few years have altered people's opinions on a good many things?

Mr. GREEN: Yes, except as regards giving the worker a square deal.

The Minister for Works: Oh no!

Mr. GREEN: Although I do not entirely endorse the remarks of the member for Fremantle (Mr. Jones) in some respects, I agree with him that in this country, as in other countries, there is industrial unrest of which

the gravity is not appreciated by the members of the various Governments. The member for Pilbara (Mr. Underwood) said we were going to open a new world, and added that the Government did not realise this. But the hon. member failed to indicate where he proposed that the new world should be inaugurated, except, possibly, in the matter of reducing the rents payable by the pastoralists. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick), after plainly indicating his view that wages ought to be reduced, also spoke of a new world, but likewise failed to hint where its inauguration should take effect. In the matter of reducing the cost of production it is necessary to touch on price fixing. The item of superphosphate has already been mentioned here in this connection. As stated by the member for Mount Magnet (Mr. Troy), super is at present much cheaper in South Australia than it is here. If there is any State of the Commonwealth which should control the production of super, it is this State. Let me quote some figures proving the vital necessity for a large manufacture of super in Western Australia. During 1916-17 there were two million acres under cultivation in this State, and to fertilise that acreage 70,000 tons of super were utilised. In New South Wales during the same year there were five million acres under cultivation, or  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times as much as in Western Australia, but the quantity of super used in New South Wales was only 50,000 tons, or two-sevenths less for an area  $2\frac{1}{2}$  times as great. These figures disclose how essentially necessary is super to the agriculture of Western Australia. And in this connection I wish to know what the Country party and the Government supported by them are doing as regards the high prices of super. It is common knowledge that before the war super cost £4 7s. 6d. per ton in this State. Last year the price rose to £5 5s. per ton here, notwithstanding the fact that the Minister controlling the State Steamship Service last year allowed a State steamer to be sent to Christmas Island to bring phosphatic rock thence to Western Australia at about one-third of the freight quoted by Japanese ship owners. The steamer was made available to the superphosphate people on the understanding that they would not raise the price of super here. However, they did raise the price, eventually to £6 per ton. This State, like other States, has an Act of Parliament governing the manufacture of super. By that Act control is exercised of the proportions of phosphatic acid and other constituents which go to make the agricultural value of superphosphate. Now, at the back of Cumine, Smith's works in West Guildford there is a bank of a certain material which is very common in Western Australia. Every man employed at the works is obliged to speak of that material by its geological name, a name which would not be used by any member of this House with the possible exception of a scientific gentleman like the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Lambert). Every worker digging into this bank of ma-

terial at the back of the Cuming, Smith's works has to speak of the material as "silica." Everywhere else throughout Western Australia it is called sand. But if the worker calls it sand, Messrs. Cuming, Smith give him the sack. The amount of silica now put into the superphosphate, I make bold to say notwithstanding the checks imposed by the Act, is greater than before the war. When travelling in the Great Southern districts some time ago, I conversed with some farmers, who expressed the opinion that the agricultural failure in the Great Southern last season was due not to any climatic condition or to any lack of quality in the soil, but to the impaired quality of the super. An acquaintance of mine—I can give his name if necessary—is prepared to swear an affidavit stating that he has worked in this heap of sand, I beg pardon, silica, and that in February last he was told that as the Government inspector was around he could have a spell for an hour or two, that they did not want him to shovel so much silica. I believe it is by such methods that the superphosphate in this country has been tampered with in the matter of usefulness. At any rate, whether there is anything in that or not, this State cannot afford to allow any profiteer to take hold of an essential industry that is vital to our agriculture.

The Minister for Works: It is a very serious accusation.

Mr. GREEN: I know it is, and I hope the Minister will follow it up. In my opinion there is only one means of obviating a risk of that kind, and it is nationalisation of the industry—although I know that the word "nationalisation" is anathema to the Minister. It would be reversal of policy for him to nationalise anything for the good of the people, although he has altered his attitude towards other State trading concerns. Now, what has been done as regards price-fixing? Let me refer to matters which affect the producers of the country, the farmers. The prices of machine parts, oils, grease, and binder twine have risen 100 per cent. beyond what they were prior to the war, and instead of falling since the cessation of the war are continuing to soar; and I am satisfied that the end is not yet. It is true that the Federal Government were fixing prices. Hon. members will recall that in every shop window there was supposed to be a notice, issued by the Commonwealth price-fixers, stating the prices of certain commodities for the particular district. While travelling in various parts of this State I kept careful watch for those notices. When speaking in various towns I used to assure my hearers that in all the other towns I had visited it would need a posse of criminal investigators to find a notice in any shop. I made a practice of saying that this applied to every town I had visited except the particular one in which I was speaking. In point of fact, the notices were discernible in very few shop windows, although they were supposed to be displayed conspicuously.

And when one was discovered, what did I find? Did it deal with super, machine parts, oil, and binder twine, and other things essential to the primary industries? No. It dealt with salicylic acid. It pointed out to the intending purchaser of salicylic acid—what probable use he would have for it I am unable to state at the moment—that the price of this chemical was the wholesale price, plus 25 per cent. and cost of transportation to the particular town. The price of confectionery was to be the same as on the 17th August, 1917. The price of infants' food was also the wholesale price, plus 25 per cent. and cost of transportation. The notices dealt with little picayune matters of that kind. Even as regards these small lines the intending purchaser had no means of appraising the local prices. The subject of meat supplies has been referred to by previous speakers. Prices, however, have not been quoted; and the member for Guildford (Mr. Davies) expressed doubt as to whether meat was actually cheaper in the other States which were mentioned, than in Western Australia. No matter what Mr. Knibbs may say, I am going to quote the prices at which meat is being retailed in Queensland. For my authority I take no less a publication than "The Ironmaster," a capitalistic periodical published in Queensland and conducted in the interests of big business. The editor states that for the last seven months the price of sirloin in Queensland has been 6½d. per lb. In Western Australia—I need not quote the other States—the price of sirloin is 1s. per lb. Other comparisons are—prime rib, Queensland 4½d., Western Australia 10d., fillet steak, Queensland 8d., Western Australia 1s. 4d.; rump steak, Queensland 7½d., Western Australia 1s. 2d.; ordinary beef steak, Queensland 5½d., Western Australia 10d.; topside steak, Queensland 5d., Western Australia 1s.; corned beef, round, Queensland 5½d., Western Australia 1s. And so on. The prices I have stated show that meat is very considerably cheaper in Queensland than it is here.

Mr. Pickering: But prices of meat were much lower here before the seamen's strike.

Mr. GREEN: I have heard that piffle before, and I will deal with it.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): But a year or two ago the boot was on the other foot. Meat was cheaper here then.

Mr. GREEN: It was as cheap here as in Queensland. Here to-day legs of mutton are sold at 11d. per lb.; in Queensland they are sold at 7d. For shoulders of mutton the Queensland price is 4½d., and the Western Australian price 9d.; for hindquarters 6½d. and 10d. is charged in the respective States. And so on right through the list. I am prepared to quote further prices to hon. members interested in the subject. What I want to know is how any member can maintain that living is dearer in Queensland than here simply because, according to Mr. Knibbs, the cost there has risen, by a

larger percentage during a certain period than the cost here. The statement is utterly at variance with facts, and I have figures to disprove it. Those figures are easily procurable. It is well known that if it were not for the State butchers' shops in Queensland cheap prices would not obtain there.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): They have the price fixed.

Mr. GREEN: Not by the Commonwealth Government but by the 28 butchers' shops established by the State Government and which serve no fewer than 60,000 people, and which not only supply meat at the low price I have quoted but which made a profit in twelve months of £22,935, and for the whole time they have been running £57,000. The total turnover last year was £272,000.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): They have a maximum wholesale price.

Mr. GREEN: The position is that as far as the wholesaler is concerned he is controlled in Queensland by the fact that the State owns some hundreds of thousands of cattle which depasture on State pastoral areas. The member for Gascoyne tells us that such a thing is an impossible proposition. Anyhow, it is getting on very well there. The Government of this State could provide cheap meat for the people of Western Australia by adopting the method followed by the Labour Government a few years ago. What was the reason for the establishment of State shops? I had a relative who was a squatter in a small way in the Kimberleys. He found that it was impossible to sell beef and at that particular time, before the establishment of the State shops, beef in Perth and suburbs cost as much as it does to-day. But with the introduction of the State steamers, and the inauguration of the policy that the small grower was to be assisted in getting his cattle to market, it was possible to reduce the price of meat. At the present time the Government are buying beef in Kimberley for 2½d. a lb. on the hoof, and we are paying anything up to 10d. and 1s. on the hoof down here. If the Government considered the people for one instant they would see that the State steamers brought down as many cattle as possible. They are stopped, we are told by the member for Sussex, by the demand for wages which is made for 1s. 2d. a day, and because of that, hundreds of thousands a year are extracted from the pockets of the people of this country for the meat profiteer. The men who are making these claims were told during war time that if they went on strike they would be put up against a wall and shot. The men cannot be told that now. The war is over and the Government will therefore have to get to work to cheapen the price of food, or something serious will happen. In Kalgoorlie there was ill-feeling engendered, not by the particular brush which happened recently between a certain section of the

soldiers' association and another section called Bolsheviks for electioneering purposes. At one time I remember I was called a Sinn Féiner, then I was called a disloyalist, and then a pro-German. Now all these shibboleths have gone. The member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick) said we have to drop the word "Nationalism" which was losing its magic, and we would have to use the word Bolshevik, and he had hardly uttered the words before we learned that the greatest disturbing element we ever had in Australia, Mr. William Morris Hughes, was about to land on these shores with the idea of suppressing Bolshevism, and by way of bluff, to deal with profiteering. The high cost of meat in this State at the present time has not been caused by any shortage of stock. The labouring people cannot be twitted and insulted by an uncouth colleague of the Premier's, when they touch on a matter of this kind. It is too serious to be treated with rude words, and it cannot be dealt with by people with swelled heads who do not know how to treat the wives and daughters of the toilers. I have a few figures here which I want to give to the House. The increase in cattle in this State in 1918 over the year 1917 was, in round numbers, 93,000 or 10 per cent. The increase in the number of sheep in the same period was 786,000, or an increase of 12 per cent. Pigs increased in the same period to the extent of 21,000, or 25 per cent. Under these circumstances it is necessary for the Government to see that the food supplies are made available to the people of the State at a cost commensurate with the great quantity of the products which exist in the country.

Mr. Maley: The Government cannot fatten the stock themselves.

Mr. GREEN: There is sufficient fat stock in Kimberley.

The Premier: We cannot get it down.

Mr. GREEN: It can be brought down in the State steamers. They are lying idle.

The Premier: You know why.

Mr. GREEN: Because the men want 1s. 2d. more a day. It would not do for the Government to fall out with the shipping ring. People must pay hundreds of thousands of pounds a year more because the Government have such a hatred of labour that they are not prepared to pay the extra 1s. 2d. a day.

The Premier: That is not so.

Mr. GREEN: What is the position in regard to butter? In 1914 it cost 1s. 3d.; to-day it is 2s. 2d. Recently, on that historical boat the "Dimboola" there were 11,000 boxes of butter. The whole of that was eventually landed, and 5,000 boxes remained in the hands of the wholesale merchants. The ukase went forth from the people controlling the butter pool in the Eastern States that butter in Western Australia must go up 2d. a pound, and so, willy-nilly, the price is raised by that amount. That meant that there was a profit

or £2,333 over and above the original profit. Let me talk of another vital necessity, bread. I challenge contradiction when I say that so far as the working man's family is concerned the cost of meat equals the cost of groceries. The price of bread before the war was 3d. a loaf. To-day in the metropolitan area it is 4½d.

Mr. Pickering: The member for Subiaco wants to nationalise bread.

Mr. GREEN: Until I hear the member for Subiaco raise his voice in that direction I will be loth to believe such a proposition. The hon. member will have an opportunity of refuting the figures which I intend to submit to the Chamber. Recently, bread was 4d. a loaf. A small increase was made in the wages of the employees in the baking industry. The master bakers in the metropolitan area decreed that the price of bread should be 4½d. in order to meet that increase in the wages, and the increased price of horse feed. The member for Subiaco will recognise the firm when he hears the figures that I am about to quote. It was found that a firm baked 12 tons of flour per week. The increase in the price of horse feed came to 8s. a horse, and that for 14 horses and the addition to wages meant an extra expenditure of £7 10s. per ton. The firm in question used 12 tons of flour per week. One ton of flour will make 1,320 loaves. At one-half-penny per loaf, multiplied by 12, it means an increased income to that firm of £33 per week, so that, by adding this little increase of wages stunt, which the member for East Perth has used with such herculean effect to show that the cocky is not able to live, the increase of one-halfpenny per loaf meant a profit of £25 10s. At the present time at Collie a 2lb. loaf is being sold at 4d., and in some instances it is carted seven miles. On the goldfields, where flour has to be conveyed a distance of 375 miles, and where wages are higher, the loaf to-day is being sold at precisely the same price as in the metropolitan area. Meat and bread should be dealt with by the Government. We have sovereign powers. Hon members have repeatedly bewailed the fact that our powers are being taken from us by the Commonwealth Government, but so far as the Commonwealth Government price fixing is concerned they have done absolutely nothing, and if the State Government want to show that it is their desire to help production they can do so by reducing the cost of living. They should study the limitation of profits, which I believe is absolutely the best way to deal with price fixing. Let us see now how groceries have gone up during the war. I have a list taken from W. J. Kirkham's advertisement as published in the "West Australian Worker." I have also that published on the 18th August by a firm known as Boan Bros. We find that sugar in pre-war days was 2s. 9d. a dozen pounds. The sugar trust now extracts 3s. 5d. Self-raising flour was 1s. 6d.; now it is 2s. Milk was 6½d. a tin, now it is 10½d.

There has been no increase in wages in the milk industry, yet the price of this commodity has gone up 4d. a tin. Groats have gone up from 10d. to 1s. 7½d. These are manufactured in Australia from Australian products. Bacon rashers have gone up from 1s. 1d. to 1s. 5d., assorted jams from 7s. 6d. to 12s.; flour (50lbs.) from 4s. 9d. to 6s. 9d. Signal soap from 10d. to 1s. 6d., and Boan's big bar soap from 1s. to 2s. 3d. If I were on a wicket of that kind I, too, would give to the war and every other fund on earth, and I, too, would see that my wife lived in England. Starch has gone up from 5d. to 9d.; treacle has advanced from 5½d. to 8½d., baking powder from 1s. to 1s. 9d., oatmeal from 1s. 8d. to 3s. 3d. That reminds me that when the deputation of ladies waited on the Premier the hon. gentleman replied, "You can buy wheat meal for 2½d. a lb."; in other words, "What the devil do you mean by living on luxuries. Why not eat wheat meal?" As a matter of fact, he might extend it, and ask "Why buy crockery?" the price of which has gone up. Put down a family trough for the workers, make a batch of wheat meal, and there they are.

The Premier: Wheat meal is very good food.

Mr. GREEN: Yes, miles too good for the brutes. Let me come to the question of boots. The member for East Perth in a serious moment—every circus must have its clown—dealt with the question of boots and defended the increased price. He takes credit for being the only member to defend the profiteer.

Mr. Hardwick: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. GREEN: I remember a few years ago a boot extensively advertised in the "Bulletin" as "Hurst's half-guinea boot." That boot could not be purchased to-day for less than 25s. What the farmers have to recognise is that if we are going to satisfy local industry by selling raw material to the manufacturers at the enhanced value they are getting in Europe by charging famine prices, we shall never establish any industry. When there is a plethora of production in any article in this country, it is criminal to create an artificial scarcity by sending more than the surplus to Europe and then asking Australians to pay an increased price for the balance. In certain of his reasonings the member for East Perth followed Mr. Massey Greene, the Commonwealth price fixer, who is one of the biggest butter producers in the New England district of New South Wales. It is a remarkable fact that under Mr. Greene's august domination butter has gone up from 1s. 3d. to 2s. 3d. In regard to boots, some provision should be made whereby the hides of this country would suffer an export tax or at least some restriction on their exportation, if that exportation means an increase in the local price of boots, which already has gone up by 100 per cent. Now we have the doleful intelligence that boots are to go up another 10s. a pair in consequence

of the export of hides. It was pointed out this evening that, through the Agent General's office, New South Wales was able to export 250,000 pairs of boots to the Old Country. I say that the people of Australia should first be supplied with boots at reasonable prices.

Mr. Hardwick: Do not forget that Australians have the value in the leather, if not in the hides.

Mr. GREEN: The squatters as usual! The member for East Perth, true to his class—well did the member for Kanowna the other evening trace the history of the class struggle.

Mr. Hardwick: Do not get on to Collie coal.

Mr. GREEN: The hon. member cannot get away from Collie coal. He could not get his eyes past Collie coal to the profiteers of the Eastern States, because the funds of the party supported by the hon. member are assisted by the big firms.

The Minister for Works: Why make that insinuation?

Mr. GREEN: Does the Minister seriously deny that the National party funds are helped by the big business firms of this country?

Mr. Hardwick: Yes, I deny it.

Mr. GREEN: Then the hon. member is suffering from a loss of memory or else is making a statement which in other circumstances I would describe by an ugly name. The increased prices are seriously affecting not only the agricultural industry, but the mining industry, an industry which up to date has been responsible for the exportation of over half the wealth of Western Australia. There has been a decrease in the gold output during the last three years, but that decrease has not been equal to the decrease in the wheat yield, which has been caused simply by the increased price of necessaries, and in some measure as the result of the policy of becoming barnacles on a Government. Let me quote from the journal of the Chamber of Mines. Under date the 31st March that journal reported as follows—

Several essentials in the mining industry have gone up. At the present rate bar iron is 12s. 6d. per ton pre war, present price 27s. 6d.; mining steel £35 pre war, £70 present; zinc shavings £34 11s. 6d. pre war, £75 present; cyanide 7½d. per lb. pre war, 1s. 2½d. present; steel plates £9 7s. 6d. per ton pre war, £33 present; caustic soda 18s. 6d. per cwt. pre war, 76s. present; borax glass £42 per ton pre war, £132 present; lead acetate 32s. per cwt. pre war, 72s. present.

In respect of the mining industry in this State, at the present time working expenses and production are run on so close a margin that any increases in the expense is liable to close down half our mines. During the war they had great trouble in carrying on. In October of last year a gold producers' conference was held in London. To that conference a letter was sent forward calling attention to the fact that under the increased prices

of mining commodities in 1913 there were certain representative companies in Western Australia who out of 1,916,000 tons of ore produced £2,998,000 worth of gold, while in 1917 there were 1,268,000 tons of ore which produced two and a half million pounds worth of gold. While it cost 20s. 7d. to treat a ton of ore in 1913, the cost in 1917 was 27s. 10d. or an increase of 7s. 3d. That means a serious loss to the mining industry. The mining engineers did not mention the cost of wages which the member for East Perth (Mr. Hardwick) was so careful to note. The engineers said the increased costs were entirely due to the rise in price of commodities. It was pointed out that in the industry to-day only 8,000 men were employed as against 13,000 men in 1913. The effect of the increased cost of mining commodities, they said, was not of an immediate character, but was far reaching because, to produce the large amount of gold requested by the Empire during war, it was necessary to select richer ore and to pass by poorer ore for the time being. This means passing it by for all time, because, owing to the increased costs, that ore will be left in the ground forever. What is the Government's attitude regarding price fixing? The Bill does not yet appear on the Notice Paper. We want an early pronouncement and no camouflage. This country has been threatened with a general strike and, at the behest of the workers, this matter must be dealt with. The Government must deal seriously with it. In connection with other industries, while the Government have not bothered about fixing the prices of commodities and have thus missed a glorious opportunity, they have actually decreased production instead of increasing it. Not only are they prepared to allow the State trading concerns to go along in any old haphazard fashion, but they are prepared to stifle them. I refer to the Minister for Works and the brick making industry. At present there are 50 bricklayers unemployed in the metropolitan area. Are they idle in consequence of unemployment? No; but because it is impossible to obtain bricks.

Member: It is impossible to get bricks in under the month or eight weeks.

Mr. GREEN: In answer to a question the other evening, the Minister admitted that the State brick works had two and a quarter million bricks to supply. I asked him whether he was prepared to erect another Hoffman kiln and run two shifts, but he replied, "No, to hell with those men."

The Minister for Works: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. GREEN: That is what he meant. Unemployment is rife, not because of the lack of work, but because of the lack of material. Rather than keep abreast of the times and open his one eye which has remained closed, rather than change the views he tells us he has changed on account of the war, he is prepared to allow a brick machine to lay idle when it could be working. He is prepared to allow men to remain out of work, because

he will not supply the bricks. A policy of that kind does not accord with his professed policy of increasing production.

The Minister for Works: You asked a question and got your answer.

Mr. GREEN: I got your policy.

The Minister for Works: Nothing of the sort.

Mr. GREEN: I wish to point out how a small industry, but one peculiarly adapted to this State, is being dealt with by big business. I frankly admit that in the old days, when the ideas of the old Manchester school, which one or two fossilised members of this Chamber still flatter themselves prevail in the world, held sway, and when the different manufacturers were in competition one with the other, the methods employed made competition good for the working classes. But big business knows a trick or two. They have cut out competition. The working classes are now the only classes in competition, and they are in competition to sell their labour power. I refer to the efforts of Mr. Braddock, who left a position in one of our Government departments to inaugurate a sandalwood oil industry. At great expense, he established a distillation plant at Lion Mill. It was an entirely new industry to Australia. Western Australia owns most of the sandalwood in the known world. Mr. Braddock, in establishing these works, was endeavouring to secure for Western Australia an industry which rightly belongs to this State. He made inquiries from the Federal Bureau of Science and Industry, but for three months he has been awaiting a reply from that live bureau which I think has at its head one, Mr. Taylor, who was formerly a prominent member of the Westralian Farmers, Ltd.

Mr. Johnston: They were lucky to get him.

Mr. GREEN: He is in big business now. He has not replied to Mr. Braddock for three months. Mr. Braddock made a patent sheep dip and sent it to the Commonwealth Bureau of Industry to find out what they thought of it. They analysed it and after careful analysis they found that it contained cedar oil. It contained nothing of the kind. They said they found dripping in it. There was no dripping in it. They also said they found something else which was not a constituent of it at all. They said they found three different things in that sheep dip which were not in it, and now they neglect to reply to Mr. Braddock's inquiries. Mr. Braddock sold a considerable quantity of sandalwood oil to some of the wholesale chemists in the Old Country for medicinal purposes. During the last 12 months, however, it has been impossible for him to sell a pound of oil in the Old Country. The other day he was informed by a representative of one of the biggest American oil factories that his oil was barred in London. Mr. Braddock said—"I did not get that definitely, but I have two to three tons of oil now and have not been able to sell it." Sandalwood oil goes 35 pounds to the ton. The American representative added, "You

are cut out. Brunner, Mond, who have the sole agency for the sandalwood oil listed in the British Pharmacopœia, which is the sandalwood oil of Mysore, India, are advertising the Indian oil. The Mysore oil contains 80 per cent. santalol which is the essential medicinal constituent required, while Western Australian oil has only 70 per cent." This is quite true, the Indian oil is better than ours. Continuing he said, "They are also advertising West Indian oil which has 35 per cent. santalol. They are afraid of being cut out by the Western Australian oil which is so near in value to the Mysore oil of which they hold a monopoly and, therefore, they have cut out the Western Australian oil from the London market, which means the American market as well, because America gets her supplies from London." Big business again with one scratch of the pen cancels all the contracts with Braddock and shuts down a new industry in Western Australia. We did not get that from the late Minister for Industries the other evening. Braddock is prepared to sell Western Australian oil at 18s. per lb. The Indian oil is sold by Brunner, Mond's at an average of 55s. per lb., although it only contains ten per cent. more santalol in it than our local oil. I should like to pay a tribute to Mr. Lane-Poole for the immense help he has given to Mr. Braddock, and to the Forestry Department generally for assisting him to get to the bottom of what is undoubtedly an intricate subject for a manufacturer. There is another industry in the State to which the farmers' representatives might turn their attention. Until recently pigs were almost unsaleable and an unprofitable investment for the farmer because of the exploitation on the part of the wholesale butchers. Breeding pigs went out of fashion. Messrs. Foggitt, Jones, however, have now established a local bacon factory, and are producing bacon of a quality which is not inferior to anything imported. This venture is hampered by the apparent neglect of our farmers to study the question of turning out the most suitable baconers for the market. It has remained for the people of the Goldfields, to whom the member for East Perth has referred as pessimists, to produce in the interior of the country, several hundreds of miles inland, baconers that are the finest in the State. I refer particularly to Mr. Harvey. That gentleman has received a letter from Messrs. Foggitt, Jones, and I commend it to the attention of our farmers, so that they may go and do likewise.

Mr. Griffiths: That gentleman comes from York.

Mr. GREEN: And all the knowledge seems to have gone from York with him. The letter, which is dated 8th May, 1919, says—

Enclosed herewith we hand you account sales and cheque in settlement of same in connection with a consignment of 35 pigs received from you on Saturday last. You



will note we have returned you a higher price than previously, and bearing in mind the state of the market have treated the whole consignment as being "first class baconers"—that is those ranging from 90 to 130lbs. dressed weight. We will be pleased to have your stamped acknowledgment of our remittance in due course. We desire to take this opportunity of congratulating you on your system of feeding, as it is evident from the evenness of the weights of the line that you have made this aspect of pig-raising a feature. Your results are the best illustration of the success awaiting anyone prepared to make pig-raising a business, and if arrangements could be made for a great number of the farmers in this State to visit your yards they would at once realise that pig-raising can be made profitable.

I commend this to the notice of the Minister for Railways, who is very seldom in the Chamber since his recent conversion and election, and urge him to put on a special train so that the farmers of the York and Sussex electorates may visit the dry precincts of Kalgoorlie and see how hogs suitable for the local bacon market are being raised.

Mr. Griffiths: Many of the people you are condemning have only just started, while this man has been in the business for many years.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you not think the State should have the benefit of his experience?

Mr. GREEN: The Government should, at all events, go into the matter. I wish I could wake up the Premier so that he might hear some remarks of mine concerning the Nornalup Inlet. I can see from his demeanour just now that the settlement of returned soldiers in this locality is only a dream. Seeing that the Nornalup Inlet was being so much boomed I took the opportunity during the recess of making a trip from Denmark through this magnificent south-west as far as Manjimup, a distance of 126 miles as the crow flies. I do not know how far it is when one walks the distance. Over 96 miles of this journey I had to pack on my back everything I wanted in the way of food and blankets. In this place that we are told is the promised land I did not meet a settler for 96 miles.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): Which way did you go?

Mr. GREEN: I went along the surveyed route of the railway, which is going to cost £400,000. I wish to state my experience frankly, and am not here for party purposes to condemn the scheme. I made the trip in order to gain some knowledge of the country.

The Minister for Works: Did you go over the new survey?

Mr. GREEN: I was so struck by my first visit to Big Brook, by the karri country round about, and the general appearance of the land, which was quite new to me, that I

determined to see as much of it as I could. After walking 36 miles from Denmark to Nornalup I arrived at Mr. Boulanger's place. He is a Frenchman and a well-informed and talented gentleman. His wife, too, is a lady of considerable attainments and refinement, and altogether out of keeping with the wildness of her surroundings.

Hon. P. Collier: Is he not a descendant of General Boulanger?

Mr. GREEN: He is supposed to be. The courtesy I received at the hands of this gentleman is one of the bright spots of my journey. I shall always remember that family with warm-hearted feelings. A man of this description should not be allowed to remain in this part of the country, even if he has a fancy in that direction, spending his last shilling there, without something being done to bring him into closer touch with civilisation. His residence is situated on the banks of the Frankland River. At this particular spot the river wore the appearance of the Hawkesbury River in New South Wales. It is a noble stream. I do not think its equal is to be seen in any part of the State. I travelled by boat for four miles down the Nornalup River, four miles across the Inlet, and four miles up the Deep River before reaching any other settlement. There I found an English family named Thompson, who had been down there for nine years. They are a warm-hearted and refined family. My impressions are that this is the prettiest country I have seen in the State. It is thickly timbered with karri trees. The soil I examined was splendid, right up to the top of the highest ridges. I had not previously noticed this feature in any other part of Western Australia. Even the settlers there are prepared to condemn any scheme for the settlement of returned soldiers there before the land is cleared. To clear land in the face costs £38 an acre. Hon. members will agree with me that before we pay £38 an acre for clearing this land we must be satisfied that it is worth the money. It must be good land for such an expenditure. I believe it would pay the Government, instead of talking about settling soldiers in the dense forest country, of an almost Amazonian density, to see if that timber could not be used by means of spot mills so as to assist our timber industry and at the same time make it ready for settlement later on. It is the last place in the world I would recommend for the immediate settlement of returned soldiers.

The Minister for Works: What would you say if the Government constructed a line in order to work spot mills in that country?

Mr. GREEN: If the Government were prepared to act in that way so as to bring sufficient timber by rail to Denmark, I would support such a line. The distance would be 36 miles. But that does not mean the construction of a railway from Manjimup or Bridgetown, as has been frequently suggested, to Nornalup Inlet. That country is undoubtedly the cow country of Western

Australia, being by far the dampest portion of the State. I believe a great portion of it would grow English lucerne all the year round without irrigation. If experiment verifies that belief, undoubtedly this country is the cow country of Western Australia, and should be opened up for dairy settlement. However, whilst walking along the track of the railway in that district, although I was hardly ever out of the sound of running water, yet I found myself on a ridge and had to make considerable journeys into the bush for the purpose of getting water. My view is that the survey, being on the ridge, is not in the best portion of that country.

Hon. F. E. S. Willmott (Honorary Minister): What timber was there on the ridge?

Mr. GREEN: Mostly karri, sometimes tingle-tingle, which is a large tree affording shelter in times of storm. I do not believe that the time is ripe, or that it will be ripe for the next ten years, to take a railway from Bridgetown to Nornalup only; but I do believe that if the Government show an earnest desire to establish the timber industry around Nornalup and help the settlers there by so doing, a railway might be justified. The railway would have to be taken to Deep River, which would be a very costly construction. A survey party between Deep River and Frankland River once took twelve days to go nine miles, and even then lost two horses owing to the arduousness of the trip. The route I refer to would involve the crossing of the Collier River, a stream called after the distinguished Western Australian statesman. In closing, I desire to refer to the goldfields trouble. I visited the goldfields during the week-end, and I say that the deportation of goldfields citizens must cease. No man must be removed from the goldfields by any body of men setting themselves up as representatives of the returned soldiers. I say advisedly, setting themselves up, because in fact they do not represent the returned soldiers. There is a section of that body who represent the Tory element of the goldfields, who shelter and feed out-of-works and would-be politicians around Kalgoorlie. With them are associated some citizens of the town who ought to know better, people in business. I have one in mind at the present moment who is a menace to the town, and if there is any further deportation he will be the next to go. He is a well known bully, which I think identifies him to every member from the goldfields. That man, immediately after the regrettable affair in which a foreigner knifed a returned soldier—and the foreigner has to stand his trial for it—went with a gang of men to the Kalgoorlie drill hall and took 17,000 rounds of ammunition. These people had the ammunition in their possession for some time. It was returned the next day, being placed under a pepper tree. The man in charge at the drill hall was intimidated and terrorised into giving up the ammunition. There are now working on the goldfields men of British birth who have been told that they will be the next to go. It is significant, however,

that the miners have carried a resolution declaring that no members of their union shall be deported; and the miners will see to that. Personally I would not shed the blood of any fellow Australian or fellow man, unless my own life was threatened. We cannot afford to allow the present position on the goldfields to continue. In God's name, we have had enough of misunderstanding and mistrust and heated feeling during the war. I now sound a note of warning to the members of the Ministry to let this be thoroughly understood by the Minister who got in on the cry of law and order, but who is now condoning the attitude of the deportationists on the goldfields. During Mr. Brodribb's visit to Perth that Minister informed him, according to a letter from Mr. Brodribb to the section claiming to represent the returned soldiers on the goldfields—and the statement has not been repudiated by the Minister—that the Minister referred to was in sympathy with them as regards the deportations. This must not be allowed to continue. The hollow hypocrisy of a man who stands for law and order and yet proclaims himself in sympathy with the deportation crowd! If that kind of thing is allowed to continue, there will be bloodshed on the fields in the near future. As regards the questions asked of the Premier this afternoon, which questions the Premier put off, I say the hon. gentleman must make inquiries. I am thoroughly in earnest over the matter. Are there to be deportations merely because of differences of opinion? In such conditions Magna Charta would never have been signed. In such circumstances, where would Hampden have been with his protest against ship money? I am afraid we are drifting back in this country. It is up to all of us, on either side of the Chamber, to defend the freedom which existed in this country before the war came upon us.

On motion by Mr. Chesson debate adjourned.

*House adjourned at 11.9 p.m.*