

Commissioner of Railways should have the maintenance, management, and control of Government railways. So the railway must embrace premises above and below the surface of any particular railway and of land reserved in connection with the railway. There would be no need for Mr. Loton to alter his amendment. As to the objection raised to-day, that could be met by amending the title, so as to make it include "other purposes."

HON. G. RANDELL: After the lucid explanation given by Mr. Moss as to the legal position, suppose there was a railway strike, would there be any effective protection of the interests of citizens and of the railway itself? Persons breaking the law in such cases might cause serious difficulty.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The Police Act of 1892, in the section already referred to, contained ample provision to deal with all classes of traffic that did not come under the control of the municipal authority. There was in that Act a code of what might be called municipal laws to be applied for the control and management of any public roadway where municipal by-laws were not in operation.

Amendment (by the Colonial Secretary) put and passed.

Farther amendment (by Mr. Loton) put and passed.

Clause as amended agreed to.

Schedule:

HON. J. D. CONNOLLY moved an amendment—

That in the paragraph headed "In the City of Perth," on page 4, the words "All that portion of William Street lying between the southern side of Roe Street and the northern side of Wellington Street" be struck out.

At the last sitting he gave reasons for this. An overhead railway would at some time be erected, to cross William Street. Meanwhile, it was not desirable to allow William Street to be blocked by buildings.

Amendment put and negatived.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved an amendment—

That the following be added under the heading "In the Town of Popanyinning": "All that portion of a public road, bounded by lines starting at a point on the Eastern side of the Great Southern Railway Reserve, situate 14 chains 65 and $\frac{1}{10}$ th links South, and 4 chains 62 and $\frac{1}{10}$ th links East from the

North-East corner of Popanyinning Town Lot 20, and extending 89° 54' 11 chains 22 and $\frac{1}{10}$ links; thence 78° 26' 5 chains 38 and $\frac{1}{10}$ links; thence 118° 0' 1 chain 57 links; thence 258° 26' 6 chains 70 links; thence 269° 54' 11 chains 42 and $\frac{1}{10}$ links; and thence 5° 26' 1 chain and $\frac{1}{10}$ of a link to the starting point."

Amendment passed, and the schedule as amended agreed to.

Preamble—agreed to.

Title—amended consequentially on Mr. Loton's amendment, by adding the words "and for other purposes."

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at ten minutes to 6 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 14th December, 1905.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 2:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—PREMIER'S PRIVATE SECRETARY.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT.

MR. WALKER asked the Premier: Is it a fact that the Private Secretary to the Premier is, beside his ordinary clerical duties, engaged as shorthand instructor at the Railway Institute, Perth, and, if so, is he in receipt of two salaries?

THE PREMIER replied: Mr. Kessell, in his private capacity, was invited, and,

with Ministerial approval first obtained, consented to devote four hours weekly of his private time in the direction referred to. Mr. Kessell does not receive two salaries, nor any fees whatever from the railway staff who attend the classes, the Committee of the Institute slightly recognising his services. The classes in no way interfere with the duties of Secretary to the Premier, and I understand that the Railway Department has greatly benefited by the arrangement, previous efforts having been unsatisfactory.

QUESTION—TIMBER INQUIRY, HOW PROCEEDING.

MR. WALKER (for Mr. A. J. Wilson) asked the Minister for Lands: 1, How many meetings have the Timber Inquiry Board held? 2, Have they called any witnesses? 3, When do they expect to report? 4, Would they suggest that the Arbitration Court award dealing with the timber industry be held back pending the report?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS replied: 1, 26. 2, Yes. 3, Early in January. 4, Yes, if the Arbitration Court wish to make use of the evidence the board has collected.

QUESTION—SUNDAY WORK ON MINES.

MR. BATH asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Has he received notification that the Inspector of Mines issued a permit for the employment of 30 men at the Boulder Perseverance Mine on Sunday, 3rd November, on work which, it is stated, was not urgent or necessary as provided by the Act, 2, Will he cause inquiries to be made into the matter with a view to seeing whether a breach of the Sunday Observance Act was committed?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, Yes; on Sunday, 3rd November, a permit for the employment of 10 men on each shift on the Boulder Perseverance was given by the Inspector of Mines for the purpose of filling No. 2 stope in order to render it safe. 2, The practice of the Inspectors of Mines in the East Coolgardie Goldfields has been to limit permits granted for Sunday work to cases of urgent necessity, but a farther report will be obtained from the Inspector.

BILL—FIRST READING.

State Trading Accounts, introduced by the Minister for Mines.

BILL—STAMP ACT AMENDMENT.

RECOMMITTAL.

On motion by the PREMIER, Bill re-committed for considering amendments; Mr. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair.

Clause 12, Penalty for issuing any unstamped bill or note:

The PREMIER moved an amendment:

That after "Colonial Treasurer," in line 31, the words "or an officer of the Treasury acting with his authority" be inserted.

This clause dealt with the penalty for issuing an unstamped bill. In Sub-clause 2 it was provided that any unstamped or insufficiently stamped bill might be stamped within a certain period as the Colonial Treasurer might allow. It was desired to insert these words, otherwise the Treasurer would be the only person with power to give the authority. The amendments on the Notice Paper did not alter the principles of the Bill, but simply dealt with its machinery.

Amendment passed.

THE PREMIER moved an amendment—

That after "payee," in line 32, the words "if the Colonial Treasurer or such officer as aforesaid is satisfied that the bill or note has, by accident and without any intent to evade payment of duty, been written upon paper not duly stamped" be inserted.

The object of the amendment was to protect the revenue from loss and the individual from any hardship.

Amendment passed.

On motions by the PREMIER, the clause farther amended by striking out the words "Receiver of revenue," in line 34, and inserting "such officer as aforesaid," and by inserting after "payee," in line 36, "and the grounds on which the application is made."

Clause 14—Power to stamp certain unstamped bills and notes:

THE PREMIER moved an amendment—

That, in line 3, the words "affix the proper stamp or stamps thereto" be struck out, and the words "affix thereto the proper stamp or stamps which at the time when the bill or note was drawn or made should have been affixed thereto" be inserted in lieu.

A bill might have been drawn and passed to another party before the stamp duty was altered; and unless we expressly stated what stamps were to be affixed to that bill, the Treasury officer might hold that it was the stamp duty of the day, rather than the stamp duty existing at the time when the bill ought to have been stamped.

Amendment passed.

New Clause—Penalty on taking unstamped bill or promissory note:

THE PREMIER moved that the following be added as Clause 13:—

Any person who takes or receives from any other person any bill of exchange or promissory note not duly stamped, either in payment or as a security, or by purchase or otherwise, without causing the same to be duly stamped within twenty-eight days, or such further time as the Colonial Treasurer, or an officer of the Treasury acting with his authority, shall permit, after receiving it, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty pounds.

This was taken from the South Australian Act word for word. In land transactions, a land agent frequently held bills for considerable periods. In many cases these bills never passed into a bank and, but for this provision, would never bear stamp duty. It was to avoid the evasion of the Act the clause was sought to be inserted. There would be no hardship, because it was optional with the Treasurer whether any penalty should be pressed for or waived.

Question passed, clause added.

New Clause—Limitation of proceedings for offences:

THE PREMIER moved that the following be added as Clause 17:—

A prosecution for any offence against any of the provisions of the principal Act or of this Act may be commenced at any time within two years after the offence was committed.

Under the Justices Act, six months was the limit of time. Frequently it happened that bills representing large transactions stretched over longer periods than six months. Frequently they reached close on two years, but rarely extended over that period. There might be bills representing a large transaction extending over two years, and as these bills might be unstamped, there would be no penalty unless the clause were inserted.

Question passed, clause added.

Bill reported with farther amendments.

BILL—TOTALISATOR DUTY.

SECOND READING.

Resumed from the 5th December.

MR. H. E. BOLTON (North Fremantle): In speaking on this Bill, I cannot help prefacing my remarks by saying that the Premier was altogether too sanguine in the amount which he expects to receive from this tax. I notice the Premier expects £12,000 from this totalisator duty, but I think when the Premier considers that the totalisator business is on a very different footing from what it was a few years ago he will alter his opinion. For instance, there is only one club in the coastal metropolitan area that now runs a straight-out tote, and that is in connection with the W.A. Turf Club. Each of the other proprietary clubs have ceased to run a straight-out tote and now run what is termed a placed tote, in which the money invested is divided amongst the three placed horses. By the Premier imposing a tax on totalisators and allowing the bookmakers' fees to go into the coffers of the clubs it would be a very easy matter for three of the four clubs to practically cease from operating on the totalisator. The totalisator building in connection with the W.A. Turf Club is of a very substantial nature, and has cost a great deal of money, and that institution puts through so much money in the year therefore it will not pay them to cease operations. In connection with the other clubs, each of the buildings is of a temporary nature and has cost very little to erect; the buildings are worth very little money, so that if the club can keep all the bookmakers' fees, which is far preferable to them, for they are not proposed to be taxed, it naturally follows they will not seek to do business on the totalisator as they are only running a place totalisator now. This is just what will happen, and the Premier will receive less than half his estimate. It must be also taken into consideration that there are only about four clubs which will be taxed, the W.A. Turf Club, the Kalgoorlie Club, the Boulder Club, and the Coolgardie Club. These are the only race clubs that run a straight-out totalisator, and I cannot see where the Premier is to get his £12,000 from, when only three clubs can contribute anything worth talking about. It would be just as easy

for the clubs to license bookmakers to bet place odds, to work on exactly the same principle as the totalisator less the 10 per cent. I think it is only a fair proposition to expect most of the public to favour the idea of bookmakers betting place odds. Supposing you take a sovereign to the racecourse, if you have ten bets, possibly you may win, but you must lose at least one pound in commission on the totalisator, therefore a great many of the public would prefer to bet with the bookmaker with place odds than on the place totalisator, therefore any action that the clubs take to lessen their business with the totalisator will be commended by the public. There are a good many amendments suggested in this Bill, and I notice in one place the words: "Whereby no fractional part of a shilling is paid by way of dividend." It has not come under my notice yet that any club should be prevented from paying less than shilling fractions. Should the dividend be 9s. 7d., there is nothing to prevent a club paying 9s. 6d. That would naturally reduce the revenue the Premier expects to receive. According to the evidence given before the committee on horse-racing, some of which was of a very useful nature, we found that the Kalgoorlie club paid the shilling if the amount exceeded 9d., that is to say, if the dividend was 9s. 10d. or 9s. 9d., they would pay 10s., just the same as they would pay a pound if the dividend was 19s. 10d. The evidence that will be before members of the Chamber when printed will at least allow them to understand that the evidence given was genuine; therefore we must accept the evidence, and it is clearly shown that the Kalgoorlie club pays the shilling when the amount approaches the shilling and is past 9d. This reduces the fractions the Premier wishes to commandeer. We can almost spend more time in looking through the amendments proposed than on the Bill itself. I intend to support the second reading, believing that by the time the Bill is through Committee it will be unrecognisable. I think, in view of that fact, it will be almost as well for the Premier to do what I hope he will do with another Bill, which is not exactly a revenue-producing Bill, either agree to tax the receipts from bookmakers' licenses, to make sure of the

£12,000 he expects to get, or give up the idea of the paltry amount from the totalisator. If the Premier does not do that I hope he will do what I hope will be done in connection with another Bill dealing with racecourses—let the measure drop. I support the Bill, but in Committee I shall have a great deal to say, and I shall try to upset the measure entirely.

MR. H. BROWN (Perth): I think with the member for North Fremantle that the Bill requires a great deal of amendment. The very fact of taxing the totalisator will be simply taxing practically those clubs that spend the whole of their profits in beautifying their courses and giving accommodation to their patrons, and leaving the proprietary clubs that put the profits in their pockets without taxation at all. It would be far better if the Premier requires a revenue-producing Bill to take a certain percentage of the gross revenue of the clubs; that would be a far more equitable way of raising revenue than by taxing the totalisator receipts.

MR. W. T. EDDY (Coolgardie): I certainly do not think there will be any possibility of getting the amount of money as mentioned in the financial statement from the totalisator receipts. I do not think there is a possibility of receiving £12,000. I would like to quote some figures—and I think they will form a pretty fair basis to go on—in reference to the amount of money that passed through the totalisator last year. The W.A. Turf Club put through £86,000; the Kalgoorlie Club an amount of £116,128; Boulder Club about £85,000, and the Coolgardie Club £12,000. These four clubs practically put through an amount of £299,000 odd, whereas the whole amount of money that went through the different totalisators throughout the State only amounted to about £354,000, showing that these four clubs put through practically just about 90 per cent. of the total amount. On the Notice Paper I have an amendment by way of protecting the small clubs by reducing the percentage, or asking the House to agree to a reduction, which will give the small clubs an impetus to keep up the game and not dodge the tax proposed, because I believe if a tax of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is proposed on totalisator receipts, we shall find not only

the small clubs throughout the State, but many of the larger ones, dodging the tax to such an extent that they will not keep the staff they do now, but will favour the bookmakers. I may tell members that in Coolgardie we found that last year after paying our staff and the expenses we made more money out of the bookmakers than out of the totalisator, showing that a tax of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., were it adopted, would openly induce the clubs to dodge the tax and find other means of procuring revenue at a cheaper rate. I think the racing Bills before the House ought to be discussed together and go hand in hand. We are satisfied that regulations in connection with racing clubs throughout the State are necessary, and I think we should go very slow before passing this Bill as it stands. I have therefore given these few hints, and I intend, should the Bill go into Committee, to have a little more to say on the subject. These are my ideas, and I say that there is no possible chance of getting £12,000 revenue from the totalisators.

MR. J. B. HOLMAN (Murchison): I believe the Treasurer said he was going to derive a great amount of revenue from this taxation. After hearing the remarks of those who have just spoken, it appears they are of opinion that not nearly the amount the Treasurer expects from this source will be derived; and other members who should be in a position to know what they are talking about say that there are means of evading this tax. If that be the case, I think it would be better to give this matter a little more consideration and go more fully into the subject, dealing with the bigger question of betting altogether. I do not know whether this Bill is brought forward with the intention of lessening gambling or whether it is purely a measure for obtaining revenue. If it is for deriving revenue, the remarks of members lead me to think it will prove a failure. If it is to minimise betting or gambling on racecourses, I think the advantage possessed by bookmakers will prevent the measure from being any good in that respect. We have legalised the totalisator for one purpose only, namely, for use on the racecourse; but if we are going to encourage this means of deriving revenue the same facilities should be given in the case of

cycling and other sports. [MEMBER: Spinning jennies and all that.] The member for Swan (Mr. Gull) has no doubt gone about and used both, and he should know the best means to adopt. In all probability, when the question of legalising spinning jennies comes on he will be able to give some important information on the matter. Betting is an evil which exists in this State, and it should be taken hold of; but I maintain that whilst we have sports, whilst we have horse-racing and while people will bet, if we cannot prevent these evils, the best thing the State can do is to take the control of them. When we allow totalisators to be run on racecourses, we should, I say, allow them to be run on other sports grounds as well. And even if we derive a revenue from them, while we allow bookmakers to come in and bet against the totalisator, when the State is deriving some revenue from it, the State should tax the bookmakers by making them take out a license. Then they would have a hold over the bookmakers as well as over the totalisator. At present bookmakers are allowed to go on the racecourse or other sports grounds, and they do a considerable amount of betting; and unless they are licensed by the W.A. Turf Club, the public have no protection, but may be swindled out of their money and there is no remedy for them. If we are going to deal with the question of betting or totalisators, we had better take the whole subject in hand and deal with it thoroughly. Bookmakers should be licensed, and if one does not pay up his license should be cancelled. Then the time would come when only men of reputable character would be able to hold betting licenses; and we should lessen the evil existing at the present time. If we have an evil in our midst—and we regard gambling as a great evil—if we cannot do away with it, we should protect those liable to suffer in connection with it. The total amount of revenue we are expected to derive from this totalisator taxation has been put down at £12,000. Members, some of whom have taken great interest in racing clubs, have said that we shall not receive anything like half that sum. They should know what they are talking about. If this measure is brought forward solely for the purpose of deriving

revenue, it is a very poor one for the purpose. There are several other means of taxation by which more revenue could be derived than from this. I am of opinion that a tax on the unimproved value of land would have been much more suitable for the Premier to bring forward for the purpose of securing revenue to carry on the affairs of the State. Some members in speaking on this Totalisator Bill have said that if we were to do the same thing as is done in Tasmania—allow sweeps to be run in Western Australia—we should derive some revenue therefrom. It is well known that in Tasmania something like £40,000 is derived from sweeps. When we know that a great deal of money is sent away from Western Australia for sweeps in Tasmania, I think we should consider the advisability of seeing if we cannot keep that money in this country. It would be much better for us to encourage the people, if they will gamble, to invest their money in Western Australia and pay a large amount towards the revenue of this State, instead of sending it away to Tasmania. I would strongly be in favour of legalising sweeps in Western Australia. In fact, I would go as far as this, that if the Government did not run them themselves they should have suitable officers to supervise the running of sweeps in this State. We knew full well that in every town and hamlet in Western Australia, when a sports meeting or racing contest is coming on, Calcutta sweeps are run before the event; we see them advertised and know all about them. We know also of other sweeps, and if these evils—if they are evils—exist in this State, we should uphold the law to its fullest extent, and not trifle with the matter, or else give those people who will indulge in what may be termed luxuries an opportunity of enjoying them in a legal manner. From my own knowledge of the totalisator, I approve of the Government deriving some revenue from this source; but after what I have heard from members who follow racing, I say that if we have this tax carried we are not going to derive the revenue which the Treasurer expects from it; the whole thing will be a failure, and then something else will have to be considered. Instead of our rushing into the matter, more time should be given to the question

altogether, and the subjects of betting, sweeps, and the working of totalisators should be gone into; also the question of licensing bookmakers. At the present time the measure is not nearly so complete as I should like to see it. As regards money unclaimed from the totalisator, those who have been unfortunate enough to lose their tickets and can bring proof to the racing clubs that they have done so, have the first claim to the money due to them. However, after all claims are settled, if there is any unclaimed money left, the State should take it and use it for charitable purposes, and not allow it to go back to the race clubs. As to fractions, when a dividend will not run out to an even sum of money, the State should take them. I am thoroughly in favour of a tax on betting, and I think $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. little enough for the racing clubs to pay. If we want to derive revenue from the totalisator, we should do what we can to prevent bookmakers from monopolising racecourses, and compel them to register. If we are to encourage the totalisator, we should, I say, extend it to other meetings as well as race meetings, and then the amount of money which the Treasurer expects to obtain will be received. I intend to support the second reading, and to go fully into the matter in Committee.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mount Margaret): The Premier pointed out very clearly in his speech for the second reading of this measure that it was purely a revenue-producing Bill, but I, in common with some members, have doubt as to the amount of revenue he will receive from these totalisators. I have listened to members who have taken a keener interest in the details of racing than I have, especially members of this Chamber who have from time to time been on the committees of race clubs in their various centres. Members speaking with that experience should have some weight. I do not claim to have any of that experience. While I have no desire to oppose the second reading, I cannot help noticing that members have pointed out repeatedly during their speeches that this Bill will practically affect the racing clubs in Perth, who spend their money in beautifying their lands; also Kalgoorlie. Whilst the beautifying of the race grounds at Perth is purely for the people when they

go to the racecourse to see the events, on the goldfields it is generally understood—and I think members representing those districts will bear me out—that while these clubs beautify their racecourses they are beautifying what practically are parks open at all times to the public except when used for racing purposes. I am informed by interjection by the Member for Ivanhoe (Mr. Scaddan) that they are the only parks about Kalgoorlie. That being so, some consideration should perhaps be given to clubs who utilise their funds in that direction, in the interest of making their racecourses pleasure spots at times other than when people pay to go through the gates to witness a race meeting. I would like to know whether the Treasurer has gone into the matter of how the Bill will affect the small racing clubs in the back country; or, I may not say the back country, but places outside the metropolitan centres on the coast and the goldfields—Kalgoorlie, Boulder, and Coolgardie on the goldfields, and Perth on the coast. It is well known to members that every small town throughout the State, whether in the mining centres or the agricultural areas or the pastoral districts, has its race club. If this measure will in any way place in the hands of the bookmakers the whole of the betting in a number of these small places, I shall feel disposed when the Bill is in Committee to try and alter it in that particular. Some members to whom I have spoken say that this Bill will practically kill the totalisators in small clubs. As I have pointed out, I have had no experience of the details of racing-club management; but members who have had some experience of that sort inform me that such will be the effect of the Bill. If the Treasurer has considered that aspect of the question, I shall be glad if when he replies he gives me some information. I also recognise the Treasurer's need of revenue; but I am sorry that he has not made provision to raise revenue from other sources than totalisators. I notice that the bookmaking element in this, as in most Australian States, is very strong; and the Bill does not affect the bookmaker. I find that the W.A.T.C. has power to register bookmakers to ply their calling on the racecourse. Why not try

in this Bill to tax the bookmaker—not directly, but to tax the registration fee which he pays to the club? I think that the Treasurer could use with just as good effect some portion of bookmakers' fees as he could a portion of the revenue derived from the totalisator. The payment of bookmakers' fees is customary in all racing clubs. I do not desire to assist any measure that will put the race-going public more completely in the hands of the bookmaker than they are now. I feel confident, as an Australian, that the spirit of betting on racecourses—the Australian desire to see a horse at its very best—is very strong; and it is no use for this or any other Parliament to try by legislation to stifle that feeling. I have no intention of advocating that. I look on racing as in itself a healthy and innocent sport. But the elements which close round the barrier as it rises, have generally an evil tendency on the people who witness the race. We should not by legislation prevent the public from making their own odds on the race. The totalisator gives the public an opportunity of making any horse they choose the favourite; but betting with bookmakers seriously hinders the public from making such a choice. I do not know whether it is a virtue or a crime in me not to make bets on racecourses. When on the coast I have always gone to the racing carnival once a year at least. Some people tell me that unless one makes a bet, one loses all interest in the race. That is not so with me. I am gratified just as highly by watching horses racing, without my having a shilling "on," as I should be were I to bet. I have never betted; so perhaps I cannot say whether betting would add to my interest in the race.

MR. HARDWICK: Perhaps your modesty prevents you from telling.

MR. TAYLOR: My modesty is apparent in every phase of my life, as the hon. member interjecting knows full well; but I notice that while a race is in progress, my friends and the general public who have money on the race, seem to be more agitated and excited than I, if the horse which is not carrying their money passes the post first. There is generally on their faces a look of dissatisfaction; and the measure of their enjoyment of a race meeting is invariably determined by

whether they win or lose. If they have lost, the meeting was no good; but if they have won, it was a really good meeting.

MR. BOLTON: Why, you are quite an old hand.

MR. TAYLOR: I have listened more than once to the hon. member, after he has returned from the racecourse, and have often heard his observations when the horse carrying his silver did not pass the post first. The bookmaker invariably makes the favourite; and it is alleged by those who follow racing—not by the public who never have a horse stripped on the course, but by men who own horses, by trainers, by breeders—that the bookmaker generally measures the strength of the arms of the jockey. If that be so, something should be done to diminish the power of those gentlemen.

MR. MONGER: They do not possess such power.

MR. TAYLOR: The member for York, who is an authority, says they do not possess that power. I will accept that as an authoritative statement; but I know from what I have seen on racecourses in most States of the Commonwealth, that the opinion I have voiced is the generally accepted opinion of owners, trainers, and breeders of race horses—that the bookmaker generally measures the strength of the arms of the jockey. The hon. member says that bookmakers do not possess that power. Quite recently in this State the W.A.T.C. disqualified a bookmaker for tampering with a jockey in order to get a horse pulled. I witnessed the race in question; and anyone who knew anything about a horse or about the condition of a horse when fit to do his best in a long or a short race, would have been perfectly satisfied, as I was, that the horse was not on his mettle.

MR. BOLTON: You must have had a little "on"

MR. TAYLOR: I had nothing "on." Through having nothing on, I was able to judge impartially. It is generally those who have money on who are so excited and agitated by their strong desire to win, that their judgment and their observation of the race are blinded from start to finish. It is idle to interject that bookmakers do not possess the power I have mentioned. I have cited one case which happened only recently, since I last re-

turned to Perth; and there is no doubt about the facts. I say that the totalisator does not possess that power; and though I am not a great authority, I believe that if we wish to purify racing the most efficient means of so doing is by preventing bookmaking, and substituting for it the totalisator. I may be wrong, but I am giving the House my experience gained through watching racing—not very often, for I am not a frequent follower of racing, but I generally go to the racing carnival in any place where I am living, not only with the object of seeing the race, but of witnessing the perfection of the horses, and of seeing the concourse of people, and perhaps, as the member for Forrest interjects, of seeing the ladies. Well, any man who has an eye for beauty, or any taste at all, cannot help admiring the ladies on cup day in any of the metropolitan centres in the Commonwealth.

MR. HARDWICK: We are unanimous on that point.

MR. TAYLOR: It is as well to be unanimous on some point. I say that while racecourse gatherings have the effect perhaps of showing various sections of our community at their best, I believe that can be done without injury to the public if the totalisator be used exclusively, and the bookmaking element abolished. I know that there is a number of people closely connected with bookmakers and with the game. Those people will not be pleased to hear this observation; but since I have been a member of Parliament, when taking part in any debate or discussion in this House, I have always given my opinions, whatever they may be, irrespective of whom they hurt or whom they please. What I have said on this subject is the result of an experience covering something like 30 years of racing in the Commonwealth, at small country meetings and at big metropolitan meetings; and if there is any intention on the part of the Government to deal with the betting evil, I commend my remarks to their notice. I readily recognise that there is no time during this session to deal comprehensively with any legislation before the House. As far back as 1894 the Parliament of this country saw the need for inserting in the Police Act a section to prevent betting and gambling. That section sets forth

the penalties for those offences—Section 2 of the Police Act, 1892, assented to on the 23rd November, 1894.

MR. BOLTON: It is a dead letter.

MR. TAYLOR: It may be dead in the sense intended by the hon. member, but it has not been repealed. The section is as follows:—

Every person betting or offering to bet by way of wagering or gaming on any racecourse or any other public place, or in any place to which the public are or shall be permitted to have access, whether on payment of money or otherwise, shall be liable on conviction to a penalty of not less than forty shillings nor more than one hundred pounds, and for the second offence shall be deemed a rogue and vagabond within the true intent and meaning of the Police Act of 1882, and as such may be convicted and punished under the provisions of this Act.

I am sure there are members in this Chamber who were present when that Bill became law. It was then by the legislature considered wise to put on the statute book a stringent law to prevent gaming. Now we find that certain privileges have been granted to race clubs under the Totalisator Act, which do not bring totalisator transactions under that section of the Police Act. My anxiety concerning the Bill now before the House is that it shall not affect the small race clubs by the imposition of a tax that will prevent the operation of the totalisator and so widen the area for the bookmaker. I may point out that races in outlying districts are subjected to a class of bookmaker that would not in many instances be favourably received in larger centres. We often have cases of men who, I think, are called welshers, those who do not meet their liabilities at the close of the day's sport. I desire to see that these outlying places do not suffer by the passage of this Bill, though I have every desire to help the Treasurer to pass the measure for revenue purposes. I am only sorry that the Government have not seen fit to bring in more taxation proposals. I support the second reading.

MR. J. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe): It is my intention to support the second reading, and I desire to give my reasons; but at the same time, I want to make it clear at the outset that I am not strictly in accord with all the proposals of the measure. I believe that a tax on the

takings of a totalisator is just, and that it is a method of raising revenue from a source where, probably, it will be a light burden.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Will you support an amendment to read the Bill this day three months?

MR. SCADDAN: I distinctly stated that I intended to support the second reading. If the hon. member has sufficient following in this House to support him, I shall probably have another opportunity of dealing with the measure later on. This Bill affects the Kalgoorlie and Boulder districts to a greater extent than any other district. The tax is a just one; but if the Treasurer is in dire need of revenue, he should have attempted to raise it from other sources. The Government have sufficient following to carry a tax on unimproved land values. Because it is a necessary tax, and because the Budget Speech showed that there is to be a large deficit, the Premier might have used his majority in the direction of imposing a tax on land values this session. The portion of this Bill to which I take the greatest exception is Clause 3, by which the moneys raised from this tax are to be paid into Consolidated Revenue and used for all purposes throughout the State. As this money is really local money, I think it would be advisable for the Premier to reconsider the matter and see whether it is not advisable to allot the revenue in the districts in which it is raised. The Kalgoorlie and Boulder Racing Clubs who will bear the greatest burden of this tax, have a considerable expenditure every year in the upkeep of their racecourses; and we are all aware that these are really public parks for the goldfields. No Government has done anything so far in the way of beautifying parks on the goldfields. The matter has been left entirely to the race clubs; and now that the clubs have made an effort to do it, the Government wish to restrict their hands by endeavouring to raise a tax on totalisator dividends, and by taking away the fractions and unpaid dividends as well. This is going too far and killing the goose that lays the golden egg. The annual upkeep of these racecourses at Kalgoorlie and Boulder is considerable. There is a considerable amount of money paid to the Government for the water

used in keeping the lawns in order and in beautifying the racecourse generally. If this money is to be taken from the clubs to the extent the Premier proposes there will be little left to them, and the result will be that the clubs will need to close down the totalisator, which they will do, and encourage the bookmaker.

THE PREMIER: Then we will deal with the bookmaker later on.

MR. SCADDAN: Deal with him now. He has had a fairly good harvest in Western Australia. I agree with the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Eddy) that the just way of raising revenue from race clubs and the people who frequent racecourses would be to impose a tax on the gross revenue of the race clubs from all sources. It might not affect the bookmaker, but the tendency would not be to encourage the bookmaker to the detriment of the totalisator. The favourite method of gambling is on the totalisator. People think they get a fair deal there, which they think they do not get from the bookmaker. Personally I do little or no gambling. I do not think I have had more than three bets in Western Australia; but if the people will bet, we should assist them to bet in the best direction where they can get the fairest deal; and that, I think, is through the totalisator. I urge the expenditure of the money raised by this tax in the localities where it is raised. I find, on referring to the Estimates, that the Government intend to spend more money than previous Governments in the direction of beautifying the parks round Perth, and that the total amount of money likely to be raised from the totalisator tax will be expended in this direction. I find that the upkeep of gardens in Government House domain is going to cost nearly £3,000. There is to be a Perth Exhibition, and the Government are giving them £3,500 of this taxation on totalisators. The Zoological Gardens are to get an increase of £400; and on the public library there is to be spent £4,000, and on the museum £4,500, and to the caves and King's Park and similar institutions in and around Perth the Government are going to deal out assistance most liberally. I say that the places where the money is raised by the totalisator tax have a claim on the Government in the direction of beautify-

ing their parks. We should assist the people in out-back places to get some enjoyment in their spare moments. Hundreds of people visit the racecourses at Kalgoorlie and Boulder every Sunday and on the Wednesday afternoon holiday. They are the only places where the people of these cities can go to get a little fresh air and something that pleases the eye. We should give every consideration to these goldfields race clubs, and should not be harsh on them. I am satisfied that the Premier will not press the matter of unpaid dividends and fractions. Probably he will agree with the member for Coolgardie to put a tax on the gross takings. I believe he will raise more money by that means, and the money would then come from all sources, instead of from the totalisator alone. I have stated publicly that I believed a tax on totalisators to be a good tax; but, at the same time, I said I was not agreeable to the tax unless the bookmaker paid his share of it. The race clubs raise a considerable amount of money every year from bookmakers. There must be fifty or sixty bookmakers on the Perth course at Cup time, and from each bookmaker the club receives £75. We can see, therefore, that the club receives from bookmakers almost as much as the profit derived from the totalisator. It is unfair that the bookmakers should not pay something to the revenue, as well as the other form of gambling. I shall support the member for Coolgardie in his amendment, and I hope there will be a sufficient majority in the House to carry it.

MR. A. J. WILSON (Forrest): I desire to say a few words on this measure. My idea is that the whole thing should be suspended and postponed until such time as the Government are sufficiently wise upon the matter to deal with it in a thoroughly efficient and competent manner. It is about time we stopped this tinkering with reform in this matter. I do not think there is any doubt but that totalisator receipts should contribute to the public revenue, but it is not the only portion of the horseracing business that should contribute something. In the circumstances, I do not think the House should be called upon to legislate on a matter of this kind, or to deal with a matter of such serious importance, and to deal with

only one aspect of it, and that by no means the most objectionable aspect. It must be borne in mind that there are certain costs in connection with the running of totalisators which the House is entitled to take into consideration before we propose a tax that will have the effect of farther exhausting the profits in connection with totalisators. Let me take, for instance, the position of the W.A. Turf Club during the last twelve months, in a period covering twelve racing days. We find that the total amount passing through the totalisator for the four days' annual meeting, 1904-5, was £71,035, the commission at 10 per cent. being £7,103 10s., the fractions amounting to £1,107 3s., and the unpaid dividends to £121 5s., while the wages in connection with the totalisator amounted to £950 15s. 6d., and the cost of printing tickets and other incidentals to £354 3s. 3d. In addition to this expense, £6,000 has been expended in connection with the buildings found necessary in accordance with the desires of public convenience for the purpose of carrying on this particular business; and I think it is only fair that we should add a percentage for depreciation of plant to the ordinary working expenses. If we take the February meeting, we find that the amount invested was £2,840, the fractions being £52 13s. and the unclaimed dividends 19s., while the wages cost of working the totalisator amounted to £41 1s. 6d., and the cost of printing tickets to £13 18s. 1d. Taking the whole twelve months, we find the sum of £90,365 5s. was invested on the tote, the commission on which was £9,036 13s. 6d. The fractions for the whole of that year only amounted to £1,507 14s. 6d. and the unclaimed dividends for the same period amounted to £156 8d., whilst the cost of wages and printing tickets amounted during the same period to £1,855 8s. 4d. If we allow for depreciation 5 per cent. on the capital cost of the tote building, and without making provision for interest on the money, we can put it down at £300, that is a fair depreciation rate for the 12 months and will give 20 years' life to the building and plant, therefore the cost of running the same is equivalent to the commission, fractions and unclaimed dividends, and would pan out at some-

thing over £2,100. And if in addition to this it is proposed to take an additional tax of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the gross receipts and to confiscate the fractions and unclaimed dividends, I am afraid it will be creating an inducement on the part of racing clubs to discountenance the use of the totalisator machine. Another consideration is of value in this matter, and that is whether we are really within our constitutional rights in saying that if a person does not happen to claim something that belongs to him within 14 days after it becomes due, the Bill should confiscate his right and title to that interest. That is a most important aspect of the question, dealing with the appropriation of fractions. Are we going to sit here quietly and calmly and say that if certain people will not claim something which belongs to them within 14 days we are going to confiscate their right to that sum. I recognise, as everyone must recognise who has made any investigation or study of this matter, that the imposition of the tax as proposed by the Bill will fall almost exclusively upon four non-proprietary clubs. The tax, in a very remote degree, will tax a class of racing, clubs which in my opinion is absolutely the most obnoxious feature in the whole business. I can never bring myself to agree to the sentiment that horseracing which does not exist primarily to improve the breed of horses and secondly for the purpose of providing legitimate sport for the public should be placed in the hands of private mongering companies to be run for their own personal profit and gain. It seems to me that if this class of business is to be associated in the proprietary concerns it will have a tendency to destroy the very interest for which this particular sport ought to exist if it exists at all. One has only to consider the improvement that has taken place on the proprietary courses. Let us take the Belmont Park race-course or what was formerly termed and used to be known as "rookery park" before it received a license from the W.A. Turf Club. We find a company was floated and registered with a considerable number of shares, of which every share except seven was held by one man, and these seven shares were held by individual members of that man's family and rela-

tions. If we look at the amount of improvement, and if we have regard to the amount of money which must necessarily be made by the gentleman conducting that particular racecourse, and if we take into consideration the amount of improvement carried out on that racecourse for the public convenience, we can only come to the conclusion that the business exists for the sole profit and gain of the particular proprietor in that instance, and does not exist for the purpose of catering for the public convenience or providing for the improved breed of horses. What applies in regard to that particular club applies in a similar manner to other registered proprietary clubs, such as the Helena Vale Race Club and the Canning Park Race Club. It may be urged by those interested that these two clubs have not had a very large return for their money, but if one has regard to the fact that there is an increasing population being centred in the metropolitan area the opportunities for making a profitable business are being increased rather than otherwise. One can only come to the conclusion that whilst these clubs may, up to the present, not have had a profitable business, the indications now are quite to the contrary, and that they are likely to develop into profitable institutions in the near future. In my opinion the class of racing clubs that require to be dealt with are the proprietary and unregistered racing clubs, and the purpose of this Bill so far as these clubs are concerned will be entirely null and void. Because we know, as everybody knows who has any knowledge about the institution at all, that the totalisator at Helena Vale and Belmont Park is practically non-existent. It does not exist at all so far as straight-out betting is concerned, and as far as place betting is concerned the investment is nothing at all. No objection can be raised by proprietary clubs to a tax of this nature, and some may even suggest that a higher tax be placed on the totalisator, for it is convenient for proprietary institutions to suggest that the totalisator should be taxed when it has no bearing on them. Unregistered clubs escape entirely because they are unable to secure a license from the W.A. Turf Club. My own idea of this business is that if we are to pass legislation in re-

ference to the totalisator, instead of the totalisator being in the hands of proprietary or non-proprietary clubs, the machine should be a Government institution, and the cost of running and the expenses in connection therewith should be borne by the Government, and the whole of the profits made from the machine should pass into the Consolidated Revenue for purposes which may be defined by Parliament. I do not think the receipts should in any case pass into the public revenue to be applied to the ordinary avenues of expenditure, but they ought to be applied for administering relief and to the purpose of augmenting the funds of charitable institutions. I think, as I was about to remark when the member for Kanowna interjected, the receipts ought to be made the nucleus of a fund for establishing pensions for the aged poor in the State. So far as the W.A. Turf Club is concerned, anyone who has had an opportunity of seeing the improvements that the committee have made on their course can have no words other than that of a most congratulatory nature for the manner in which they have administered the affairs of the club and particularly in regard to the way in which they have expended whatever profits they have made at meetings for the purpose of providing for the convenience and attending to the convenience of the public who attend the meetings. If we are going to tax the race clubs in this way, it seems more especially in connection with gold-field clubs, the Kalgoorlie and Boulder clubs, that we shall be robbing these clubs of funds which at the present time they are pleased to devote to the public good and the public convenience. Take the Kalgoorlie Club: we find that the Kalgoorlie racecourse is regarded as one of the show places of the district. It is kept up all the year round as a public park. There are nine men permanently employed there and their wages amount to £1,700. Large numbers of people, we are told, go every day to the place. The racecourse is open at any time and it is largely used as a picnic place for both private and school picnics. The tramway runs right into the ground and the committee have never refused an application for the use of the ground for picnics. School children when they have competitions go there and the course has been

a magnificent object lesson of what can be done with water. This is an important feature especially in connection with the water supply on the goldfields. There is no doubt about the way in which the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Racing Clubs have taken advantage of the money which has been made available and how they have demonstrated conclusively to the public what can be done with a copious supply of water from the Coolgardie Water Scheme. There is no doubt about it, that what the people want is a practical object lesson of what the soil is capable of producing in the locality. They no doubt will be spurred on to emulate the magnificent example set by the racing clubs on the goldfields. For instance, the Kalgoorlie club during last November used 900,000 gallons of water, for which they paid £180. Provision is being made, as it always has been made, and, as many members know who have had the pleasure of visiting the goldfields, that when any important distinguished visitor comes here, after being shown round the mines on the fields that visitor is handed over to the tender mercies of the Kalgoorlie Racing Club, and is shown over a place that is one of the most picturesque spots in West Australia. When we find these clubs doing so much good for the public and for the public well-being with the funds that come in their hands in consequence of the meetings and from the running of the totalisator, is it wise for us to step in and say we will penalise you and take from you some portion of the money which otherwise in the ordinary course of events you are possessed of, making this magnificent improvement which you have done in the past. The Kalgoorlie club is perhaps the most fortunate of all the principal racing clubs in the State, because it happens certainly to have done well, and its committee have always adopted the wisest policy in regard to the administration of receipts which have come their way from time to time. And at the present time we find it with a magnificent pile of buildings, a magnificent course, and a really magnificent public park; the whole thing practically in the hands of the people and entirely free from debt. In the case of the Boulder Racing Club, they are scarcely in so fortunate a position, for they find themselves called on to borrow

a sum of money, to saddle themselves with a liability of approximately £5,000 for the purpose of farther catering for the public convenience; and in the circumstances they are necessarily and naturally entitled to rely upon the possibility of getting a respectable revenue from the meetings to be held almost immediately in the ordinary course of events. Relying upon that and the possibility of a certain return, they have involved themselves in an expenditure and liability which may considerably interfere with them if they are called upon to pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. from their gross totalisator receipts, and to hand over the fractions and dividends from the same source. If we come closer home to the W.A. Turf Club [Mr. WALKER: What about Kanowna?] The House would be delighted to have the pleasure of listening to what the hon. member could tell us about the course at Kanowna. I believe I had the pleasure of seeing that course once, but I never desire to see the same course again. (Interjection.) I was not backing dead ones or live ones either, but I was so overwhelmed with dust that I was glad to get away and utilise the Coolgardie Water Scheme as soon as I got to Kalgoorlie. In connection with the W.A. Turf Club, we find that they have recently involved themselves in a liability in connection with the added improvements. They have erected a magnificent grandstand at a cost of tens of thousands of pounds, which has lauded them in a liability of over £20,000. This measure is something which could not possibly have been anticipated when the plans were prepared for that particular expenditure. I do not think my friend, the Colonial Treasurer, dreamt $2\frac{1}{2}$ years ago of introducing a measure of this nature. The probabilities are that in those days he was more imbued with the much greater advantage of a tax upon the unimproved land values, but now he seems to have cast all those things to the winds, income tax, and unimproved land values tax, and he asks the House to assist him to augment his revenue by dabbling in pettyfogging measures like this. I say they could not possibly have anticipated a Bill of this nature, and consequently the statement made by the Premier in introducing this measure is one that can

scarcely lie, as far as that club is concerned. I think he gave the House to understand that people had had plenty of notice about the possibility of this measure coming, and that it was introduced in a prior Parliament and had been talked about for some little time. When the W.A. Turf Club incurred the liability two years ago, they could not have had any idea of the possibility of the introduction of a measure like this, which would have the effect of interfering with their pockets, and I think that the claim suggested by the member for York in this connection is well worthy of the serious consideration of the House before this measure is put through its final stages. The proposal is that this Bill shall not take effect until after, I think, the 10th January. Of course we can scarcely expect the Colonial Treasurer to fall in with such a desirable proposition as that. I know he seeks to get proceeds up to the 30th June amounting to no less a sum than £12,000 as the result of the operations of this tax. [MR. BORTON: He will not get £3,000.] I can assure the Premier, as far as my personal knowledge in this matter goes, I do not think he will get £1,200 from the tax, even if it operates as early as he anticipates, between now and the close of the financial year. That means that these non-proprietary race clubs have no desire to rob the public of any unnecessary sum, and if they find the Treasurer, who happens to stand in need of funds, swoops down on the fractions of less than a shilling, which they have been in the habit of utilising, they will discover some means of dividing the money and giving a fraction of 3d., and then, in face of the figures I have stated in dealing with the fractions of the primary racing clubs, involving an amount of £90,000 odd, how will the hon. gentleman get anything like £12,000 as the result of the operation of of this tax? I think the experience of the people in the community, as far as these non-proprietary clubs are concerned, is that they have no desire to interfere with the legitimate sport of the public, and they have certainly no desire to take any more out of the pockets of the people than they can reasonably hand back to those people in some form or another. That is manifest from the fact that the officials, except one or two found to be

essential, are entirely honorary officers, gentlemen of considerable repute and standing in the community, who devote their time, and considerable time it is, to the purpose of providing for the convenience of the public taste in this particular connection; and there is no doubt the manifestation they have given in the direction of magnificent improvements will point conclusively to the fact that they will soon find means of giving to the public the fullest possible benefit from this particular machine, and I think they will go to the length of providing for payment of a fraction even down as low as 3d. [MR. BARNETT: That is when they are forced to do so.] I do not know whether it will want much forcing. I think they will recognise that having appropriated 10 per cent. of the public money derived by means of these betting machines, the Government will have taken quite enough from the public in connection with this business, and I think that when they find the Government are going to swoop down and take away some of the money which at the present time the clubs are enabled to give back to the public in increased improvement, in a better class of racing, in bigger stakes, and other ways, in which to enhance and purify the sport, they will discover some way of meeting the convenience of the public. Another thing we have to take into consideration is this, and I submit it is a most important matter. I do not know whether the member for Albany (Mr. Barnett) has a racecourse in his constituency or not, but, if he has, there are not many race meetings held there in the year, and if those race meetings are not held for profit or anything of that kind, but solely for the purpose of providing some little recreation and sport for that portion of the community having a fondness and desire for that class of sport, the money available to enable those clubs to carry on their business is mainly subscribed by the local people in that community; and what applies to Albany applies, I know, in some measure to Bunbury, Greenbushes, and presumably to Northam, and I believe even to York, if there were a race meeting there. In regard to these small country clubs, where the totalisator would be running, perhaps the bulk of the transactions of the meet-

ings would go to the betting machine, and if you are going to say to these clubs "You must give your 2½ per cent. of the gross receipts, and you must hand over generously and without demur the fractions and unclaimed dividends," the probabilities are that this will have the effect of absolutely preventing the possibility of their having the little annual gathering which they have enjoyed in the past, and look forward to enjoy in the future. The whole thing resolves itself into this: That we have before us a proposal which is going to collect a certain amount of money from the W.A. Turf Club and the Kalgoorlie, Boulder, and Coolgardie Race Clubs, and it is going to divert that money from the purpose to which it has hitherto been devoted by these people, who have been imbued with a purely philanthropic motive in this matter. For what purpose? To enable the Colonial Treasurer to build a bridge in some electorate, or to make a bit of a road somewhere. Is that the legitimate business of a tax of this nature? In my opinion it is certainly not (Interjection by the Premier.) I am sure the hon. member knows just as well as I do that there are no bridges, no municipal councils, no road boards, no anything, except good honest workers and good timber, in the Forrest electorate, and he knows very well it has never been my desire to worry him in any degree for any vote for that particular matter. I know he also realises it gives me a freedom of vision which perhaps few members enjoy to the same extent. I say therefore that the only object or effect this Bill can have at this stage is to place a tax unduly, unfairly, and inequitably upon these racing clubs, which are legitimate in every sense of the word, and which exist primarily for the very object for which horse-racing exists—for the purpose of providing good, healthy, clean, legitimate sport in those centres where the desires of the people lie in that direction. In view of the small amount of revenue likely to accrue if the Bill passes and becomes law before the 1st January, the measure ought not to be pressed, but the matter ought to be postponed until we are in a position to deal with the whole question upon a sound, comprehensive, effectual, and efficient basis, so that the Government may be in a position to

submit a measure which not only will be satisfactory from the point of view of the general public, but also equally and much more satisfactory from the point of view of the Colonial Treasurer himself. I do not know that we can by any amount of amendment put this measure upon a thoroughly satisfactory basis, and under those circumstances I certainly think the best thing the House can do is to vote the Bill out on the second reading.

MR. E. C. BARNETT (Albany): I intend to support the second reading, on the following grounds. I support the Bill in its entirety. I hope that the Premier will keep a stiff back, and carry through the Bill as introduced. We must recognise that within a reasonable time we shall all be called upon to contribute more than we contribute now; and I think that wealthy institutions like the W.A. Turf Club and the Kalgoorlie and Boulder Racing Clubs can well afford, with the rest of the community, to contribute their share to the revenue. As to the smaller race clubs to which members have referred, and on which they seem to think the tax will fall heavily, I do not think that such clubs will be injured by so small an impost. I say, as president of one of those clubs, we shall be very willing to pay our share towards the revenue. I think that the Premier must feel obliged to the member for Forrest (Mr. A. J. Wilson) for suggesting that the revenue be increased not only by a totalisator tax, but by a tax on the fees received from bookmakers. I think there would be a general feeling of satisfaction if that suggestion were adopted. I shall support the second reading of the Bill, which I trust will, without any amendment, be passed into law.

MR. T. WALKER (Kanowna): I do not know whether members generally recognise the moral or the immoral step which the House is taking by passing a Bill absolutely legalising betting and gambling, and making the Government a partner in betting transactions. That is a serious step to take. It may be a right step—I do not know; but we should realise what we are doing, and if we take that step we should be prepared to take it consistently. We should be prepared to repeal our existing Acts penalising betting and bettors. Only yesterday,

I think, a very serious charge was brought against the proprietors of a certain club. Men are to be sent to prison for doing what the Government are practically proposing to do in principle. I should like to know whether, if this Bill be passed, the Government intend to abolish the existing laws, either Acts of Parliament or the common law, against betting. Is betting to be made legal from the time this Bill passes, as it ought to be if there is any morality or consistency in our legislation? From the time of the passing of the Bill, will it be lawful for a man to bet in his house, in a club, or on the street, as he may think fit? That is a point which ought to be taken into consideration, and upon which we ought to have some pronouncement of policy from the Minister in charge of the measure. I submit that we are not going far enough. If we take any step at all, if the Government becomes a partner in betting transactions, becomes a gambler in part, the Government should, as the member for Forrest put it, have the courage to go farther, and entirely take over all gambling agencies such as the totalisator, and if necessary, license or otherwise utilise even the bookmaker.

MR. LYNCH: Put on the bag.

MR. WALKER: Exactly. If the Government authorises gambling, and stands in with the winners, it ought to have the courage to go farther, and to take over and run for the benefit of the citizens the totalisator. Moreover, I think that if this Bill is passed, it will be perfectly consistent to include therein the provision suggested by the member for Swan (Mr. Gull), for running a State lottery on principles similar to those of Adams' sweeps. We should, in vulgar phrase, go the whole hog, and take complete charge of gambling. If the Bill is passed as it stands, it may possibly do something to increase the revenue, and I understand that is the sole object of the Treasurer in bringing this Bill before us; but it will do exceedingly little, and I question whether in doing that little good, it will not do a vast amount of harm. Consider the racecourses at Kalgoorlie and Boulder. Every year these institutions contribute from the proceeds of the totalisator large sums of money—not a few paltry pounds, but large lump sums—one hundred to one charity and another

hundred to another charity. The Benevolent Society at Kalgoorlie has, year after year, received what are comparatively immense gifts from the Kalgoorlie Race Club; and I believe that the Boulder Race Club has contributed to the charities in that town. It is perfectly clear that if these clubs are deprived of their profits, and their incomes are reduced till just sufficient to meet expenses; if the clubs are to be heavily taxed for the purposes of the public revenue, there can be no charitable gifts from the clubs' profits. What will be the consequence? The demands of charity, now met privately, must be met by the Government. What revenue will be received from the tax on the totalisator will have to be spent in giving charitable assistance through our Department of Charities, which will absorb all the revenue realised by the totalisator tax. What is the use for revenue purposes of such a tax, if we increase our expenditure on the one hand while increasing the receipts on the other? We shall be simply robbing Peter to pay Paul, simply "swopping" the money in our pockets. In the meantime, while the Bill will undoubtedly do a vast injury to the local charities on the goldfields particularly—I do not know that the custom of contributing to charities obtains with the coastal race clubs—it will discourage a very healthful sport on the goldfields. I interrupted the member for Forrest when he was speaking of the use made of the profits of racing to beautify the goldfields racecourses, and I mentioned the Kanowna racecourse. The citizens of Kanowna are doing their best to make that racecourse fit to visit. They have, under great difficulties, obtained what is naturally a very beautiful site, but a site some distance from the town, and requiring, I will admit, vast improvement in order to make it fit for use. The people of Kanowna are longing to see the day when the racecourse will be a thing of beauty, if not a joy for ever. They have already spent a considerable sum to make the course what it is; and they are anxious to spend more. Kanowna has not that beautiful park in Kalgoorlie described by the member for Forrest and other speakers; it is anxious to have one of its own. In comparison with Kalgoorlie, Kanowna is

but a small place; nevertheless, the people want their sports; they wish to take part in the sport of the State; and shall they be discouraged? They expect to receive, as in the past, some considerable assistance from their totalisator profits. If by any means we attach those profits, we practically crush a club that is now labouring under great disadvantages and discouragements. In respect of every race meeting a vast expenditure is incurred by the club in securing communication with the railway station. The club has to offer special inducements to cabmen to drive passengers to the course from the Kanowna station. All kinds of difficulties beset the club, which is deserving of encouragement, not discouragement; and this tax on a club of that kind is a distinct discouragement, and worse, it will practically involve the club's extinction. How is the club to beautify or make fit for a racecourse the site which it holds? On that score alone I oppose the Bill—on account of its inequalities, inequalities such as are usually found in these short-sighted measures which make no distinctions whatever, and have no exceptions to a general rule. The Bill proceeds on the principle that what is good enough for all metropolitan racecourses, for the W.A. Turf Club, is good enough for a racecourse at Menzies or Leonora. All race clubs are treated exactly alike, as if they were on the same level. Such is the result of this hasty, slipshod, careless legislation, which is more or less a stop-gap, so far as I can see, for the present session. If we dealt comprehensively with such matters, making some distinctions, and not imposing on all racing clubs the same penalties, then there would be some justification for proceeding with the measure. But as the measure stands, I cannot give it my support. Strongly as I believe in helping the Government to get revenue, this is not the proper means of raising it, and moreover, though not one of those who have any moral qualms about the source from which revenue comes, so long as it comes honourably, still, I think that when we are taxing what we believe to be a vice, the revenue thereby derived should be earmarked. I do not believe it should be passed into the common fund, without any distinction. We should keep it for

a specific purpose. It has been suggested that if we tax totalisators, or run them, or conduct sweeps, we should utilise the proceeds for an old age pension fund, or that, at all events the proceeds should go to charities; and the present outcry on the goldfields against the Bill is that it will deprive the goldfields of a means of conducting local charities; and consequently there will be hardship on the poor and suffering of all sorts in these localities. A measure that makes any distinction of this kind, which does not seek to earmark the money and which does not make any differentiation concerning the localities where the revenue is raised, is only a meagre and ill-thought-out measure. I therefore intend to vote against the second reading of this Bill.

MR. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet): I do not intend to take very serious exception to the second reading of this measure, because after all, there is very little to take exception to. In the first place it has been introduced by the Treasurer to secure additional revenue, and though, to my mind, it is a paltry way of doing so, still, considering the impecunious state of the Treasury, I suppose revenue must be derived from some source or another. One would have thought that the Government would bring down a measure more worthy of the consideration of this House, considering the many other ways there are of securing additional revenue, and considering the advantages that would be gained by a system of land value taxation and an income tax. I notice that some oppose the measure because they consider that, through the Government recognising totalisators and racing of any kind, we are encouraging gambling. I hold no strong opinions regarding that. I am of opinion that it is human for people to gamble, and that they will gamble no matter what restrictions are placed upon it; that no matter what legislation is passed to prevent them, it would not reduce in any measure the gambling already done. The member for West Perth and other members on the Government side of the House intend to oppose this measure because they hold the opinion I have referred to. On many occasions I have advocated a tax on totalisators, but I advocated that the proceeds should not go into the general revenue. I think they

should be set apart to form the nucleus of an old age pension fund. I have also advocated the establishment of State lotteries and sweeps under Government control and under the administration of the State; because I consider a great amount of money is being lost to the State every year by allowing a person residing in Tasmania to carry on a business of sweeps and draw money away from this State, and because we do not pay sufficient heed to this matter. If we legalised this business we would receive sufficient revenue to form the nucleus of an old age pension fund. I hope it is not too late for the Government to give this matter serious consideration. I believe, after all, that any Government is justified in taxing totalisators. I take no serious exception to it myself. I know that racing clubs do a large amount of good from their receipts. In Perth and on the goldfields they have done a great amount of good by making pleasure resorts for people and by beautifying their reserves; and when people do that they should receive assistance and encouragement from Parliament; but there is no getting away from the fact that there are certain portions of the receipts to which racing clubs are no more entitled than the Government. I refer to the unclaimed dividends and fractions. I think the Government are just as entitled to claim these as are the race clubs. In the first place, the race clubs have no moral right to them, while the Government have certainly a greater right to them, because they belong to the people of the State and, if handed over to the Government, could be used for doing work for the people of the State. A great deal has been said regarding the amount of money spent on totalisators. Though it seems large, I believe a larger sum of money is being spent in other directions. For instance, I believe the bookmakers make a greater profit than even the totalisators; and if totalisators are to be taxed, why should bookmakers not also be taxed? If revenue is very necessary, why not tax these persons? Why not tax every person who draws a profit from sources which people think iniquitous? [Mr. GULL: Sometimes a bookmaker makes a loss.] He more often makes a profit. If he did not make a profit, we would

not see so many following up this particular business year in and year out. I do not know much about bookmaking, but I believe the bookmaker arranges his book so that he never makes a loss. [Mr. GULL: That is the theory.] The hon. member knows more about it than I do. Why should we not tax the profits made from theatres? Some people hold that theatre-going is just as obnoxious as attending races. No doubt the member for West Perth would just as emphatically condemn theatre-going as he would racing. Why not tax theatres and bookmakers, and every person in the State, to secure this additional revenue? I support the second reading of this Bill, and, as far as possible, I shall support most of its provisions in Committee.

Question passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. ILLINGWORTH in the Chair: the PREMIER in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Duty on takings of totalisators.

MR. BATH moved an amendment—

That the words "the Colonial Treasurer for the use of His Majesty" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu:—"trustees to be nominated by the Colonial Treasurer for the purpose of the maintenance of parks open at all reasonable hours to the public, or of grants in aid of the maintenance of such parks, or for the purpose of supporting or assisting in the support of local charitable organisations in the district in which the sums hereinafter payable by any racing club were received by it from the public."

As this was essentially a local tax on the contributions of people in the particular districts where totalisators were situated, the residents of the districts should have the advantage of any taxation raised. Unless the amendment were made, it would only result in a continuation of the policy of centralisation which had fettered the development of the country to such an extent in the past. He had not the figures regarding the gross amount passing through the totalisators in Perth, Kalgoorlie, Boulder, and Coolgardie, but it was known that the bulk of the money was contributed by the totalisators in the goldfields districts. Members should consider whether it was advisable that the tax raised should go

into consolidated revenue and be used, as in the past, for an undue amount of expenditure in the metropolitan area. He was not desirous of raising any controversy between the metropolitan area and the goldfields, but this was essentially a tax that could be allocated in the manner suggested by the amendment. So far as the goldfields districts were concerned they had suffered badly at the hands of the various governments of the State in respect to provision for parks and reserves. There were very few opportunities for that method of recreation on the goldfields. Outside the Victoria Park in Kalgoorlie which was largely maintained by the municipal council there was not a decent park or reserve in the whole of the Kalgoorlie and Boulder districts. If a sum of money was allocated from the tax on the totalisator receipts they would be in a position to provide the necessary breathing space and recreation reserves for those who urgently needed it.

MR. KEENAN: It was impossible to get away from the fact that if the goldfields racing clubs were mulcted to the extent of the tax there would be practically no public parks on the goldfields. He had extracted from the Estimates the amount to be expended in the metropolitan area for parks and reserves and he found that the vote for King's Park was £3,000, public gardens £2,967; the Observatory, which was really a source of public amusement rather than education, £3,613, and the Zoological Gardens, £5,000 including a special vote of £500 for snakes. The total was £14,580, and the amount which under the general vote for parks and reserves that was likely to go to Kalgoorlie if on a similar scale to last year would be £500. Therefore it was clear unless the citizens of Kalgoorlie contributed to the up-keep, almost entirely, of their own parks there would be no parks in the district. If members looked at the balance sheet published by the Kalgoorlie Racing Club they would see that taking the two last years into account practically the whole of the revenue of the club had been devoted to prize money and to the maintenance of the public park. Approximately £4,000 a year was spent in the maintenance of the racecourses. If the club was called on to bear taxation to the extent of

£3,500, which would be about their proportion on the year, it was clear they must reduce their expenditure, and the most probable method of reduction would be cutting off this expenditure, which was no source of income to them. The racecourse added a great deal to the enjoyment of Kalgoorlie. If the money was not devoted in this way the people of the goldfields could go to the Government with a claim which they could not resist because if the Government spent £14,500 in and around Perth, it would be impossible to refuse to give a considerable grant for the maintenance of parks in and around Kalgoorlie, and in the long run the gain to the Government would be so trivial that the Bill would not result in any great gain to the Treasurer.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The amendment was of an eminently practical and highly desirable character. The goldfields public were practically responsible for the parks in their locality, and if this money were taken from the totalisator receipts it should be placed in the hands of trustees to spend on parks and reserves in the locality where the races were held. Perth was the metropolis of the State and King's Park was really a national park and not a local park such as one in Kalgoorlie would be; therefore the argument which had been used by the member for Kalgoorlie did not apply. The Premier anticipated receiving £12,000 from totalisator receipts. There was to be a deficiency in the public accounts of £130,000, and he had no desire to see that amount grow, but the possibilities were that the Treasurer would find there was occasion for Kalgoorlie to complain that this year and last year only £500 was given in the goldfields centre.

THE PREMIER could not accept the amendment. He realised what a pleasure it must be for the member for Brown Hill when relieved from the responsibilities of office, because it gave him an opportunity of opposing measures which he himself previously supported. We had heard a great deal about this sum of £12,000 as the estimated result of the new taxation. This was an estimate of his predecessor strange to say. He could not see what was to be gained by setting apart the sum realised and putting it in the hands of certain trustees to be devoted to the maintenance of parks and

reserves. The clause as it stood did not meet the wishes of a good many members, and he should like to see if he could draft an amendment to render it more acceptable. He moved that progress be reported.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ASSENT TO BILLS (2).

Message received from the Governor assenting to the Perth Mint Act Amendment Bill, and the Permanent Reserve Rededication Bill.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1905-6.

IN COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

Resumed from the 12th December; first day of general debate.

Vote—His Excellency the Governor, £1,498:

AS TO POSTPONEMENT.

Before Mr. Speaker left the Chair:

MR. BATH asked the Premier to consent to a postponement of the debate until to-morrow. He had applied himself with great assiduity to the financial proposals submitted by the Government, within the limited time at his disposal since the Treasurer delivered his Budget speech on Tuesday, and found it impossible to prepare and be ready to go on this afternoon. On Tuesday last he asked that the debate be adjourned till the following Tuesday, and that was a reasonable proposition. He now asked the Premier to allow the adjournment until to-morrow (Friday), the intervening time being the least in which it was possible for any member to deal with the voluminous matter brought forward by the hon. gentleman, and also the very voluminous Estimates.

THE PREMIER regretted that he did not see his way to meet the wishes of the hon. member. The object of placing the Estimates under consideration at so early a date after they were once presented was of course apparent. It was to endeavour to complete the business of the session before the advent of Christmas. It was not with a view of obtaining a holiday for his colleagues and himself, but rather that they might get to work that wanted doing so badly, and what would mean a holiday perhaps for other members would

only mean increased work for Ministers. They could not work in two places, and whilst they were working in this House other work was being neglected. If he had had any assurance or seen any manifestations on the part of his friend opposite and the gentlemen who sat with him that they would assist in the direction of pushing forward business, he would have been much more prepared to meet the wishes of hon. members than at present. But after what he had witnessed this afternoon he felt bound to take a firm stand, and he regretted very much that he could not agree with the request made by the hon. member.

MR. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) moved that the Order of the Day be postponed till to-morrow. The leader of the Opposition should have been given the opportunity he desired. Members on the Opposition side of the House had no desire to waste time in debate. They did not wish to keep the House sitting any longer than was absolutely necessary, but they recognised that they had a duty to the country. The country sent them here not to rush through in a few hours the most important proposals that had yet been before the House, but to give them earnest consideration. If the Premier desired consideration from the Opposition side of the House, why did he not extend to them the courtesy which he professed to extend in connection with all his dealings? Members had not had time to dissect the Bills before the House, and also to attend to the Estimates. It was most regrettable that the Premier had seen his way clear to take this high-handed action. Members desired to dissect every portion of the Estimates, and wished to know just how far the financial proposals of the Government were going to affect the State. How could they do that unless they had an opportunity of going through the Estimates? That opportunity had not been given them. If the matter were postponed till to-morrow, there would be sufficient time. Last year the then Treasurer gave the present Leader of the House a week in which to go through the proposals and dissect them, and the hon. gentleman on that occasion did not think he had been allowed sufficient time. Many members on the other side of the House felt just as Opposition members did regarding

this matter, namely, that there was no necessity for rushing through these proposals. He appealed to the good sense of the Premier to treat the House fairly. Was he treating the House considerately? Was he, because he had a big majority at his back, going to flout the wishes of the people of this State? Members on the Opposition side had no desire to raise other than fair issues. They had no desire to unduly prolong the discussion.

Mr. P. J. LYNCH (Mount Leonora) seconded the motion. On the Notice Paper were no less than six measures which could well be proceeded with, and by that means members could be given a reasonable chance of exhaustively digesting these voluminous Estimates. He did not know whether there were any grounds for the suspicion that the action taken was because the Premier had such a formidable majority behind him that he wished to take his own course without consulting the convenience of members on that (Opposition) side of the House; but in his opinion the unwillingness of the hon. member to give a reasonable time for going through this very necessary work of digesting every item of these Estimates was not altogether unconnected with the fact that he had a large, and one might say in some respects, a servile majority behind him.

POINT OF ORDER.

Mr. F. ILLINGWORTH (West Perth): I rise to a point of order. Clause 366 of the Standing Orders says:—

When a Bill or other matter has been partly considered in Committee, and the Chairman has been directed to report progress, and asked leave to sit again, and the House has ordered that the Committee shall sit again on a particular day, the Speaker, when the order for the Committee has been read, shall forthwith leave the Chair without putting any question, and the House thereupon resolves itself into such Committee.

I contend that this debate is entirely out of order.

THE PREMIER: With the permission of Mr. Speaker I would like to make one or two brief remarks by way of explanation. I have been accused, or it would appear that I was taking some high-handed action. [Mr. BATH: There is no doubt about it.] I do not wish that charge to lie at my door. I want to point out what a pitiful request this is.

We are told that a postponement is desired until to-morrow to give an opportunity of exhaustively digesting these Estimates. Supposing the request had been granted, there is plenty of other business on the Notice Paper which we could go on with to last us until 11 o'clock to-night, and between 11 o'clock to-night and 2:30 to-morrow afternoon is sufficient time to digest the Estimates, yet the two days already given are not sufficient. Let us stop this farce and get on with the business.

Mr. DAGLISH: On a plea of personal explanation the hon. member is debating a motion while a point of order has been raised. It is very unfair.

RULING.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member rose in explanation.

Mr. DAGLISH: The hon. member did not explain that.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. member rose for that purpose and stated it. It is usual to hear a member who rises and says that he wishes to explain something. The motion desired to be moved is entirely out of order. The member for West Perth is perfectly right in his contention. I was about to leave the Chair when the member for Mount Magnet asked leave to move that this particular Order of the Day be postponed. I find now that I had no alternative but to vacate the Chair.

MR. BATH: I submit, Mr. Speaker, that your ruling only applies where no motion is submitted for the postponement of the order. We know that on repeated occasions, when a Premier has not been prepared to go on with the Estimates, a motion has been moved to postpone them to a future date; and if a Premier can move a motion to postpone the Estimates, it is quite in order for another hon. member to do the same thing. The Standing Order mentioned by the member for West Perth is quite right. Supposing there is no desire on the part of members of the Committee to postpone the Order of the Day, then Mr. Speaker vacates the Chair without any question being put that he shall leave the Chair. I submit that if an hon. member desires to move the postponement of the Order there is nothing against it in the Standing Orders. In fact on the other hand, they provide that

he can move for the postponement of the order and can give his reasons for so moving.

MR. SPEAKER: I have ruled in compliance with this Standing Order, and I take it I was correct in doing so. In explanation I may only add that the Estimates had been in progress and the Chairman had reported progress, the customary thing after a matter is considered in Committee. This was formally done on the night of the Budget Speech. Standing Order 366 specially provides that when a Bill or other matter has been partly considered in Committee and the Chairman has reported progress and leave is asked to sit again (which is put formally to the House), and the Committee is ordered to sit again (which is to-day), the Speaker, when the Order to the Committee has been read, shall forthwith leave the Chair without putting any question, and the House thereupon resolves itself into Committee. Therefore I rule on that Standing Order.

MR. BATH: May I ask your ruling as to whether a member is right in moving to postpone an Order of the Day, or whether Ministers have been continually breaking the rules of the House in doing so? Will you give your ruling on the point whether that instance does not apply to the point that Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair without a motion, or whether he leaves the Chair on the motion of the Premier "that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair?"

MR. SPEAKER: It is quite competent to move to postpone the ordinary business; but once a matter has been in Committee, I have no power but to leave the Chair immediately the Order is read by the Clerk. This is most positively set out in Standing Order 366.

THE SPEAKER accordingly left the Chair.

MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair; the general debate resumed on the first item in the Estimates—

His Excellency the Governor—£1,498:

MR. TROY moved that progress be reported.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	13
Noes	...	...	...	25
Majority against				12

AYES.

Mr. Bath
Mr. Bolton
Mr. Collier
Mr. Daglish
Mr. Horan
Mr. Hudson
Mr. Lynch
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Walker
Mr. Ware
Mr. A. J. Wilson
Mr. Troy (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Barnett
Mr. Brebber
Mr. Brown
Mr. Butcher
Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Eddy
Mr. Ewing
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Gull
Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Hicks
Mr. Isdell
Mr. Keenan
Mr. Layman
Mr. Male
Mr. Monger
Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Price
Mr. Reason
Mr. Smith
Mr. Verryard
Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

[5-25 o'clock, p.m.]

MR. T. H. BATH (Brown Hill): When on Tuesday night after the Premier had delivered his Budget speech containing his financial proposals, I asked for an adjournment to the following Tuesday, I did so not with any desire to delay the conduct of the business of this House, nor with any desire to be obstructive in any way at all, but with the desire that members of this House should be given the fullest opportunity of discussing the financial proposals submitted by the Treasurer. We know that in years past when the Treasurer submitted his Budget proposals, the Leader of the Opposition and, in fact, members generally have been given ample time to study the financial proposals submitted and to prepare any remarks they might have to offer thereon. I know that when, as a new member of Parliament, I first entered this Chamber and became acquainted with hon. members, I was given certain advice by older members of the Assembly, who had filled positions for some years past, that whatever I did in the House and whatever attention I devoted to other proposals, I could not do better than concentrate my attention on the financial proposals submitted during the session. Amongst others I received that advice from the member for West Perth, and I have always found that whatever discussions took place in the House which he considered unworthy of remark, whenever the financial proposals of the Government were in question that hon. gentle-

man was always forward in offering remarks. The Premier cannot complain of any lack of consideration of the part of members on this side of the House. Members on the Ministerial side have only to recollect that on Thursday last the Premier and his colleagues were desirous of lunching with the officers of H.M.S. "Powerful," and the Opposition offered no objection to allowing those gentlemen opposite the opportunity to partake of that luncheon.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: We were not ready to go on. That was the reason.

MR. BATH: We also know that the Premier on Friday night, in view of the fact that he was preparing his Budget Speech, was unable to be present in the Assembly, and that he had to leave it to his colleagues to conduct the business of the House. We know how they were at sea, and we know the consideration extended by members on both sides of the House; because, when certain proposals introduced by the Premier necessitating his presence in the House were reached, we adjourned out of consideration to the Premier. We must also bear in mind that the hon. gentleman assumed office on August 25th, and though he had an election to contest on the occasion when he sought re-election as Minister, during the recent general elections he was returned unopposed. Also the Minister for Lands and the Minister for Commerce were returned unopposed; and whatever time other Ministers had to devote to electioneering, they did not find it necessary to spend time at electioneering work. With the result that they again offered the excuse that the excitement of electioneering prevented them from preparing their financial proposals. Yet we find that although the Premier assumed office about 25th or 26th August, and although he has had until 12th December to prepare these Budget proposals, it was not until the latter date he brought them forward and submitted them to the House. I say, therefore, having due consideration for members who wish to finish at the earliest possible juncture, if the Premier wishes to stifle debate, instead of placing the blame on the shoulders of the Opposition in asking for a minimum amount of time in which to discuss these proposals, we should lay the blame on the Premier for the time it has taken

him to submit his Budget proposals to the House. In speaking on this question on Tuesday last, I desired the House—if the Premier as he stated was not willing—at least in their courtesy and fair play to give the members of the House and the Leader of the Opposition a reasonable amount of time and opportunity to study the proposals. I appealed especially to the member for West Perth (Mr. Illingworth) and the member for Katanning (Hon. F. H. Piesse) to bear out my contention that on all previous occasions a much more extended period had been allowed to members of previous Parliaments to consider and go through the Estimates and the Budget proposals before they were called on to criticise them. I have only to refer to some remarks which were offered by the member for West Perth when that member was in Opposition. After the financial proposals had been submitted by the Right Hon. Sir John Forrest on the 17th October, 1899, I may say that a period of, I think, a month or six weeks had elapsed between the time the proposals had been delivered and any member of the Opposition being called on to continue that discussion on the proposals, and on that occasion the member for West Perth said:—

It is now some time since the Budget Speech was delivered, and the space has somewhat abated the interest which arises out of so important a deliverance. At the outset I desire to express regret that the most important utterance of the year should have been delivered to a House of never more than 25 members and often of only 23 members. It does seem to me that whatever may be the neglect shown to other speakers in this House, and to other themes presented for consideration in this House, when the Premier rises in his place to deliver the greatest speech of the year on the most important subject that Parliament can take into consideration, he is deserving of a better House than 25 members.

I want to emphasise this point: "the greatest speech of the year, and the most important question that Parliament can be called on to consider." And if it has taken the Premier from August 25 until December 12 to prepare "the greatest speech of the year on the most important subject Parliament can be called on to consider," are not two short days—two days during which Parliament sits and meets at half-past two—too short a time for anyone to devote to and criticise the

proposals? When I submit that to members I express my surprise and regret that members should allow themselves to be herded up on one side of the House like dumb-driven cattle, and allow the Premier on an occasion like this to suppress any intelligent discussion of the financial proposals he has submitted to the House. I do not find it difficult to understand the Premier's desire for haste in this matter, because if members—I do not care on which side of the House they sit—will only give the briefest study to the speech of the Premier and to the proposals submitted, they will find it is to the interests of the Premier to suppress any right to free speech on the part of members, to prevent them from adequately criticising the proposals submitted to us.

THE PREMIER: You are having your free speech, are you not?

MR. BATH: Dealing more particularly with the financial proposals as submitted to us, I may say I hasten to congratulate the Premier on the methodical and painstaking way in which he delivered his Budget Speech, and on the manner in which he submitted the proposals to us. But I must say also I cannot congratulate him on the matter that made up the Budget Speech. We remember at Midland Junction, when delivering his policy speech, some time in December, the hon. member seemed to be inspired with some great spirit of prophesy. I do not know on that occasion whether it was the enthusiasm of the audience, or whether the blushing honours that had just been thrust upon him; but we know he practically announced himself as the Messiah of the millenium of sound finance in Western Australia; and we know that in the course of the addresses of his supporters since that occasion throughout the electioneering campaign they have endeavoured as far as possible to advertise him in that capacity. It must be unfortunately disappointing to the disciples of the Premier to find that in the deliverance which he made on Tuesday last he has proved so disappointing; and instead of the Messiah of sound finance we find him but a false prophet succumbed to ignominious failure. During the electioneering campaign we were assured that good results would accrue from the advent of

the Reason Administration. We were told if we could only destroy the three party position in the House, if we could only return him with a sufficient majority behind him, if we could assure him of a long continuance in office, we would have some sound financial proposals put forward; and that hon. gentleman, if no one else in the State was capable of doing it, would at least square the finances and put us on the high road to financial prosperity. But I appeal to the most enthusiastic supporter of the Premier at that time as to whether he has carried out or realised their expectations; whether in the proposals he has submitted to us there is any cautiousness in regard to the proposals for the solution of the financial problem or any display of sound financial ability. It seems to me that instead of the Premier, as promised by him, grappling with the financial situation, apparently the financial situation has grappled with the Premier, and has laid him ignominiously in the dust. He did not require in submitting these tabulated statements to us to emphasise in the way he did the fact that the diminution in the revenue received from the Commonwealth and the increase in the amount necessary to provide interest and sinking fund would provide a financial problem which it would be difficult for any Treasurer to trace. We all know that with each succeeding year the reduction under the sliding scale meant a diminution in the revenue received from the Commonwealth. So we expected, instead of the Premier merely informing us of a fact that was known to every member, he would provide us with some proposals for remedying the evil and offer a proposition of some system of taxation which would make up the deficiency. We know that as far as the reduction is concerned it has been desired by the great majority of people throughout the community. That sliding scale was a special impost that pressed very hardly on those people who from their circumstances were least able to bear any disproportionate share of taxation; and if any thing commends itself to the bulk of the community it is this reduction of the special duty which has been permitted in Western Australia for a period of five years. We know the Minister for Mines, at Bridgetown, referred to the

fact that Western Australia was called on to bear an altogether disproportionate share of taxation. I am going to refer to some figures adduced by him in the course of his remarks. Referring to the taxation paid by every unit of population, every man, woman, and child in Western Australia, he made the statement that if they could be called on to pay it directly they would soon kick up a row and ask for some remedy. I desire to impress on the Committee that if these people could only be called on to pay directly the amount they really contribute in an indirect way through the taxation on the goods they consume, to the Treasury, there would soon be a demand from an overwhelming majority for some new method of taxation. The right course the Treasurer should have pursued was not to indulge in any silly whine against Federation. That is only the remedy of a parochial Dogberry. It is silly for a member of this or any Chamber to say that he would fight against Federation. In the first instance, Federation is desirable, and I say it is altogether too short a time for anyone to expect that we are going to reach the millenium by the Federation of Australia. Anyone who talks of a movement for the abolition of Federation, for the destruction of the bond entered into, talks in a most puerile and silly fashion. What we want is not silly talk like that, but definite proposals on the part of any Colonial Treasurer in a State charged with the duty of looking after the finances—for some definite proposals to make up the loss occasioned by the reduction of this taxation which presses inequitably on the people by the imposition of a system of taxation of an equitable nature; one that will commend itself by its equitable nature to the common-sense support of the people of this State. Instead of that we have certain proposals submitted by the Treasurer as a remedy for the financial conditions he finds prevailing. In the first place we have what I consider are certain over-estimates of revenue. The Treasurer was very careful in the course of his remarks the other evening to state that he never made any such remarks as I attributed to him during my speech on the Address-in-reply. I have taken the trouble to look up his speech at Midland Junction when he was dealing with his

Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the forthcoming year. And I find that the statement I made on the Address-in-reply was a nearer approach to the truth of his remarks than his interpretation that he offered during the course of his Budget Speech. He said:—

As Treasurer of the State, he was placed in this advantageous position, that the first quarter of the financial year had now passed, and, having a quarter's experience, the rough-and-ready method of multiplying the results by four gave him a rough-and-ready estimate of the year's transactions.

Then he went on by stating that the Dividend Tax gave so much during the quarter. "Multiply that by four, and I submit that it is only a reasonable thing to assume we should get so much, £130,000 from the dividend tax." (Interjection by the Premier.) I am quoting from his remarks as reported in the *West Australian*. He went on to deal with increased revenue he expected from the new system of embossed stamps, and dealt with the probate duty. As the quarter brought in £4,101 he thought it only reasonable to multiply that sum by four, which gave £16,404. He thought it reasonable to assume that they would get £16,000. And so with other estimates. The hon. gentleman has even extended his rough and ready method as applied in his Midland Junction speech. He has gone one better and added a few thousands to the sum he expects to receive. I submit this is a matter of luck he reckons on as the result of the advent of this great conglomeration of geniuses. We are going to have a birth of confidence which will give an altogether greater result during the next two quarters than has occurred during the past two quarters. Then after what I consider is an over-estimate of the revenue in certain directions we have a reduction in expenditure in the direction of assistance to the mining industry which has been a special feature of our Budget proposals in the past, and we have a reduction in the amount of money devoted to public works and buildings; and then as a solace to members we have a vague promise that in the sweet by and by they are going to do something in the way of reducing the cost of administration. Members will remember that during the course of the elec.

tion campaign we had the assurance of zealous and smooth-tongued canvassers that the only thing the matter with the metropolitan districts was that the Labour Government had not spent enough money from revenue on public works and buildings, and the fact that they had not spent that amount of money had resulted in a lack of confidence on the part of private builders, the consequence being that architects, contractors, and men who had been employed by them were out of work. We find that the hon. gentleman who submitted this proposal proposes during the coming year to spend a less amount from revenue on public works and buildings. People supposed that the Rason Administration were going to alter the state of things that ruled during the *régime* of the Labour Government, and expected that they were going to have a lavish expenditure out of revenue on public works and buildings. We find that their expectations will not be realised. We heard of what they were pleased to term the "mark-time" policy, but the Premier, instead of sounding the advance, has sounded the retreat. He only slightly touched upon his proposals now, because he was going to deal with them on the Loan Estimates. We have a solace for the injury done to these people in the fact that, in order to make up the deficiency in the amount proposed to be expended on public works out of revenue, we are going to the money lender, although that was condemned by members who sit behind the Government. We know this was, perhaps, practically the only alternative of the Premier. We have only to read his policy speech, or his criticisms of the financial proposals submitted by his predecessor last year, to know with what virulent and vigorous denunciation he treated the Treasurer at that time. In his criticism of the proposals as to the expenditure of revenue on public works and buildings during the financial year 1904-5, he grew facetious at the expense of the "mark time" policy, and now when we find him adopting not a mark time policy, but a policy of retreat, he must of necessity find some salve for the consciences of those who have been disappointed in their expectation of a vigorous public works policy. We know

that although he had available at his hands when he took over the reins of office the sum of £980,000 available from the loan flotations, he proposes to still farther add to the loan indebtedness of the State by availing himself of what he calls the favourable turn of the market to borrow another loan. Not of course that he is going to spend it now. He is going, as he says, to spend it in the sweet by and by; but when we have the clamours of ministerial supporters for a spur line here and a railway there for public buildings here and roads there we shall find that if the hon. member is authorised to obtain a loan there will be precious little of it left when the end of the financial year arrives. We can admire the convenient optimism of the hon. member who has to support such a proposal as this when of necessity he has to appeal to the money lender to provide him with money to retain the support of members on the Ministerial side. It is very convenient to cover up his own sins in the past by declaring that the resources of the State are such that there is no need to fear in regard to authorisations for many millions; that there is no need to fear any stringency of the financial market, if we continue to borrow for many years to come. The Premier, I suppose, sought some colour of justification for his loan proposals in his reference to flotations during 1904-5, and I submit that in the course of his remarks on the subject on Tuesday night he indulged in the gentle art of stabbing by innuendoes; because he sought to imply that the amount of loan money expended by his predecessor during the financial year 1904-5 amounted to the immense total of £1,975,000.

THE TREASURER: I did not do anything of the sort.

MR. BATH: It was submitted by the Premier in the explanation of his speech in regard to loan flotations. Members will find that although that amount, the last $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan of £1,400,000 was floated during that financial year, it was only floated on the 9th June, and the financial year ended on the 30th.

THE TREASURER: I mentioned it.

MR. BATH: The hon. member was very careful not to mention that fact. We had the assurance at Midland Junction during the course of the policy

speech that the loan money available amounted to £981,426; so a very large proportion, almost £1,000,000, of the flotation of £1,400,000 was available for the Premier to work upon. The Premier when making statements of this kind should at least be careful that he is dealing fair play to his predecessors.

THE TREASURER: So I did.

MR. BATH: I presume the member for Subiaco, who preceded him as Colonial Treasurer, is quite prepared to defend his proposals and his methods of finance, but I certainly think he does not desire that he should be misrepresented in this fashion; that he should be represented as having expended this large amount of money on the loan expenditure.

THE TREASURER: He was not misrepresented.

MR. BATH: Then, again, the method employed by the hon. member is on a par with his repetition of the statement made at Midland Junction with regard to the alleged deficit left by the previous administration. We have only to take the draft Estimates. He stated the previous Government showed a deficit of over £300,000; and notwithstanding the fact that the members of that Government repudiated any authority for those draft Estimates, notwithstanding the fact that the member for Subiaco stated he would not nor would any other Treasurer hold himself responsible for any other Estimates than those he submitted to Parliament, the hon. gentleman repeats that statement. At the same time he states that he does not want to appear to claim that these were the proposals the hon. gentleman would have finally submitted to Parliament. If he did not want to do this, why did he mention the fact? I presume it was perfectly justifiable for him to mention it at Midland Junction, when it was a case of electioneering, but I think that when submitting his financial proposals to this House he should have avoided any such reference as that seeing that he himself did not think it was fair to his predecessor.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: He mentioned that at Midland Junction, too.

MR. BATH: Then, again, we have his comparison of the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan floated in 1905 and the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. loan floated in 1902. Anyone who has any acquaintance with the respective conditions of

things in 1902 and 1905 will know that at the time the 1902 loan was floated the position was essentially favourable to the flotation at advantageous terms, and we know that in 1905, when the Russo-Japanese war was in progress and the money market was depressed, the loan, as far as advantageous terms were concerned, could not be considered on a line with 1902. The Premier was very careful not to compare the loan in 1905 with the loan of the Government with which he was connected in 1903, when they floated a 4 per cent. loan which went at the rate of interest of £4 1s. 5d., and was 3s. 10d. less advantageous than the loan floated in 1905; and although here in the table it is shown as an amount of £483,215, members will see by the footnote that afterwards a larger amount was subscribed on the same terms, which practically made that a flotation of £1,000,000 on the terms stated. In that table the hon. member carefully avoided any comparison between the loan floated by his Government and the loan floated by the member for Subiaco. As we all know, the late Premier had practically no alternative at the time, and the fact that he secured the most advantageous terms possible at that time is evidenced by the circumstance that the underwriters who took up the loan were unable to secure the terms and to place the loan upon the market and unburden themselves of it. If I were desirous of using those methods of trying to belittle predecessors, I might point to the fact that almost immediately after the results of the elections were known we had a fall in the Western Australian stocks on the London market. We find that from a perusal of the weekly returns issued, and they have not recovered since.

THE TREASURER: They are higher than ever they were.

MR. BATH: One would have expected that, as the result of the advent of the Premier and his colleagues, we would have had a rise in the London market; but I am satisfied, and we all must know, that the persons who subscribe to our loans had sufficient knowledge to draw their own conclusions when the Premier stated at Midland Junction that his predecessor's draft Estimates showed a deficiency of over £300,000, that he himself was not going to pursue any retrenchment policy,

that there was to be no diminution of expenditure on public works and buildings because it was necessary to inspire confidence in private citizens, and that we were going to borrow another £1,000,000, although we had £980,000 available from the last flotation; and the result of drawing their own conclusions is shown in the position of our stocks in London to-day. The Treasurer was desirous as far as possible of eliminating any discussion on the loan expenditure or loan proposals of the Government. The hon. member considered there would be a more opportune time when the Loan Estimates were introduced; but I say the most opportune time for the discussion of such proposals is on the general Financial Statement of the Treasurer. I am not going to follow the Treasurer's example, but I am going to review, as far as possible, the loan expenditure of the State and the loan proposals of the future. We have the hon. gentleman, like any other man who desires to hide his failure at squaring the finances, resorting to a borrowing policy to provide for public works. And he endeavours to put the best face on the matter by saying that the money is expended in reproductive works. I desire to know what the hon. member considers as reproductive works? If we are to accept the opinion of his financial mentor, a gentleman who was formerly Treasurer of this State, we would find that the only way an honest Treasurer can interpret reproductive works is that the operations of these works when completed shall provide sufficient to pay interest on capital fund, and also some provision for sinking fund. I think that is the interpretation given by hon. gentlemen in this State who profess to have knowledge on financial matters. So far as I and other Opposition members are concerned, it is the interpretation we have placed on reproductive works. In order to show the result of the operations of the loan money expended in reproductive works, we have Return 9 submitted to this House by the Treasurer with a great deal of assurance. We find that, after making provision for working expenses and interest on the cost of construction, without any attempt to provide for depreciation or sinking fund, the whole of these operations show a loss of

£508; yet the Premier had the assurance to submit that return to us with all the pleasure and conceit in the world as one of which we should feel proud and which we should regard as distinctly of an encouraging nature. So far as that return is concerned, absolutely no consideration is given to depreciation in regard to our railways, and especially in regard to the Coolgardie Water Scheme, which is essentially a very important item; because we may make provision either from revenue or by the receipts from the operation of that scheme for the payment of interest, and even for the payment of sinking fund; but if no provision is made for depreciation it means that at the end of the term, when the amount of the loan will be liquidated by the accumulated sinking fund, we would practically, to all intents and purposes, need to renew the whole of the capital cost of these undertakings. I also desire to show what I consider a very disquieting feature in connection with our loan expenditure. The percentage of our annual revenue absorbed by interest and sinking fund charges in 1898 was 12·2; and last year that percentage had increased to 20·42, while taking the figures for the five months ended November, 1905, the percentage of the revenue absorbed by fixed charges for interest and sinking fund amounted to 25·2. These are disquieting figures, and show that, whatever confidence we may have in the resources of the State, and whatever we may believe is likely to be the future prospects, there is necessity for the gentleman in charge of the administration of the finances to consider the position and to see whether we are doing right in so continually adding to the annual charge for interest and sinking fund, especially as our revenue does not show a tendency to increase in due proportion. Then we have the Treasurer repeating, as an encouraging feature, the fact that, although our gross indebtedness had increased considerably, the net indebtedness per head of the population showed a decrease to last year; and the hon. member referred to the figures for 1900 and 1905. On the 30th June, 1900, the net indebtedness per head of the population was £63 10s. 11d.; but on the 30th June, 1905, it was £61 19s. 11d. The hon. gentleman

showed a considerable amount of wariness and courage in the particular years he submitted to the House for comparison.

THE PREMIER: The returns were before you.

MR. BATH: I have them before me now.

THE TREASURER: Quite so. I gave them to you.

MR. BATH: But you only gave the figures for two years. I am going to give the years from 1900 to 1905. In 1900, the net indebtedness per head was £63; in 1901 it was £65; in 1902 it was £69; in 1903 it was £67; in 1904 it was £63; and in 1905 it was £61. So during those years when the Treasurer was a member of the previous Administration, and while he was Treasurer of that Administration, the net indebtedness per head of the population was much higher than before or since, while the proportion for the year 1904-5, during which his much-maligned predecessors (the Labour Government) were in office, there was a decrease in the net indebtedness from £63 19s. 5d. to £61 19s. 11d. This cannot be accepted as an absolutely reliable comparison for the purpose of removing doubts regarding the amount of our indebtedness; because we must recognise that, while there has been a decrease in the net indebtedness per head of population, yet there has been a great increase in the percentage of women and children in our population, carrying with it a considerable reduction in the earning capacity per head of the population in Western Australia. So the one I consider to be more than a set-off against the other. Of course, the Treasurer in that airy fashion that characterises him, declares there is no necessity to seriously consider this question of indebtedness, because he assures us with the utmost confidence that the resources of the State can stand it. I want to know at what period in our career we can expect that the indebtedness of the State must be considered in relation to the resources of the community. We know that it has been held by almost every Treasurer in Western Australia that, while it was quite right for him to borrow, and while the money was being expended in reproductive works, and while the resources of the

State would stand it, he was leaving things in such a condition that there would be absolutely no necessity for his successor to borrow any money at all. We have a remarkable unanimity in the utterances of the hon. gentlemen who have occupied the position of Treasurer of this State. We have, for instance, the present Treasurer stating that what we wanted in Western Australia was optimism, the optimism of Sir John Forrest who kept the reins of office for so long a period in Western Australia. I have only to refer the Treasurer to the speech Sir John Forrest made as Treasurer in 1898, when he was anything but optimistic with regard to the position of Western Australia, and when he came down with a declaration to the effect that there would be a considerable deficit at the end of the year. He then stated the necessity not only for retrenchment, but also for a cessation of borrowing in the near future. On the 18th August, 1898, Sir John Forrest spoke as follows:—

We may well rest from borrowing, except for short extension of railways as required. We have given the Colony a good start, and it should be able to depend on its own resources now, to a large extent.

I may here interpolate: When can we hope in Western Australia that we will be able to depend on our own resources? Sir John Forrest continued:—

As I said before, we are getting into a more settled condition, and steady development must take the place of spasmodic effort. We must be careful not to increase our indebtedness much beyond the present capitation, but as the population increases so can our indebtedness increase. We are better off in respect of indebtedness than other places. We owe £52 per head, but Queensland owes £67, and South Australia £69 per head. It will be seen that, in comparison with these colonies, on a capitation basis, we are in a far better position, and it must not be forgotten that our population is composed of a larger proportion of adult wage-earners than any other colony in Australia, and therefore more able to bear taxation. I cannot see myself any great need for fresh loan authorisations for large amounts. We have done most of the great works that are required for our development. I can only say that, when the time does come, that this country is self-supporting, when we are living within our means and not depending on loan money, I can well understand the position of a Minister under such circumstances being a comfortable, if not a happy one. I cannot expect that it will be in my time, but I hope it will come for our successors, and that they will be able to go on the noise-

less tenor of their way without the aid of borrowed money.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: That was after he came back from the Jubilee.

MR. BATH: In passing, I may say that the member for West Perth (Mr. Illingworth), when Treasurer, was careful not to give himself away in any fashion in regard to our loan expenditure. I believe he recognised that if the Government wished to have any chance of securing the support of the electors of the State, they could not declare against borrowing; and so the hon. gentleman, during the course of his Financial Statement, was very careful to avoid any reference to these points. However, in the Financial Statement made by Mr. Gardiner on the 16th October, 1902, we had this declaration of wisdom, which I commend to every hon. member, and especially to the gentlemen who succeeded him as Treasurer:—

The best thing which can happen us is to be hard up; the best thing that can happen to the Treasurer is to be hard up. Not hard up in the sense in which Esau was when he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; but hard up in the sense in which one's business friends are hard up when they tell us that business was never better, but that they never had so little cash. That is the position which forces men to look into their affairs. Hitherto, as I said before, we have had loan moneys coming in and a large revenue coming in, and we have spent both. Now we must show to the world that not only can we borrow money and spend it, but that we can save it; also that when the necessity does occur we can take our responsibilities on our own shoulders. We do not want our children, when they grow up, to say to us, "You must have had not only prodigal sons amongst you, but you must have been a nation of prodigals." Rather let them say that when the time of necessity came we did our duty, which duty is to see how far we can assist this country onward, assist it with the revenue at our disposal, assist it by economical construction of public works, to become, as it has every prospect of becoming, the gem of the Commonwealth.

That hon. gentleman, who was Treasurer at that time, went even one better on the next occasion, when he delivered the Budget Speech, because he made the following remarks about State borrowings and sure results:—

It seems to me that the present is a fitting opportunity to strike a strong blow at the generally accepted idea, which had practically become a faith, that Australia can only prosper by huge borrowings. Too frequently huge borrowings lead to that prosperity which we

know is unstable and carries with it the strongest possible germs of corresponding depression, which in turn has to be relieved by farther borrowing. Another reason which is frequently advanced is that, if we have to wait till our great resources are developed by our own capital, our progress must be very slow indeed. In the minds of thoughtful men, five years is nothing in the history of a nation, provided those five years are represented by slow and steady progress; and business men will tell you that ultimate prosperity rests with the man of energy and enterprise who, whilst looking ahead, is certain of providing for his immediate obligation; and if this applies to business, it ought to be a good principle to apply to the State. If the prosperity coming from internal development be slower, there is not the slightest doubt it is surer. We have strong evidence of that fact in the great development which has taken place under our public battery system. Moreover, the national life is sturdier and more independent, for there is not the slightest doubt that the whip of necessity is a strong incentive to development; consequently I hope we will see that Western Australia and Australia, so far as these ideas can influence Australia generally, must put more energy into the development of some of those natural resources which are indeed her great heritage.

It is a pity that when the present Premier went to school to that hon. gentleman he did not better his instructions. I have already referred to the return which the hon. gentleman has issued which shows that after the mere provision for working expenses and interest, the net result of this State's chief trading concern results in a loss of £5,608, and in his endeavour to make as good a case as possible, the Premier assures us that although perhaps we have not had a direct return from these trading concerns, the indirect benefit, is very considerable indeed. I want to say, in my opinion the phrase in regard to the indirect benefit accruing from these returns is a phrase invented by the devil to snare the souls of incompetent Treasurers. If to-morrow the Premier were to borrow say two or three million pounds and employ men in shifting the sandhills along the coast into the sea and then declare that that had given employment to so many men, was that an indirect benefit to the State? We want to know if the loss entailed on the community which went to provide interest and sinking fund is counter-balanced by any indirect benefit. However much the Premier may have failed to realise the high ideals to which he set his eyes during the course of his

policy speech at Midland Junction and during the course of his electioneering campaign, when he was loud in his declaration of the great work he was going to perform in squaring up the finances of the State, in spite of this, whatever may have been his failure in this respect, he should have spared us this reference to indirect benefit, a platitude, which is the excuse of the bankrupt to stave off the day of reckoning. Then the third proposal of the Premier is the means of remedying the present financial stringency. We have his vague promise that in the sweet by and by he is going to encourage economical administration. I am prepared to say that at all times, whether we have a full and overflowing revenue or whether we have a depleted revenue, it is always essential to have economical administration, and I say every member in the House can agree with the Premier in this respect. I am rather doubtful as to the likelihood of seeing that economical administration from our friends opposite.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Have we not made a start already?

MR. BATH: The Minister for Works can take things comfortably, because as far his predecessors in office were concerned, they put their proposals into practice in regard to the work of administration, and they effected that economy in administration which the hon. gentleman must be enjoying to-day. In order to lend some colour of justification to their desire to evade what is really the direct issue as to the financial proposals, and in order to lend some colour of justification to the pathetic appeal to be allowed to get into recess to effect these economies in administration, we have a most elaborate return laid on the table by the Treasurer. I am quite prepared to admit that no doubt this return is accurate in regard to details, and that a considerable amount of labour was spent in its preparation, but I join issue with the Premier in regard to the accuracy of the basis on which he rests the contention that the administration in this State is more extravagant as compared with other States. I say that as far as the civil service of the State is concerned—and in speaking of the civil servants I wish to distinguish between the employees in our various departments and the casual

hands and temporary hands employed on the railways and various works—as far as the civil service is concerned, we may say to the public servants that they are treated on the whole very well, and as the result of that fair meed of treatment we get a fair return in the labour they give us. And we must take into consideration, as has been done in this return, the difference in the cost of living and the sparse nature of the population and the wide area over which they extend in determining the cost in this State as compared with other States. One portion of the return, as submitted by the Premier, absolutely disproves his contention as to the costliness of our administration. We find in the comparison as to the administration expenditure under the various heads, on which we have the actual administration expenditure in Western Australia, what it would be in Western Australia were the Government constructed on the special lines which were conducted in the other States. We have only to turn to the Mines Department and we find the actual expenditure in Western Australia is £64,503. If that were based on the lines ruling in the other States it would only be £15,000 in Queensland, £18,000 in New South Wales, £17,000 in South Australia, £17,000 in Victoria. Then again, dealing with land and land surveys, the actual expenditure in Western Australia is practically £130,000. If the expenditure were based on similar lines in Queensland it would be £52,000, in New South Wales £96,000, in South Australia £31,000, and in Victoria £25,000. Then in connection with the expenditure in our Medical Department, the actual expenditure in Western Australia is £69,000. If it were based on similar lines adopted in other Australian States, it would be £50,000 in Queensland, £23,000 in New South Wales, £38,000 in South Australia, and £24,000 in Victoria. The same thing applies in a lesser degree in regard to Government gardens, parks, and recreation grounds and the stipendiary magistracy. I contend that the administrative expenditure in this State is higher than the other States because the State here enters more largely into the life of the people than is done in the other States. The State

does more in the way of providing services for the people; it provides more conveniences and does more work for those engaged in our mining, agricultural, and timber industries free of charge than is done in the other States. We have only to refer to the fact that we provide free surveys, except in the case of grazing and poison leases, in Western Australia, whereas in the other States they make people pay for the surveys. We have only to refer to the fact that a large proportion of our expenditure on the mining industry is expended in the direction of water supply, in putting down bores and wells and in other directions assisting the industry. It is this fact that we do so much for our people for the encouragement of these industries, and not to the fact that we have an overloaded civil service, or that they are paid an exorbitant rate, that our administration expenditure here is higher than in the other States. If we were to say that we are not going to assist the people any longer, that they must pay the cost of their own surveys, and if they want wells on the goldfields they must pay the cost of them by some form of taxation; if we say that we decline to render assistance at all, the relative cost of administration in Western Australia would be on a par with that in the Eastern States. Then again we must also bear in mind that in proportion to the population we have expended a much larger amount of money and built a much longer mileage of railway than have any of the other States. I have prepared a return showing the percentage of railways built in this State compared with the other States. We show a larger mileage than the other States do in comparison with the population. In New South Wales they have one mile to 431 people; in Queensland they have one mile to 178 people; in South Australia they have one mile to 194 people; in Tasmania they have one mile to 290 people; and in Victoria they have one mile to 358 people; and in Western Australia we have one mile to 112 people. It stands to reason with that mileage of railway to a much smaller proportion of people, the cost of operating these railways must be considerably higher. Therefore any comparison representative of the cost with the other Australian States that does

not take this into consideration is absolutely valueless so far as a comparison is concerned.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.
At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. BATH (continuing): When the House rose for tea, I had been endeavouring to show that the return submitted to us by the Premier to indicate that the cost of administration in Western Australia was extravagant, when compared with the cost in other States, could not be regarded as reliable, if we take all the circumstances into consideration. I have also in the course of my remarks dealt at length with the measures submitted by the Premier as a solution of the financial problem, but in order to impress them on the minds of members I will again sum them up as follows:—First, his financial return showing an estimated deficit of £132,000; second, the Estimates show a serious reduction in the expenditure provided for public works and buildings from revenue, and also for the encouragement of our primary industries; and third, we are to be compensated for this by a lavish loan expenditure, I presume on public works and buildings, and also on some of those proposals for spur lines and railway communication in the agricultural districts which have been foreshadowed at various times by the hon. gentleman and his colleagues at agricultural shows and other like social gatherings. And in the fourth place we are to have no retrenchment and to all intents and purposes no new taxation. I wish to emphasise the latter point, because it carries with it an explanation of the voluminous return which has been submitted to us by the Premier, and proves it to be merely an attempt to bolster up the Premier's failure to show any courageous initiation or any display of ability to deal with the financial situation. What is the underlying object which the Minister had in presenting this return and in making light of the deficit? It was done, I submit, in order that they might ignore the one solution of the financial position. We know how prominently, not only members on this side of the House, but also a number of members on the Ministerial side, have declared themselves

ardent advocates of taxation on the unimproved value of land, and expressed their firm and continued adherence to that principle. I recognise, of course, that in order to save themselves from the charge of having broken election pledges, some of them have at least left to themselves a line of retreat, inasmuch as they have declared that while they are consistent advocates of this principle they will not favour it unless some necessity is shown for new taxation, and unless the Premier in his remarks to the House declares that such new taxation is necessary. When those advocates of the principle of a tax on the unimproved value of land, those who regard it as an equitable tax, those who have stated on the platform that they believe it will be an equitable tax to replace the loss of revenue, occasioned in relation to those special imposts which have been reduced as a result of the Federal contract, and which they have repeatedly declared were a class of impost falling heavily upon just that portion of the community least able to bear such an inequitable tax—when those gentlemen remember we have the Premier's declaration that we will have a deficit of £130,000, when they recollect that for the five months which have already passed there is a deficit amounting to £124,000, and when they examine the cheap-jack methods which have been put forward by the Premier in order to get some rivulets of revenue, I ask them whether the occasion has not arrived when they should put their view into practice and use their influence and weight in the House towards securing a reform to which many of them are committed. One can of course appreciate the reluctance of the Premier to make any admission that such an impost is necessary. We know that he must have regard not only to the susceptibilities of a number of gentlemen who, while supporters of land values taxation, sit on the Ministerial benches, but also those of members who are just as strongly opposed to such a proposal or method of taxation as the others are advocates of it. When we remember the Premier's speeches at the time he was seeking election in 1901, and the reply he submitted to the head of the labour organisations who asked his opinion on the proposals embodied in the labour platform,

and when we remember that the hon. gentleman was then an enthusiastic supporter of land values taxation, and declared that he always had been a supporter of it, and, if I mistake not, also declared that if returned to Parliament he would support it in the future, what we want to know is whether he is still a supporter of that principle, whether he is prepared to brave the resentment of those who are opposed to it, and who will only support him so long as they consider he is not likely to introduce such a proposal; or whether, in the interim between his declaration on that occasion and the present time, he has changed his opinions and has altogether abandoned the advocacy of that equitable measure of reform. We also know that in other campaigns which the Minister for Mines has fought he has declared his undying support and belief in this principle; and although his chief had declared he had no intention of introducing it, he even went so far as to say that personally he was strongly in favour of the proposal, and he used it, I believe, with good effect during the course of his election speeches. Apparently the hon. gentleman has altered his opinions, or, as I have remarked before, the evil communication into which he has been led has corrupted his good manners in regard to this proposal. We find him trying to justify his desertion of the principle by stating that the people were taxed to such an extent now that there was no room or no need for fresh taxation. In the course of some remarks in an after-dinner speech in connection with the Bridgetown Show, the hon. gentleman made the ridiculous statement that the taxation in the State of Western Australia amounted to £14 6s. 7d. per head. [MEMBER: That was after dinner.] I do not know whether it was before dinner or after dinner; but, even if it was after dinner, surely the hon. gentleman should have sufficient knowledge and sufficient consideration not to make such an absurd statement without at least acquainting himself with the facts of the case. I do not wish to do the hon. member an injustice, but I have taken the trouble to look up the report of the hon. gentleman's remarks on that occasion. After dealing with the necessity for shorter sessions, less legislation and more good adminis-

tration, the hon. gentleman said—(I quote the words from the report appearing in the paper)—“The present taxation of Western Australia amounted to somewhere about £14 6s. 7d. per head of the population. There had been so much new legislation that increased expenditure had to be provided to pay inspectors and that kind of thing.” I want to show the hon. gentleman that the taxation in Western Australia is nothing like £14 per head. It is not much over £4, to leave out the £10. I have not the latest return available. The last return I saw issued or published was to the effect that the taxation per head of the population in Western Australia was £5. Since then we have had a farther reduction in the sliding scale, and I will be very much surprised to learn that the amount is much over £4. What the hon. gentleman did—and it has been very convenient for not only the Minister for Mines, but also his colleagues, to say and do the same thing—was to confuse the taxation in Western Australia with the payment which the people make for the use of the services which the State provides. That is the great difference in Western Australia. The Government provide railway communication, which is a trading concern, and the hon. member has introduced a Bill in order to differentiate between this trading concern and the ordinary taxation of the State. We are also doing more in the way of providing a water supply in Western Australia than is done in any other State; and the result is that lumping the whole of the items as distinct from taxation the amount may show £14 per head, but the actual taxation only comes to £5 per head, and when you want to convince the people that we do not want any more taxation it is very convenient to lump those items together, and to say the people are taxed to the extent of £14 per head of the population. I have known occasions in this House when the present Colonial Treasurer was very careful to differentiate between these items, and to assure people that in confusing these two items, payment for services and taxation, they were doing an injustice to the reputation of the State. I could understand hon. members' opposition to a proposal for securing, by a tax on unimproved land values, the unearned

increment accruing from the values of lands, if they could show that in any State where such a tax is imposed it has resulted in failure or in harm to the community. But, on the other hand, we know that indirect taxation is always the kind of taxation which people do not feel acutely, and which affords an opportunity to those administering the finances to be extravagant without exciting public criticism. Did we not know that, we could give some credence, some attention to members' opposition to this proposal. But we have only to point, for instance, to the result of the imposition of this tax, in common with other taxes, in New Zealand, in order to show that it has worked advantageously to that community. Of course, I have heard it argued by members that the prosperity of New Zealand is not due to any policy pursued by the Government, but to the inherent resources of the State and the great fertility of the soil. But we know the condition of things in New Zealand prior to 1890. We know that the country then possessed exactly the same resources that it has now, that the soil was just as fertile, the timber just as good, the gold of precisely the same value; yet we find that before the initiation of the programme of the Liberal-Labour alliance in New Zealand, population was leaving New Zealand, and the country was practically on the verge of bankruptcy. We find that since the adoption of that policy, combined with the compulsory purchase of large estates, since the Government have settled the lands along their railway lines, they have been able to increase the population to an abnormal degree. The revenue has gone up by leaps and bounds. Without increasing the individual burdens on the people the Government have been enabled, by the great accretion to their railway revenue, to make reduction after reduction in the railway rates to the advantage of the farmer, while at the same time the railway revenue has in the aggregate increased.

HON. F. H. PRIESSE: Their railway rates are not so low as ours.

MR. BATH: I should like the hon. member, before urging that as an argument, to compare the capital cost of the railways in Western Australia with the cost in New Zealand, and to base his

argument on that comparison. He will find that the capital cost of the New Zealand railways was much higher than the cost of ours, and that, therefore, in order to pay interest on capital, the New Zealand railway rates must be somewhat higher than those of this State. But the fact remains that the New Zealand Government have time and time again reduced their railway rates, yet their railway revenue continues to increase, and their population continues to flourish. I know that to-day New Zealand enjoys an era of prosperity not enjoyed by any other State in Australasia, and the people of New Zealand are so satisfied with the Seddon administration that they have sent them back to power with a largely increased majority.

HON. F. H. PRIESE : The prosperity is not all attributable to the Ministry. The country has great resources.

MR. BATH : I have pointed out to the hon. member that it had exactly the same resources in 1890; therefore it is only fair to assume that the result is due to the wise, careful, and intelligent administration of the affairs of that State. I should like to refer also to the conduct of the Treasurer of another State, who was faced with circumstances somewhat similar to those which now face the Treasurer of Western Australia. We know that for years and years, as the result of the reign of the "Continuous Administration" in Queensland, that Ministry piled up a huge deficit, and increased the loan expenditure to an abnormal degree so as to avoid the imposition of fresh taxation, with the result that when the people were given an opportunity by the extension of the franchise to exercise an influence on the counsels of the country, the continuous Government had to go. The new Treasurer, when he faced the situation, recognised in the first place that he must cut his coat to suit the cloth; he plainly told the people of Queensland that there would have to be decreased expenditure from revenue, in order that the revenue might balance the expenditure; and he told them also that he would put his foot down on any proposal to make up such deficiency by a resort to borrowing money from the foreign money-lender. The result is that the Queensland Treasurer has not had to resort to the money market to secure loan flota-

tions for carrying on public works; the huge deficit which faced him when he took office has been reduced during the last two years in which he has held power, and a surplus is shown on the last half-year's operations. That is the sort of policy which commends itself to the people of Queensland, and the sort of policy which should commend itself to the people of this State. But in the Budget Speech of our Treasurer, no such statesmanlike qualities exist. As members of a Legislature which is supposed to watch the interests of the people, and above all things to guard the State finances, we should ask the present Government to keep to their promise, and to effect economies in administration. I think that any member who has summed up the situation in the short time at his disposal must candidly admit that there is but one remedy on this occasion—to find new sources of revenue. We know that our taxation has been reduced, because we have had a decreased return from the Customs; and anyone who has studied the finances knows that the decrease was largely brought about by the reduction of taxation resulting from the abolition of the sliding scale. I believe that is recognised by the majority of the people of the State; I believe that, judging by the opinions of those returned to this House, a majority of the people favour, and strongly favour, taxation on the unimproved value of land. I believe that the majority of this House, if we can judge by their election speeches, are also pledged to that reform. And before the general discussion on this item closes, I will give members an opportunity of deciding whether that reform should be introduced, whether they will carry out the pledges they made to their constituents. To give that opportunity I will, before this discussion closes, move that the item be reduced by £10.

[8 o'clock.]

MR. M. F. TROY (Mount Magnet) : I regret to say I am of opinion that the Budget Speech of the Treasurer, delivered a few nights ago, cannot even by his most sanguine supporters be characterised as of a reassuring nature. As to the finances, despite the fact that the expenditure has been cut down, we are faced with a

serious deficit during the coming year. Not only are we faced with a deficit, but very necessary expenditure has been reduced. Economy has certainly been exercised, but not in administration; and we find no such economy in going through the Estimates. The cost of administration has in every instance been increased; there has been an increase in the cost of administering every department; and if there has been any saving, it has been effected by refusing to give to the people of the State the facilities necessary if the development of the State is to proceed. From the Treasurer's own figures, we find that the estimated revenue for this financial year is £3,634,887. The actual revenue for last year was £3,615,340. Hence the revenue this year will be £19,000 more than was received last year by the Daglish Government. The expenditure for this year, despite the increase in revenue, has been cut down from £3,745,224 to £3,721,217; and there is being spent this year, on our public works and undertakings, the sum of £24,007. Last year I remember how the present Premier and several gentlemen now in his Cabinet went through the length and breadth of the State and denounced the Daglish Government because it had, in their opinion, stopped all public works; because it had brought great distress on the people, and had put back for a decade the progress of the State. One would have thought that those persons, desiring to keep the promises they made on that occasion to the people, and profiting by the experience of the late Government, would have come into power determined not only to clear off the deficit, but to provide sufficient money to carry on efficiently the development of the State. But that is not so. We are faced with a deficit. There is less money to be expended; and what increased expenditure there is is absolutely spent on administration. A progressive public works policy is not being proceeded with; less money is being spent on public works; and in consequence, the depression now existing will exist, I have no doubt, while the present Government is in power. Again, the Treasurer told the House that, despite the very bad state of the finances, it was not his intention to retrench; but at the same time, wherever his Government thought it necessary to

use the pruning knife, they would not hesitate in its application. I have no doubt that when the Government get into recess, they will find great need for retrenchment, and that retrenchment will absolutely be effected, because it is necessary, if the Government do not wish their deficit to increase from their present estimate of £132,000 to £200,000. Personally, I believe that, when the next Budget is presented to the House, the deficit will be nearly £200,000. Now we are assured that it will not exceed an amount equal to £132,000; but unless we have farther taxation or retrenchment, it must total £200,000, which is not a very bright outlook for the people of this State. The Government are not carrying out retrenchment as we generally look for it, that is, by cutting down the salaries of civil servants, but they are retrenching in a direction that more materially affects the people. They are cutting off from the people of the State facilities which are necessary if the back portions of the country are to be developed. They have not provided for public works absolutely essential to the development of the State. They have not presented any public works policy at all, though they talk about spur railways and a hundred and one other things which are not at present within realisation. They are denying to the people in several portions of the State, with the exception of one or two constituencies represented by Ministers, facilities which should be given if these districts are to be developed. People want railway communication and medical officers, and they must have hospitals and schools, and they must have money spent on water supply and in building roads and bridges; but these are all denied because the Government are not doing their duty to the State as a Government comprising alleged statesmen should do. I have gone carefully through these Estimates; and having compared them with the Estimates presented last year, I find that there is less money being spent in building roads and bridges and in providing for schools, water supply, batteries, and things necessary for the people, than was spent by the Government headed by Mr. Daglish. Is this progressive? Is it the state of things that people thought would be brought about when they elected this huge

majority? It is not. The people thought that the Premier was going to bring about a boom, that there would be public works in every part of the State, and that the Premier would settle the finances; but these poor deluded people who voted for the members on the Government side of the House have been absolutely sold by the people who represent them. I have said that I believe the deficit is going to be greater than the sum estimated by the Treasurer. It is only natural the sum which the majority of members think it will, and it is only natural that he should try to reassure the people of this State and to again delude them as they have been deluded in the past; but let us take the figures for the months during which the present Ministry have been in power. There has been a deficit, with the exception of September. In September there was a surplus for which the Government were not responsible. They cannot be credited with it, because it was brought about by an increase in the receipts from the Commonwealth and by increased receipts from rents in connection with our lands. The Government were able to show a surplus that month. Since then, what has been the result? In October there was a deficit of £17,000 and, as the months roll by, we find that the deficit is increasing. In November it amounted to £73,282.

THE TREASURER: What was it in September?

MR. TROY: I told the Treasurer that he had a small surplus, but it was not due to his administration, though he was willing at the time to take advantage of it. It was due to the fact that our land rents, being paid quarterly, were paid in that month, and that we received from the Commonwealth a much greater sum of money than we anticipated. The Treasurer was able to show a surplus in that month, and he took advantage of it and let it be understood that the drift in our finances had ceased, that a strong man had taken charge of affairs who with a firm hand would straighten things. Notwithstanding this, we find a larger deficit in November and less money being spent on public works. At present there are more unemployed than there were three months ago.

THE TREASURER: That is not so.

MR. TROY: The condition of affairs in Perth is worse than it was three months ago, and I have no hesitation in saying that the position of affairs in the back country is considerably worse.

MR. F. H. PIESSE: What do you call the back country?

MR. TROY: For instance the whole of North Coolgardie is in a worse condition to-day.

MR. TAYLOR: The capitalistic Press, the *North Coolgardie Herald* to wit, keeps that fact dark.

MR. TROY: Notwithstanding that we have a new Minister for Mines and a modest and big-hearted Premier, the position in the back country is worse than it was three months ago. I want members on the Government side of the House to for once throw aside their prejudices and see the actual position of affairs. If they inquire into the matter they will find that something is needed to bring about the improvement necessary for the proper development of the State. It may be that our deficit may not reach the point I imagine it will. The Government may borrow some millions of pounds within the next 12 months, and may be able to continue our public works out of loan funds instead of building them out of revenue, as has been done by their predecessors in the past, and by conserving their revenue they may be able to show that their deficit is not so very large after all, and they may, in a sense, delude the people of the State. Unless they do that, in order to straighten the finances of the State we must have either increased taxation or retrenchment; and from what I can see at present and from what I can gather from the remarks of the Treasurer, it is possible that we may have both before we can settle the finances of the State. The Premier the other night made a few, what I consider to be, most unworthy remarks upon the administration of his predecessor, and he unfortunately laid emphasis on points that would discredit his predecessors, and which, he thought, would put his Government in a better light. I have no desire to champion the cause of the last Premier, because it was his work on which the Treasurer laid most emphasis. I have no doubt the member for Subiaco

will, before the close of this debate, prove that what has been asserted by the Treasurer is absolutely incorrect. The Treasurer said a great deal about the loan raised by the previous Treasurer just before he went out of office; and though special emphasis has been laid on that loan, the Treasurer has not told us that almost the whole of the money raised was handed over to him. To-day he is carrying on the works of the State by means of that loan. Surely, to be honest he should have told us how that money was raised and how it is being spent. If he had done so members would have had a better opinion of him than they have now. The Treasurer was good enough to remark that the time has come when the matter of administration demands the consideration of the Government, the Parliament, and the people of the State. The Treasurer said, "I am not prepared to ask this House to impose farther taxation beyond what is asked by me for the ostensible purpose of carrying on developmental work but really for what I am beginning to believe is a somewhat needlessly costly establishment. I am not prepared to ask the House to agree to an income tax until I am satisfied that the funds at the disposal of the Treasurer are expended economically and satisfactorily."

THE CHAIRMAN (MR. ILLINGWORTH) : The hon. member is not in order in reading a speech made this session.

MR. TROY : I have no desire to refer again to the few remarks of the Premier, but I want to say that, although he says he is not satisfied that there must be extra taxation, it must be in the minds of members of this House that extra taxation is necessary. I have no doubt those who sit behind the Treasurer are absolutely of the opinion that we must have farther taxation. I hold the opinion that the Treasurer has made these remarks without giving the matter proper consideration. Otherwise how are we going to straighten our finances and bring about that state of affairs which this Government was sent here to bring about? Why could not the House, instead of during the past two or three days, or during the past month and during the time we have been assembled here, been engaged debating paltry Bills of no benefit to the country, have discussed measures

dealing with land taxation, with an income tax and an absentee tax? Had these measures been brought down, I have no hesitation in saying they would not have caused much opposition, and as much time would not have been wasted as has been on the paltry measures brought down by the Government. We have members on the Government side calling themselves statesmen bringing down to the House a few paltry measures that are not worthy of serious consideration. The Minister for Works, who is now absent, is patron of an institution at Busselton called the Busselton Debating Society, and these measures that have been introduced to the House are not even fit to be debated by such a society.

THE CHAIRMAN : The member must not cast reflections on the Bills before the House.

MR. TROY : I will say these Bills may, to members on the Government side, be very desirable, but to members in Opposition they are not worthy of consideration. It is an insult to the intelligence of the House to take up the time of members in discussing such measures. During the time we have been assembled here this session why could not we have had measures which are necessary in the interests of the people of the State, and necessary for the welfare of the State? Why could we not have had a measure providing for land taxation? There is plenty of room for such a measure, and it is very necessary.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS : You had 12 months; why did you not bring in such a Bill?

MR. TROY : During the six months the late Government were in power, a Bill was prepared, and had the present Government been honest in their desire to bring forward such legislation, it was to their hands and could have been brought forward. Surely this cabinet of statesmen, who imagine they constitute the brains of the State, are competent to bring down measures worthy of being discussed. The Government have absolutely failed in their promises to the people of the State, and the Government are condemned by the paltry exhibition which they have made in this Chamber during the past month. Again, there is the question of an income tax. Surely our time could have been better occupied

had the Government brought down a Bill providing for the imposition of a tax on incomes. And would not such a tax be justifiable? I have no desire to go into the merits of such a tax, but every member knows such a tax is justifiable, and would bring more revenue into the coffers of the State than will be brought in by the tax on totalisators and race-courses and increased stamp duties. An income tax would have done more for the State and brought in more revenue, and have given more money to assist in the development of the State. It would have provided the money required for building roads and railways and bridges, and providing for water supplies and batteries on the goldfields. These measures I have mentioned would have brought in sufficient revenue to clear up our finances. Why on earth is the time of the House wasted by discussing such measures as we have had before us during the past month? Time after time members on the Opposition side have entered their protest against the time of the House being wasted by the introduction of paltry measures. I hope never again in the House will any Government flout the wishes of the people by introducing petty measures such as have been brought forward this session. There is another measure that would have done a good deal towards straightening the finances—a tax on absentees. Such a tax has been placed on absentees in almost every other State in Australia, but here in Western Australia, where to-day we have a decreasing revenue and a deficit, no mention is made of the introduction of such a Bill. Surely the Premier and the members of the Government must be blind to the best interests of the State, or they would have brought forward a measure providing for a tax on absentees. I appeal to the democratic members on the Government side, because there are some there. I judge of their democracy by their utterances. We have the Minister for Mines at Menzies advocating a tax on land, and I believe the member for Kalgoorlie advocated a similar tax. I know the member for Katanning is in favour of such a tax, and surely these members could have used their influence with the Government in favour of such a measure. I was going to leave out the member for South Fremantle, but by his special re-

quest I will mention him. Had it not been for the interjection, I should have failed to recognise in the member for South Fremantle one of the democratic members of the Assembly. I am sure that the member for Katanning is in favour of a tax on the unimproved value of land. That gentleman has expressed that opinion in my hearing, and I am sure, despite the fact that he now sits behind a conservative Government, he holds that opinion to-day just as rigidly as he did 12 months ago. I can only express my surprise that he and others sitting on the Government side did not compel the Government to bring forward measures which in their minds they know to be essential. In New Zealand, many years ago, the people and the Government of that country were faced with a similar position that faces the Government of this State to-day, and instead of allowing things to drift, instead of being confident by a big majority at their back and winking their eyes at everything, they set about straightening up things a bit, and introduced the measures which I have mentioned. For years New Zealand was allowed to drift, and for years the position of affairs became worse. We have a similar position to-day. Month by month the deficit is becoming larger. In New Zealand, instead of considering a few conservative people, the democratic Premier imposed a tax on the unimproved value of land, a tax on incomes, and an absentee tax. By this means the finances of New Zealand were straightened up, money was secured for the development of that country, and to-day, by democratic legislation there, New Zealand is miles ahead of any other country in the Southern Hemisphere.

MR. J. J. HOLMES: There is no Labour party there.

MR. TROY: There may be no Labour party there, but there are men with instincts as democratic as the Labour party. There is no Labour party in New Zealand because there is no member holding such opinions as the member for East Fremantle does. It is the presence of such men who make it necessary to have a Labour party. They will not insist on democratic legislation, and for that reason the Labour party has come into existence. Before I depart from this question of the position of our finances, I have to express

my great regret that the Government of this State have not assumed a more progressive attitude. If they had, despite the fact that I sit in Opposition, I would have welcomed and supported a democratic Government in this House. But the Government have no intention of becoming democratic. On the eve of an election, certain members may have democratic opinions, and say that the policy of the Labour party is the policy they advocate, but when they come into the House they hold widely different opinions, and they are not game to express the opinions they honestly hold. We find that in connection with the expenditure, and I have looked over it, there is, as I have asserted, and will assert on every possible occasion, no economy exercised in administration. The Government want to get into recess because they told the people of the State that administration was more essential at the present time than legislation. Everyone who has gone through the Estimates will find that there is no economy effected in the administration. In every department I find that all the increases in expenditure are in administration, either in the way of salaries or providing positions for persons in the clerical departments of the State. The expenditure in connection with various works is decreased, and altogether to my mind, the position is more hopeless than ever. In the Colonial Treasurer's department I find there is an increased expenditure in connection with the upkeep of our parks and libraries and museums and art galleries. I want to know why it is that we have this increased expenditure in connection with the parks in the metropolitan area? Why is the increased expenditure necessary to-day in the public library and the museum? Is it because there is to-day a number of members on the Government side of the House absolutely indifferent to the majority of the people of the State? When we find the finances in such a bad position, when we find the State drifting day by day and month by month into a more serious condition of affairs, when we find the State drifting into troubled waters, these increases could have been laid aside until the wants of the people in the agricultural, pastoral, and mineral areas of the State had been looked to.

MR. HOLMES: Did not the drift commence when your party was in power?

MEMBER: Has it not gone further since?

MR. TROY: The drift commenced when the Government which preceded the Government I supported was in power, and I am surprised that the member who represents East Fremantle did not know that, because he was then a supporter of that Government, just as to-day he is a supporter of those now occupying the Treasury benches. [MEMBER: Blind following.] Blind following and deaf and dumb following. Could we not have allowed the metropolitan parks, museums, art galleries, and a hundred and one ornaments which the majority of the people in the State do not care a rap about, to stand aside for a few years until our finances have been straightened up? And if the Ministry desired to expend money—if they had money to expend—how much better would it be to spend this money in the development of our various resources and in alleviating the sufferings of the people out of employment? There are a hundred and one ways in which money could have been expended in a better manner than that proposed. It is a deplorable thing to find members on that (Government) side, representing places where there are people in absolute poverty, voting amounts of money to keep up parks, museums, and so forth in the metropolitan areas. Are those members blind to the interests of the people they represent? Surely when we discuss these items members who represent the remote portions of the State, members who represent agricultural constituencies, the members who represent Collie and Kalgoorlie, will vote that these amounts be struck off and the money be used for purposes more beneficial and more in the manner required by the people of this State. The member for Collie represents a constituency where there is very great distress, where there has been great distress, and where there will be great distress, if he follows the present Government and allows them to waste money in administration instead of using it to carry on development work in his district. It may be that the hon. member hopes the Government will tender for an increased supply of Collie coal.

[Mr. EWING: I hope so.] I have no doubt that his hope will be blasted, just as has been the hope of a great proportion of the people of Western Australia who sent to this House men following the present Government. There is no doubt about that, because the Estimates prove these arguments conclusively. If those members opposite had any interest at all in their constituencies, would they be behind a Government which is absolutely starving the people of this State, which is putting the country back a decade? Would they assist at bringing about a position of affairs which has never been paralleled in any State in Australia? I have to express disappointment at their demeanour and general actions during the time they have been in this House. I feel that when they look into these matters—I find the member for Balkatta is at least studying the Estimates—they will no longer give this Government the subservient adherence which they are giving at the present time. Let me refer to the Minister for Mines. Let me ask that gentlemen if to-day he holds the same professions as he did when he sat in the chair which I now have the honour to occupy. [Mr. DAGLISH: Give notice of question.] I remember when that gentleman used every possible argument, and not the fairest argument, to bring discredit on the Government I supported at that time. I remember when he got up from this seat, and told the House and country how the Government then in power were absolutely ruining the country; how he told them they increased the cost of administration; and how in every way the country was being sacrificed by people on that (Government) side of the House. [MEMBER: And the country believed it.] I remember that on one discussion the Minister for Mines charged the then Premier with having appointed a public service commissioner, and, having, by the appointment of that commissioner, brought about costly administration. One would have thought that the hon. member, having voiced that opinion strongly and emphatically here, and in other parts of the country—he voiced it at the general election in his own constituency—would have kept his promise and have come here prepared to abolish that commissioner.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think the commissioner was appointed then.

Mr. BOLTON: The Bill was before the House and you spoke on the Bill.

Mr. TROY: If the Minister questions what I say let me refer him to the speeches he made during the elections in the Menzies district. Did he not say that the Civil Service Bill would become a curse to the State? Did he not say it was necessary it should be repealed? The hon. member having given expression to the opinion that the Daglish Government by appointing such a commissioner had increased the cost of administration to the State, why did he not, instead of bringing down such paltry measures as have been introduced, bring down a measure for rescinding the Civil Service Act. Why did he not keep his word?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I ask you, sir, to make the hon. member withdraw that statement. I never said I would try to have the Public Service Act repealed. I remember making a speech, but I never made such a statement as that.

THE CHAIRMAN (to Mr. Troy): The hon. member denies the statement.

Mr. TROY: I shall withdraw the statement if the hon. member denies it, and I only say the hon. member must not blame me, but must blame that very erratic organ called the *North Coolgardie Herald*, which circulates so extensively in his electorate, and in which, I believe, he is somewhat slightly interested. Seeing that members sitting on the other side of the House last year condemned the cost of this civil service commissioner and the costly administration of the office, why do they bring down in the Estimates farther cost in connection with the same commissioner? In connection with the administration of that particular department, there is an increase of £549, and I want to ask the people of this country whether that does not give the lie direct to the people who made a very great deal of noise about the Daglish Government having increased the cost of administration by the appointment of a public service commissioner. I want to know why this increase of £549 is necessary. Is it because Ministers are unable to control their departments? Is it because they are unable to economise in connection with

administration? Or is it because it is absolutely necessary and essential? Surely the country requires some explanation of this matter, especially after the expressions that were used here when the Estimates were before the House on the last occasion and during the last general election. Surely members on that side of the House have reason to get up and give an explanation to their constituents. Even their own caucus could be violated in deference to the wishes of their constituents, if they were to get up here and give their reasons for supporting a Government which has increased the cost of administration. Did not every member come here on this occasion with a charge from his constituents to straighten up the finances and to decrease the cost of administration? I want to know why are members on that side of the House silent when they have such startling facts as are shown on these Estimates. Surely members on the other side of the House are expected by their constituents to have some opinions of their own and to express them. I think—and am of opinion that the member for Swan, who so learnedly and with such experience discussed the caucus, will agree with me—that it is a very bad thing for the State, after all, when we have such a majority as that on the other side of the House, absolutely controlled by caucus, declining to say a word to the people of the State on the most important matter which concerns them.

THE PREMIER: You do not give them much latitude.

MR. TROY: And if I did, judging from my experience during the past two or three days, and since I have known these gentlemen, I do not think they would avail themselves of that opportunity? I can sympathise with those members. I regret, because any member must regret, such an intolerable position of affairs, such a disgraceful state of things, that members, subservient to their caucus, decline to give an opinion on what affects them and the people who sent them here. Could anyone have imagined such a deplorable condition of affairs? I wish to compare that state of things with what occurred here during the discussion of the last Estimates. The party now on this side of the House, many of whom were my

colleagues on that occasion, discussed every item of the Estimates, and though we were supporting the Government and we gave the Estimates the fullest and most earnest consideration. Our lead on that occasion could now with considerable advantage to the country and to themselves be followed by Government supporters. When I see an hon. member fondling a pillow, I cannot help regretting that his constituents sent a pillow to this House, instead of sending a member to represent them. [**MR. GULL:** Some have their beds ready.] I can but say, from the experience I have had since entering the House, that had the constituents of those gentlemen sent beds here, the beds would have done as much useful work as the members who intend to occupy those beds.

MR. A. J. WILSON: Is the member for the Swan (Mr. Gull) in order in interjecting when out of his seat?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is out of order in interjecting at all; and the member for Forrest is out of order for interrupting.

MR. A. J. WILSON: I submit, with due respect to you, sir, that I am always in order in rising to a point of order.

MR. TROY: I was referring to the increased cost of administration, and to the fact that Government supporters care so little about the business of the country being properly conducted. Leaving that matter, I wish again to refer to the increased cost of administration in every department; and before I sit down, Mr. Premier, I will prove to you that in every department there has been an increase in the cost of administration, and a decreased expenditure on public works—a decrease in expenditure absolutely necessary for development purposes, and an increased expenditure on administration.

THE PREMIER: You have said that many times.

MR. TROY: And I will say it again. When we remember that Ministers went to the country and talked about the need for economic administration and for less legislation, we on this side of the House desire to keep them to their promises; we wish to see exactly whether they have kept their promises to the people, and we find by the Estimates that such promises have been absolutely broken. Nor do I find that the Premier or any Government

supporter is ashamed of the action they now take. If I promised my constituents that I would do a certain thing, I should do it; I have kept my word on every possible occasion; and by keeping my word I hope still to have the opportunity of representing my constituency when no member now sitting on the Government side will hold a seat in this Chamber. Surely this is the time for us to throw aside all hypocrisy. On the eve of a general election I can understand members going to their constituents and promising things; but from the time I first entered Parliament I could never understand how members can go outside and calumniate members who hold other positions in the House.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Do what?

MR. TROY: You know perfectly well, because you have done it. I tell the Premier that I could never understand members, after sitting in Opposition, leaving the House and bitterly assailing the men on the other side. And surely during the past twelve months Government supporters did more of that than they did of anything else; and after having lead the people to believe that something was wrong, it might have been expected of them that, profiting by the fact that the people unfortunately believed them, and gave the Premier and his Ministry a majority at their back, Ministers would come here prepared to perform their duty to the people who trusted them at the last general elections. Though that is a matter which to my mind is indeed unfortunate for members on the Government side, I hope that, profiting by the lesson which is now being taught them by the Opposition, members opposite will, during next session, come to the House prepared to carry out the work which is required of them by the people of the State. And I can assure members that there is room for hope in this connection. I know there are members on the other side who are absolutely disgusted with the present Government and its methods, absolutely disgusted with the poor show the Premier made in bringing in his Budget. There are on the other side of the House gentlemen who are under the impression, and rightly under the impression, that the Premier has not taken a forward step, that he is not even marking time, but that he is taking a step back-

ward; hence I feel sure that those members will soon compel the Government to take up the position which Ministers themselves undertook to occupy when returned by their constituents. Not only does the Government not voice our feelings in bringing down such a paltry Budget as this, but it does not voice the opinions and feelings of many members on the Government side. And I can only regret that though those members have expressed their dissatisfaction elsewhere, they are not prepared to express it in this Chamber. But after all, the public expression of that feeling may be a reward in store for the capable statesmen who now occupy the Treasury bench. We will now consider the Crown Law Department. I have carefully looked through this vote on the Estimates, and I find that fewer facilities are being given the public to-day than were given 12 months ago. Very necessary facilities have been taken away from the people, facilities absolutely necessary if the Government are to serve the interests and the wishes of those residing in remote parts of the country. In this vote again we find an increase in the cost of administration. As I touch on every department I find the same position of affairs: decreased expenditure on public works and in providing facilities for the people, and an increased expenditure on administration. The same conditions obtain in the Crown Law Department. We find an increased expenditure to the extent of £1,700. Where is the boasted economy? What is the Government doing which pledged itself to the electors to practise economy in administration? Again I ask, what justification is there for the Opposition allowing the Government to go into recess that Ministers may attend to administration? Surely if their administration is to be like that exemplified in the Estimates, we are justified in keeping the Government before the people of the State for the next three months. If Government supporters will only go carefully through the Estimates, consider all the items, and note how the people of the State are being neglected, they will assist the Opposition in compelling the Government to bring forward a more comprehensive policy. I remember, on the occasion of the 1904 general elections, when you, Mr. Illingworth, had

the honour to represent the constituency of Cue, when Mr. James, then Premier and now Agent General, paid a visit to Cue. He spoke at Mount Magnet and at Lennonville also, and emphasised the great need for a Circuit Court for the Murchison. What is the result? To-day the question has not been considered by the present Government, and the Murchison is as badly neglected to-day as it ever was during the past seven or eight years. I ask the Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory), who represents Menzies, what is he doing for the northern country which sent him to Parliament? Is he giving the people of that district the facilities which they so strongly desire? Everyone knows that the cost of bringing law cases to Perth is very high; that by refusing to provide Circuit Courts, to send a Judge to hold sessions on the Murchison and at Menzies, Leonora, and other remote centres, we are compelling the people who live in these districts to come to Perth, at considerable expense, in order to get justice.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: A Circuit Court visits Kalgoorlie.

MR. TROY: It does; but Kalgoorlie is thousands of miles from the Murchison, and surely if any portion of the State should have a Circuit Court, the Murchison should have it installed as soon as possible. I will give several instances of the need for that court; and I know you are aware that what I say is an actual fact. You have been appealed to on several occasions to assist men accidentally injured on the Murchison to come to Perth for justice. One man named Jenkins, injured at Day Dawn, had to bring his witnesses to Perth, and engage a lawyer to prosecute his claim against the Great Fingall Company. The expense amounted to nearly £300; and I wish to ask members, how are poor men in the back country to get justice? They cannot, unless they have someone behind them who will pay their expenses. That man was particularly fortunate in having behind him a body of men who subscribed the money necessary to carry on his case; and but for that, he would to-day be in some home for incapable persons, in some of our destitute asylums, and would be a burden to the State.

MR. HORAN: He would be in Parliament.

MR. TROY: No; he would not be in Parliament. When I look at the hon. member interjecting, I must admit that the people do send some peculiar representatives to Parliament. Still, they draw the line somewhere. That is not the only instance. I know of many cases which have been dropped for want of means. Many men injured in the Murchison mines cannot bear the expense of coming to Perth and waiting for months to have their cases tried. And in consequence those men are a burden to their relatives, and receive no compensation for their injuries. When we remember that on the Murchison are some 8,000 or 9,000 people, that the district is very large, and that it is closer to the East Murchison than the East Murchison is to Kalgoorlie, surely we must admit that there is some necessity for establishing a circuit court in the Murchison district.

MR. HARDWICK: The Daglish Government must have overlooked the necessity.

[9 o'clock.]

MR. TROY: I raised my protest during a discussion on the preceding Budget; and I received a promise from the then Minister for Justice (Mr. R. Hastie) that if he were in office on the next occasion he would place a sum on the Estimates to provide for the establishment of a Circuit Court in that portion of the State. Until such a Circuit Court is established, I intend to raise my voice on every possible occasion against centralisation here and in Kalgoorlie. Not only does this apply to the Murchison, Menzies, Leonora, and the East Murchison districts, but it also applies to agricultural portions of the State. Surely the Government must know that there are many poor people who cannot bear the cost of coming to Perth to secure justice, and that there is necessity for establishing Circuit Courts in the agricultural districts also; and if they recognise this, I would take it as a favour that they should tell the House the absolute necessity for these facilities. In Victoria and New South Wales there are Circuit Courts in almost every locality. Years and years ago, in the district in which I was reared, though it was only a small district, a Circuit Court was estab-

lished; and in every portion of that State facilities are given to the people which are denied here.

MR. BROWN: Why did not your party give it to you last year?

MR. TROY: It will be remembered that last year the Estimates were the Estimates of the preceding Treasurer. No provision was made on those Estimates, and I did not have an opportunity of urging on the new Government the necessity for these Circuit Courts until after the new Ministers had come into contact by administration with the greater portion of the State, and until the Estimates were brought down. However, I mentioned the matter to Mr. Hastie, who was then Minister for Justice, and he assured me that if he were in this House this session, and if he were Minister for Justice, provision for these facilities would be put on this year's Estimates.

MR. BOLTON: It may have been, but may have been struck off by this Government.

MR. TROY: I do not say that.

MR. BOLTON: I do.

MR. TROY: These Circuit Courts are essential, because a poor man has not the opportunity of getting justice under present conditions unless he is backed up by some powerful organisation, or he has some friends behind him who will give him sufficient money to pay his legal expenses. The rich men, the mining companies in many instances, score on every possible occasion. I know that there are many cripples here in Perth who have been injured in the Great Fingal Mine at Day Dawn. They have been awaiting justice for the past 18 months; and, despite the fact that their costs are increasing through their cases not being called on, they cannot get the justice which the poorest man in the community should be given by the Government of this State. Considering the dire necessity for the establishment of these facilities, surely the Government will not allow another six months to pass before making some provision for a Circuit Court on the Murchison. If they do not, I promise them candidly that, though I will not go to the country disparaging them, I shall point out where the Government have failed to meet the wishes of the people, and how the poor people of

this State are being denied rights which the poorest should expect. Passing to the Colonial Secretary's Department, we find in it more costly and less efficient administration than obtains in any other department. I hope the hon. gentleman who controls that department will get a hustle on, and that he will give people better consideration than they have had in the past. We do not want a Minister who can attend garden parties and go in for banquets on the river in the police launch and take the police horses out for exercise and give prizes away at Sunday schools, but we want a capable administrator. More economy can be exercised in this department than in any other department.

MR. H. BROWN: It is the penalty of greatness.

MR. TROY: That is something for which you will never have to suffer. One of the departments controlled by the Colonial Secretary is the Aborigines Department. There was such bad administration in this department that the previous Government had to send to Queensland to bring a person over to report on some of the work controlled by the department; and last night we had a Bill brought down to provide against the abuses which exist in the department. Not only in that service, but in the other services, there is scope for inquiry, more efficiency and economy. Take for instance the Police Department; and I promise the Committee that when we are discussing the Police Estimates I shall have a good deal more to say in that connection than I will say now. It is one of the most costly departments in this State, and it is one of the worst controlled. There are more abuses in connection with it than in any other department.

MR. H. BROWN: Because you have not got them in a union.

MR. TROY: I have some work to do here, and I shall refrain as far as possible from taking notice of the hon. gentleman who represents Perth, because I do not think his remarks can in any way embellish the work I have undertaken; and I hope the hon. gentleman will recognise that his remarks do not give me any assistance. I do not wish to weary the House, but in connection with the Aborigines Department I could go fully into this matter and, if I desired to prolong

the debate—and the Premier knows it—I could produce Dr. Roth's report to show the abuses that exist and the necessity for having a capable Minister in charge of the department. However if we are to have economy in the Colonial Secretary's Department, the Minister must hustle and see that the work for which the Bill provides is carried out efficiently, and that the Aborigines Department is not made as costly as it has been in the past. We find that it is more costly now than it has been in previous years. I do not desire to be always drawing the attention of the House to the cost of administration; but I regret it is my painful duty to draw attention to the increased cost of administration as shown by these Estimates. While I find there is increased provisions for salaries of clerks, and that new officers are being appointed in connection with the Colonial Secretary's Department, I find no provision for the erection of hospitals in the back country, or for the appointment of doctors, and very little provision for the establishment of schools. In fact I think the only place where a school is mentioned is in the electorate represented by the Minister for Works, whose department is one that shall receive closest attention from me to-night. Last night I touched on the disadvantages under which the people labour in the back country; but here I find no provision for the establishment of schools and hospitals, or for the appointment of doctors. Surely there is greater necessity in this direction than in connection with the appointment of a few clerks who can serve no particular purpose but to adorn the office of the Colonial Secretary. The Premier was good enough to say that if the Government had any object more than another it was to give to the people of this State all the education it was possible for them to acquire; and he said that, wherever possible, it was the intention of the Government to establish primary schools. That may be the intention of the Government with so many good intentions. The only exception I have to take to it is that the Government, according to these Estimates, do not seem to have any desire to carry out their intention. In my electorate no care is being taken to establish schools. Take Black Range,

for instance. An application has been made for the establishment of a school in that locality, but no provision is made. Though to my own knowledge there are between 30 and 40 children growing up there in absolute ignorance, no attempt is being made by the Government to give them that education which the Government say it is their desire to give.

MR. HOLMAN: All over the back country it is the same.

MR. TROY: While in Perth we have primary schools and, in many instances, secondary schools, we find no money provided on the Estimates for the establishment of schools in the back country, where they are needed. There are many children of maintenance men along the railways who receive no education at all.

HON. F. H. PRESSE: How many of them?

MR. TROY: I know one family—

HON. F. H. PRESSE: One?

MR. TROY: I suppose the hon. gentleman knows of many others; but I know one family, the eldest of which is 15 years of age, and that child has not received one day's schooling. I will give an instance. Between Yalgoo and Mount Magnet there is a distance of 70 miles where a number of maintenance men live. Almost all these men are married and have children. In one family there are four or five children between the ages of 7 and 15, and there is one child over 15 years of age, and that child has never received any education. Are the Government blind to these facts? Do they intend to give the people the necessary facilities for education? I suggest that the Government as far as possible should locate the married railway men in one locality so that the children could be educated. A school should be erected there and a teacher supplied; by that means children would be given educational facilities which the Government profess they desire the people should have. There are single men in the department and these men could be located together where there is no school. To point to one instance; and the Premier knows of this case: there is at Yalgaddy a station, and the owner of that station has five or six children. He resides 18 miles from Mount Magnet and has no opportunity of sending his chil-

dren to school. There is a siding on the railway line there and the railway men have children. There are also single men there. These single men could be transported and the married men located at Yalgaddy where a school could be provided. If a full time school could not be provided, why not give them a half-time school. This is done in New South Wales. A teacher serves in one place half of the year and in another place the other half of the year. The Government cannot do better than take into consideration this suggestion and establish schools in these localities providing teachers who could give half their time in one locality and half their time in another. With little expense, facilities could be given to people in the back country for education which should be within the reach of the poorest person in the State. It would be a very good idea if some members who represent the metropolitan areas were to spend their recess in visiting the localities to find out the criminal neglect of the Government in regard to education. We have children in this State growing up in absolute ignorance because the Government have no thought other than for those living in the metropolitan areas, on the coast, and on the goldfields. I am reminded that the Government of late have given great consideration to a locality known as Busselton, and I am reminded of that because on the Estimates Busselton is receiving as much consideration as the districts around Perth and Fremantle. As to the question of hospitals in my opinion, not because I represent a constituency somewhat remote from the metropolis, the people in the back country are deserving of more consideration at the hands of any Government than are the people who are too faint-hearted to go and struggle in the back country. Because people are of strong character and have confidence in themselves they are neglected by the Government in power. In many remote portions of the State people working in the mining industry, in which people are more prone to accidents than in any other industry, no doctor or hospital is provided. I know of people who have been injured in some localities and it has been necessary to convey them 200 miles before they could receive medical assistance. These people are

struggling to open up the mineral areas of the country and to develop them. They are braving all kinds of dangers and difficulties and they receive no consideration at the hands of the Government in power. I have no doubt that the same condition obtains in our pastoral areas and the remote agricultural areas of the State. I hope those members representing such constituencies will demand from the Government for the people who form the backbone of the State facilities which more favoured and perhaps more faint-hearted brethren enjoy on the coast. I have known injured people die whilst being conveyed to a hospital. Had a hospital been in close proximity to the spot where the injury was received lives would have been saved. I have known men lie in camps for weeks and weeks because they have been too ill to be removed to a hospital 200 miles distant. These men are nursed by their mates or charitably disposed persons and but for such people many of the men living in these districts could not brave the dangers or surmount the disadvantages and obstacles which pioneers in the back country have to face. I want to draw the attention of the Minister controlling the Education Department to the consideration which should be given to school teachers. In this State teachers are more poorly paid than any other class of civil servant. They give better services notwithstanding the good services given by other civil servants, but they give better service to the State than any other class of civil servant, still they are paid the poorest salaries, while they are doing the best work for the State in training the youth.

MR. H. BROWN : They are the best paid in Australia.

MR. TROY : I know something about this matter. I know that the teachers in this State, considering the conditions of life under which they have to live and the cost of living, are poorer paid than any other class of civil servant in Australia. For three years I served in the civil service of New South Wales as a public school teacher, and I know teachers who were of my grade in New South Wales received higher salaries than teachers of the same grade in this State do. How can the hon. member (Mr.

Brown) say that teachers in this State are paid higher than those in other parts of Australia? I do not rely on what I have been told, but I rely on actual knowledge, and I know the salaries received by the teachers according to the Estimates. From my knowledge the salaries received by the teachers in New South Wales are higher than the salaries paid to teachers holding similar positions here. If we are to have a good class of teachers who shall instruct the youth of the State and produce a better class of man than exists in any other portion of Australia, we must pay our teachers well. With all his faults, the Premier desires that we should have well-trained men and women. He desires that a better class of education should be given to these people, and he desires to see a progressive class of people. If we are to have this class of people we must give them facilities to enable them to compete with people in other parts of the world. We must give them educational facilities which are enjoyed by people in other States. We must have the best teachers, and we cannot get them unless we give good salaries. I want to protest on behalf of the teachers against the unfair treatment meted out to them. The salaries of the highly-paid heads of departments might be reduced in some instances and the amounts pooled and split up amongst the teachers so that their salaries could be increased. I throw that out as a suggestion, although I do not think the Premier is of a sufficiently progressive character to adopt the suggestion. Look at the habitations these teachers live in, and in some localities there are no habitations provided at all. Teachers are sent to remote portions of the State in the agricultural areas where they cannot get board and lodging. Residences should be provided for teachers as in other portions of Australia. In almost every portion of Australia when the Education Department erects a school they erect a dwelling-house for the teacher. If the Government do not increase the salaries of the teachers they might compensate them by erecting decent dwellings for them to live in.

MR. H. BROWN: Is it fair to ask female teachers to live in these back blocks?

MR. TROY: It may not be fair, but it does exist in some localities. There are female teachers in some localities, but in the majority of cases the teachers are of the male sex, and therefore these people naturally desire the same conveniences as do others of the same sex in more favoured portions of the State. I would like to have seen on the Estimates a sum provided for the erection of schools and the erection of dwelling-houses for teachers. That has not been done. At the present time very few schools are being erected. The member for North Fremantle (Mr. Bolton) can bear me out in the statement that a sum of money provided on the Estimates for a school at North Fremantle has been wiped off, and no provision has been made for the people in that locality. I find in regard to a peculiarly favoured district known as Busselton considerable amounts have been placed on the Estimates for the erection of new schools, where at the present time a school suitable for any climate exists. [MR. WALKER: Have there not been some marriages there lately?] I do not know. Why are some people refused schools, and why is money provided for the erection of schools in a place such as Busselton, where schools already exist, and where they can fulfil every requirement for the next twenty years? Is that a fair thing? Are the Government giving a fair thing to the people of this State? Again, I want to ask people behind the Government representing constituencies similar to my own whether they think it is a proper course for any Government to pursue? Is this legislating in the interests of the people? Is it administration in the interests of the people, or is it administration in favour of a few to the detriment of the great majority? The member for Kimberley represents a constituency which is widely scattered, and where the people, because of their remoteness from the capital, receive very little consideration from the Government, and I hope he will support me to-night in urging upon the Government the absolute necessity which exists for providing schools, hospitals and medical officers in remote portions of the State. I feel sure that if the Government do not provide those facilities I can rely on the hon. member for Kimberley using still farther

effort in compelling the Government to accede to the requests made by members representing the agricultural, mineral, and pastoral districts of this State. To my knowledge, in the district represented by my friend, the member for Leonora, special necessity exists for the erection of schools. In the locality of Vivian we have, and shall have in the future, one of the finest mines in the State. The population is daily increasing, and when I was there only six months ago there was a considerable number of children there, yet that hon. gentleman has found it utterly impossible to give educational facilities to these children. At Darlot the same position obtains. It obtains also in the Kathleen Valley and in a hundred and one localities on the goldfields areas, to say nothing of localities in the agricultural areas, where people of the State are being denied the facilities which are theirs by natural right. I confidently rely upon members who have interests outside the metropolitan area to support me in the appeal I make to the Government on this occasion. Turning to the Mines Department, I regret that the Minister for Mines has seen fit to leave his seat. The mining industry at the present time needs more than an alleged capable Minister, an alleged energetic Minister, at the head of affairs. Compare the Minister's administration in the past three months with the administration of his predecessor, Mr. Hastie. The administration of the present Minister for Mines has been to my mind more a matter of self-advertisement, more a matter of Press notice than of real, downright work, and I know what I am talking about in this, because I have, during the time I have been a member of the House, travelled over every portion of the goldfields areas in this State, with the exception of the Pilbarra goldfield, and I know that to-day the gold-mining industry is in a worse condition than it was three or four months ago. Let me say something in support of my contention. A little while ago the Minister for Mines, when he took office, promised that he would send the State Mining Engineer out of his office in Perth and compel him to go to the various goldfields areas in the State to give any of the prospectors the assistance and advice they might require, and therefore assist in the general deve-

lopment of the mining industry. He said, furthermore, that it was not the duty of the State Mining Engineer to sit in his office in Perth; that the State Mining Engineer should be out in the country giving that advice to prospectors and people concerned in the mining industry for which he was in the first place appointed. What has been the result? I remember reading in a paper how Mr. Gregory, Minister for Mines, was going to send the State Mining Engineer out in the country to report on mining propositions and to give advice to the prospectors; but, with one exception of a few weeks, the State Mining Engineer has been in his office in Perth, and is still there as far as I know. On that particular occasion the State Mining Engineer was in Mr. Gregory's electorate, where the majority of the civil servants in the Mines Department are. During the course of the general election there was a report on a mining proposition in the Pingin district, in which district the Minister has an interest. The Minister for Mines promised that the State Mining Engineer would be sent to a place 50 miles north of Black Range, but we find he has never been sent to that district. If a pot-hole is put down by the Mines Department, the Press have the information. The Minister sees that the Press gets these little notices, and therefore the Minister for Mines is being advertised throughout the State. I want just to report what his predecessor did. Mr. Hopkins, when speaking at Boulder during the last general election, said that owing to the forethought and foresight of the Minister for Mines (Mr. Gregory) and the James Government, of which Mr. Hopkins was a member, in providing water facilities at Black Range and boring for water, prospectors were able to go out into the country. I want to give the lie direct to that statement. The James Government did nothing to provide water supplies for that district north of Black Range; absolutely nothing. But Mr. Hastie, when Minister for Mines, placed at the disposal of his officers the sum of £2,000 for the purpose of boring for water and providing wells, and to that foresight of the then Minister for Mines is due the development of the Black Range goldfields and the area north of Black Range. I want to say that I believe the

Minister for Mines is desirous of conserving the mining industry. I think that in many instances he has shown actually that not only has he desired to develop this industry, but also that he has as far as possible carried out his promises. But there is something due to his predecessor. His predecessor did very good work in this connection. He provided half as many public batteries as were provided during the whole course of years his predecessors held office, and he also erected half as many cyanide plants, and surely to that gentleman, although I may confess he was a member of the Labour Government, some credit is due for the energy he displayed. Mr. Hastie, despite the fact that he did not advertise himself—and probably that is one of the greatest faults he possesses—did a great deal towards developing the mining industry. As far as my own electorate, anyhow, is concerned, the mining industry received more substantial assistance and encouragement, and progressed more rapidly and substantially, during the term the Labour Government was in power than during any previous time. When the late Government went out of power, the Murchison, with the exception of one locality, was a more prosperous and more substantial field, and a field with better promise than it had been during the past ten years. On no occasion have there been a brighter outlook, greater hope, and greater signs of prosperity in connection with our mining industry in any one locality than exist on the Murchison at the present time, and I hope the present Government will continue the good work of their predecessors and make that portion of the State, and every other portion of the State where this particular industry has been carried on, more prosperous than at any other stage in the history of the State. I could pursue this argument still farther, and speak more in connection with our mining industry and the necessity that exists for encouragement, if this particular industry is to regain the position it once held in the State. I could show many ways by which this industry could be assisted. I believe that one who knows the industry, and has worked in every grade of it, can give more candid assistance and advice to the Government than a dozen Mr. Hoovers, even

though he may be able to give them other entertainment besides the entertainment of listening to an address on the mining industry. A little while ago I gave notice of a motion. I regret that I have not had an opportunity of bringing it forward before this. I gave notice that I would move in this House that a royal commission should be appointed for the purpose of assisting the mining industry, and inquiring into the State battery system, the encouragement of prospectors, and the general encouragement of the mining industry. I want to see that royal commission appointed, and to give my assurance to-night that, even although it has been hinted that my desire was to see a commission appointed on which I should have a seat, and other members of the House would have seats, I wish to see a commission appointed not as commissions in the past have been—for instance, the commission on immigration, and the commission on gold-mining some two years ago—but as pointed out by Mr. Walker—a commission comprising two experts, one being an expert on batteries and cyanide treatment, and the other an expert on general mine development, this expert being a member of the Prospectors' Association. If the Government will appoint that commission, which the Minister for Mines favoured only a few months ago, it will give more valuable advice and will better assist the development of the mining industry than can any Minister or any dozen Ministers. I should advise the Minister for Mines that what mining people want is work; that in the North Coolgardie district a number of mines has closed down, and a great many men are out of employment because of the diminution in the values of ores. And if we are to open up new country, to provide facilities for prospectors, we must have more money spent on mining development than is provided in these Estimates. When we advance money to prospectors, we do not throw away that money. The fact that a few months ago a prospecting party at Mulgabbie, to which Mr. Hastie, when Minister for Mines, advanced £300, was able to develop a very promising property and has since repaid that £300 to the Government, shows what can be done. And

there will be many such instances if the industry is encouraged as it deserves. I wish to give a little advice to the Premier. The House is tired, and I am tired of listening to the Premier's telling us in his Budget Speech that we have paid some 13 millions in dividends and have produced enormous quantities of gold, while the fact is that because of the payment of the dividends and the production of the gold, we are poorer than we were last year. Every ounce of gold that leaves our mines, though it gives us some benefit, leaves the State the poorer; so I hope that the Premier, if it is his fortune to deliver another Budget, will spare us information as to the quantity of gold extracted, and as to how much the country is poorer in consequence, and will tell us something new; tell us that we have vast belts of auriferous country; tell us that we have more gold in the earth than can be extracted in the next hundred years; and above all things tell us that his Government is prepared to come down to the House with a substantial sum on the Estimates, for the purpose of developing gold-mining—an industry of which so far we have heard little; for beyond a few figures, little information regarding it is given in the Budget. I am sure that the Premier can, with advantage to himself and the State, tell us just what amount the Government is prepared to expend in assisting the mining industry. When we are discussing the Mines Estimates, I shall have considerably more to say on this question, and shall endeavour to show from practical experience how the industry can be assisted, and the grave necessity for assisting it. Besides, there is the question of water supply. A little while ago the Government were pleased to tell the country that they were vigorously seeking for water. To members who represent mineral areas this will be news. Vigorous operations to provide water were going on long before the Government came into power; and more money was expended in sinking for water and developing water supplies last year than was expended in any previous year.

THE PREMIER: What?

MR. TROY: The Estimates prove it. More money was spent last year in providing water on our goldfields than was

spent in any previous year. I will not mention at all the Goldfields Water Scheme.

THE PREMIER: You said, "in any previous year."

MR. TROY: During the past year, under the Daglish Government, more money was spent with that object than was spent by any Government with which the Premier was connected. But in addition to this, the Government can do still more. They can vigorously prosecute a search for water in auriferous areas to which the pioneer and the prospector cannot now go because water is not available. In the Lake Barlee country is a very fine auriferous belt. Prospectors have succeeded in getting as far as Lake Barlee, but they can stay a few days only, for lack of water, the water there being generally salt. I would urge on the Government that they cannot better develop the mining industry than by providing water in auriferous districts where it is not available; and if they do that the prospector will do the rest by prosecuting the search for minerals; and by that means more than any other will the mining industry be assisted.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

MR. SCADDAN called attention to the state of the House.

THE PREMIER: Is it not easily accounted for?

Bells rung and quorum formed.

MR. TROY: I think this is most unfair, and I raise my protest against members leaving the House, because it is not often that they have an opportunity of listening to something to their advantage. I would remind the Minister for Mines that he can learn more from mining members in this House, men who have had practical experience, than he can from a hundred Mr. Hoovers. We may not be able to put matters before the Minister under such favourable conditions as were available to Mr. Hoover; but that is not my fault. I can go to the refreshment room and do it just as easily as I can here; but fate demands, and the Standing Orders demand, that I shall do it here. Let us consider the public battery system. Throughout the country, in the auriferous areas, there is grave complaint as to the administration of our public batteries.

You, Mr. Chairman, having at one time represented a mining district, know that there is grave reason for complaint, and that the sooner complaints are remedied, the better. They cannot be remedied but by appointing a commission to make a thorough inquiry. Again I assure the House that on the commission I wish appointed two experts familiar with public battery work, with cyaniding, and with the recent development of mines and the general conditions under which mining should be carried on. Therefore, on the commission should be a representative of the prospectors' association—a man who knows something about the mining industry, one who is now working at mining, and who can give, not theoretical opinions, but practical, sound advice. I am surprised that the Minister for Mines has not seen his way to appoint that commission ere this. When he occupied this seat (on front Opposition bench), he urged on the then Minister the need for a Royal Commission to inquire into the public battery system.

THE CHAIRMAN : The hon. member must not anticipate his own motion.

10 o'clock.

MR. TROY : I am simply suggesting that there is great need for improving our public battery system; and it can best be improved by the appointment of a commission. If I have the opportunity of making the motion, I shall be able to give the House the result of a practical experience of the industry, an experience extending over many years, both of actual mining and of prospecting. Public batteries were originally provided so that prospectors who went out to remote districts might have their stone crushed. I believe the batteries were instituted when Mr. Lefroy was Minister for Mines in the Forrest Government. The scheme was then in its infancy. And later on, improving on the experimental work of Mr. Lefroy, Mr. Gregory provided batteries in which he desired that the stone might be crushed at reasonable rates, so that as far as possible the prospectors should get every particle of gold in the stone; but so far, that result has not been achieved. The system, though greatly improved, can be still farther improved, and I desire

to see that improvement effected; but I see nothing in these Estimates to lead me to hope that the improvement will be effected. Therefore I protest against the manner in which the prospectors in the back country are being treated. During the past two years the price of crushing has been reduced, but it must be still farther reduced if we are to develop our mining industry as it should be developed; also the prospector must be given all the gold in his sands and slimes. At present he pays the extortionate price of 10s. per ton for having his sands treated, when any private firm can treat sands by the cyanide process at 4s. per ton. Why should prospectors be charged 10s. per ton for what should not cost more than 4s. per ton? The prospector now gets nothing from the slimes, though it is known the slimes will yield more gold than the sands. The Government are now treating these slimes, but they are not giving the prospector the benefit of the gold obtained. So the prospector is not receiving the consideration he should receive, and he is not getting all the gold he should get from the stone he raises from his mine. If the Minister desires to encourage the mining industry, and to make the public battery system up to date, I hope he will not only provide a better kind of plant at Coolgardie, but that he will make the public batteries up to date in every portion of the State, and that he will, as far as possible, decentralise the public battery system. I believe the great trouble in connection with the whole system is the fact that it is all managed from Perth, with the result that the batteries do not give the satisfaction the people expect. Let us decentralise and give the battery managers more power to act on their own initiative. If they are allowed to make reforms required, undoubtedly we shall hear less dissatisfaction expressed in regard to the system. The Minister for Mines does not know much about the mining industry. If he did, we would find more practical knowledge displayed in the administration of the department. The Minister may think that the industry is being encouraged by the fact that he lets the newspapers know what he is doing. If he sinks a pot hole 6ft., we find in the newspapers the next morning that the Minister is

sinking for water or something else. If we learn from the *Daily News* that the Minister is going on tour from Kalgoorlie to Siberia, the mining industry will not progress; nor will it progress if the State Mining Engineer is not fulfilling the duties for which he was appointed. I would remind the Minister that he promised to send the State Mining Engineer to Black Range three months ago. I can assure the Minister there is more need for that gentleman in other portions of the State than in the constituency of the Minister himself, though, when an election is about to take place, it is very handy that you should have a few officers of the department in your own electorate to show the people in the electorate the interest you, as Minister, are taking in the electorate. Instead of being in more important portions of the State, officers of the Mines Department were in the Minister's electorate during the election, though, of course, not to assist in the election.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The statement of the hon. member is untrue. The State Mining Engineer was not in my electorate during my election.

MR. TROY: I am prepared at all times to take the hon. gentleman's assurance. I am satisfied with what he tells me, but will he deny that the State Mining Engineer was there some time before the election?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: No; he was there afterwards.

MR. TROY: Since I have been good enough to withdraw, may I ask the hon. gentleman if he promised that the State Mining Engineer would be there soon after the elections?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (in explanation): Yes; I told my people that I thought the State Mining Engineer should not stay in Perth. I instructed him to proceed to North Coolgardie, and to report on Pingin and then to go to Black Range and Montagu Range in the district of the hon. member.

MR. TROY: I am satisfied that if the State Mining Engineer was not there, the Minister's constituents had a definite promise that he would be there. If that is not one way in which to encourage a constituency to vote for you, I know of few other ways more advantageous.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Do you impute motives?

MR. TROY: No; but I believe that if I were the Minister—

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: "If."

MR. TROY: Do not make any mistake. I would probably be a better Minister than you. If I were a Minister and I felt that my election was very precarious, I would do the same thing if I thought it would assist me. The Minister did what probably every other man in the House would do. While he denies that he took the State Mining Engineer with him, he assures the House that he is satisfied the State Mining Engineer should not be kept in Perth, and that this officer should go throughout the State giving prospectors advice.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You are only repeating a statement I made some months ago.

MR. TROY: Why is it not done?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The State Mining Engineer is in his office in Perth.

MR. TROY: Will the hon. gentleman tell me the number of weeks since he made that statement that the State Mining Engineer has been out of his office?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: He is now preparing a report on the district he visited.

MR. TROY: He did not visit my constituency.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: He is going there.

MR. TROY: I am pleased to hear it. I want to ask the Minister: Did not the inspector of batteries accompany him when he was seeking election after he became Minister?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order in interrogating any other member.

MR. TROY: I only desired the Minister's assurance. I thank the Minister for the information that the State Mining Engineer will not remain in his office in Perth, but will be sent to every portion of the goldfields to advise, assist, and encourage prospectors, a policy which will be most beneficial to those engaged in mining development. Let us give the managers of public batteries more power of initiative. Where they find reforms let them make them without having to apply to Perth for permission. Let us

decentralise, and we will do greater service to mining development in every direction. If that does not suit the purpose, let us provide in the Murchison Goldfield an officer with supreme power over the batteries in that goldfield, and another for the East Murchison Goldfield, and another for the North Coolgardie Goldfield. If such officers were given full power there would be less cause for dissatisfaction. I recommend the Minister to take my suggestion into serious consideration. It is not altogether my own opinion, but it is one I have heard expressed in places I have visited where State batteries exist. The majority of prospectors are of opinion that the loss which occurs is due to the fact that if anything goes wrong the battery manager must advise Perth, after which the officers in Perth must lay the matter before the Minister and go through many forms before they can reply to the battery manager. I will give an instance. The Black Range battery broke down. The gentleman in charge, a most capable and painstaking officer, though he knew what was necessary, could not act on his own initiative, and he was compelled to write to Perth. He could not telegraph, because we have no telegraphic facilities; and since we have only two mails per week, it was some time before his communication got into the hands of his superior. That superior sent for a report, and by the time the manager forwarded that report more time elapsed, and as a result, the battery has not fulfilled its particular object.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: When did this take place?

MR. TROY: It took place during the present Minister's administration and before his administration. The Minister for Mines has been in office for over three months and during that time the 11-head battery at Black Range has only had six stampers falling. There is more than sufficient stone in the district to keep a 20-head battery going three shifts. This is due to mal-administration. The water supply is not sufficient to keep the 11 heads falling.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You said I was to blame.

MR. TROY: I did not say the Minister was to blame, but I said this occurred during his administration. The Minister

and his predecessor did the best they could to get water to keep the battery going full time. It is a difficult matter to get water there, and the battery has not served the object for which it was erected. This is due to the system in vogue; if we had decentralisation in connection with our battery system it would be better. We should have one inspector over the Murchison field, then the work would be done with greater despatch, and we would have less dissatisfaction than now exists. I wish to refer to the encouragement to prospectors. As far as possible we should encourage prospectors in the development of our mining industry, and we cannot do better than reduce the cost of crushing and give special facilities to the prospectors working large bodies of low-grade ore. Boogardie, a locality which up till recently was looked upon as being no use from a mining standpoint, has during the past year become most important from a mining standpoint on the Murchison, and to-day the mining outlook around Boogardie and Mount Magnet is more promising than it has been for the past eight or nine years. The lodes in that locality are of a low-grade nature, and the prospectors are successfully developing their propositions. The battery is being effectively administered, and it has been very effectively administered during the past 12 months. When I first represented Mount Magnet serious complaints were made regarding the administration of that battery, and since Mr. Hallam took the matter in hand there has been very few complaints from that locality, and to-day the Boogardie battery is doing better work than it ever did before. That is in consequence of the low-grade ores being treated. The cyanide treatment is better under Mr. Hallam than it was previously; the cyanide process and the battery process are being more effectively carried out, but the people there require something more. From all the low-grade ores after crushing there is a considerable amount of slimes, more slimes than sand, and the percentage of gold in the slimes is very large. The prospectors do not receive anything from gold in the slimes, and they are not receiving that assistance and consideration at the hand of the Government which they should get. I want to advise the

Minister to erect a slimes plant there. There is a slimes plant connected with every other battery where slimes accumulate, and where it is known that these slimes contain a high percentage of gold. The mines at Boogardie average from 8 to 12dwts., and they would average 17dwts. to one ounce per ton if the slimes could be treated. We would have greater development there, if a slimes plant were erected, than in any other portion of the State. I was speaking to an officer of the department who recently visited that locality and he said that in consequence of the system adopted by Mr. Hastie the Boogardie mines were most promising. If the Minister provided a slimes plant I have no doubt it would give a great impetus to the district and greatly assist the State in the gold production of Western Australia.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Tell me one of my regulations that they altered.

MR. TROY: I do not control that department.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I thought you knew something about it.

MR. TROY: I did not ask what regulations had been altered. I knew when I first represented that constituency there were numerous complaints.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I believe you got the manager sacked.

MR. TROY: I think that is an unjust accusation, and I think the Minister should withdraw it. I did not get the manager sacked.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I was wrong, the hon. member had an inquiry held and the manager resigned.

MR. TROY: So that members may be fully seized of the facts and so that I shall not be misjudged I will tell members what the inquiry did and how it was brought about. It was instrumental in bringing about a better state of affairs at Boogardie than existed there previously. The prospectors of Lennouville communicated with the Minister for Mines and informed him that the assayer at Lennouville had made certain complaints regarding the manager of the battery under whom he worked. I saw the Minister and asked that an inquiry be held. Before I moved in the matter I compelled the assayer to give me a written statement and to swear it before a justice of the peace, so that the statement would

be accurate. The assayer charged the battery manager with doing certain things that were wrong. He wrote out the charge which incriminated himself and he swore it before a J.P. and I sent it to the Minister and had an inquiry held. It was my duty to do so. Could I have closed my eyes to what I was credibly informed of, and what was sworn to as being of a corrupt character, I would not have been doing my duty to my constituents or the State if I had done otherwise. I have no doubt that at the time I made many enemies in consequence of the action I took. The manager had many friends in that locality and they took exception to my action in the matter in having an inquiry held. I determined, despite their hostility, to do what I thought was right, and because of the charges made against the manager of the battery I asked for the inquiry to be held. Was that not fair? Was there anything wrong in that? If the manager had been wrongly accused then he could have justified himself at the inquiry, and if he could not justify himself he deserved to be punished. If the inquiry had not been held it would have created very grave mistrust in the minds of the prospectors against the Mines Department generally, and against that battery in particular. The prospectors would have communicated with other prospectors throughout the State and would have created mistrust against the public battery system. This inquiry was held with the result that it was found both officers had done things which they should not have done, and the manager of the battery received intimation that he should resign. Is it right that I should be accused of anything other than a kindly action? Is it right that I should be accused of doing something which in the eyes of the Minister was improper? I followed a course which I would follow to-morrow if placed in a similar position; and I assure the Minister for Mines whilst he occupies his position and whenever a similar charge is placed in my hands I shall just as fearlessly do my duty to my constituents and the people of the State as I did on that occasion. Although the people in that district censured me in the first instance for the action I took, when they knew the facts they were satisfied and they commended me for my action.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You should say in justice to the manager that the inquiry resulted in his being exonerated on all the charges in respect of other matters.

MR. TROY: I did not see the report but I know the Minister controlling the department on that occasion was going to call on the manager to resign, and I said to the Minister, "While he may be guilty of something, there may have been no intention to do wrong; he may have been led away by a desire to do a favour to some friends. If you keep him there there may still exist in the minds of the people mistrust; shift him to some other locality, but do not sack him; give him another chance." I had nothing to do with sacking the manager. Why should I? [THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You got the man sacked.] It is a most unworthy and base thing to accuse me of having the man sacked; because there is nothing on record. Are those the tactics of the hon. gentleman opposite? Does he think I would follow out the course he adopts? [THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I do not think you would.] I would not follow that course. I challenge the Minister to have the fullest inquiry into my action in that connection. Put the papers before the House, ask the people of the Murchison, Lennonville, and the prospectors of Boogardie what was my action in connection with that matter. A public meeting was held and objection raised to the dismissal of Mr. Fleming, and I was censured; but at the last election the people supported me by giving me an overwhelming majority. I do not want to go farther into this matter. If I do, I shall say something which the hon. gentleman opposite would not care to have mentioned in this connection. Besides assisting in the erection of slime plants, the Government could assist by subsidising the prospector who goes out, say, in a new district a considerable distance from a battery. They could subsidise him by giving him so much a ton for conveying his ore from his show to the battery. Say for instance, that a prospector discovered a mine 20 miles from Yalgoo. There does not exist at Yalgoo any battery, and there does not exist a public battery nearer than Boogardie or Lennonville. To assist the prospector the Government

could not do better than pay a subsidy and help him to develop his mine; to encourage by his development more prospectors to gather round him and open up new country, and form a community in which in the near future a public battery might be erected. I know many instances where this can be done. I know that near Yalgoo there is some very fine auriferous country in the midst of a pastoral area, and there are people who go prospecting in these localities, but they cannot stay there for any length of time, although they find fairly good mines, because they cannot get crushing facilities within a distance of 70 or 80 miles. I want the Minister, or whoever may control this department, to provide money on the Estimates for the purpose of assisting these people by means of a subsidy to convey their stone to a battery. By that means the mining industry can be more developed than it can by giving people a right to own their properties or to, without exemption, leave their properties and go back. I believe I heard it mooted by the Minister for Mines—and I know it has been mooted by Mr. Hoover—that we should give these people the fee simple of their leases. But if we did that it would create a class of prospectors who are not *bona fide*, but speculators, who would hold properties without doing anything with them, and without complying with the labour conditions, for the one purpose of selling them when an opportunity occurs. [MR. SCADDAN: Professional dummies.] That has existed in the past, and such a position creates harm in localities where a rush occurs or where a new goldfield is thrown open. Therefore I do not hold that by adopting the system advised by Mr. Hoover you are going to do for this State what you with your sanguine anticipations may expect. I have heard of the necessity for assisting prospectors to develop their properties. The future of this State depends undoubtedly on the prospector. The prospecting branch of the mining industry is the most important branch; and to encourage prospecting you must enable the prospector to go down below water and to develop his property at a depth. I have the honour to represent a portion of the Murchison goldfield, and the Murchison, as members know, has contributed to this State a consider-

able amount of gold. In fact, the gold production of the Murchison is second only to that of Kalgoorlie. That has not been due to the fact that we have had a lot of companies there, but to the fact that we have a class of good, sound, *bona fide* prospectors, who go in for prospecting and developing their properties, and working them on systematic lines. We want to encourage that class of men—men who have made the Murchison what it is, and who particularly have made Cue what it is to-day. A little while ago Cue was not very prosperous; but to-day the prospectors have brought about a better position of affairs. We have sterling prospectors there; men who went there poor and took up mines and developed them; and the district to-day is more prosperous and promising than it has been during the past ten years. If we want to encourage this class of men on all our fields, if we want to bring about the happy and prosperous position of affairs which has been brought about on the Murchison, we must encourage the *bona fide* prospector. And we can do this best by the means I have already touched upon—by subsidising £ for £ for sinking to below water level. I do not want the House to forget that the despised Labour Government, which was such an evil to this State, did more in that way to assist the mining industry than did any of its predecessors. We can, and we must, put a sum of money on the Estimates for the purpose of assisting prospectors who go down below water level. By £ for £ subsidy they will be enabled to develop their properties and prove at various distances the depth. On the Murchison all our hopes lie in getting down to a depth. If we do not get down to a depth, then for a considerable time to come our field will not make that progress which we earnestly hope it will. [MR. GULL: You are down to about 1,000 feet level now, I think.] Wherever we have gone down on the Murchison good results have always followed. The great mine on the Murchison is the Great Fingall, which, I think, is down to nearly 1,000ft., and if all our mines go down as well as the Great Fingall and prove as rich in depth, then undoubtedly the Murchison Goldfield will be second to none in Western Australia. I want to give an instance. The people of Cue One Mine for a considerable time were

desirous of getting a subsidy from the Government for sinking and improving the property to a depth. When the hon. member opposite was in office, they could not secure that. When the Labour Government were in power they gave a subsidy to the proprietary of the Cue One Mine. For some considerable time the proprietary had tried to get that subsidy from the predecessor of the Labour Government, which included the Minister who now controls the Mines Department. I remember the occasion of a banquet when both the hon. gentleman opposite and the Colonial Treasurer, Mr. Gardiner, eulogised the work done by Mr. Chesson and Mr. Heydon, and promised they should receive assistance; but they did not receive it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: They did. The Government authorised assistance to the extent of £1,000.

MR. HOLMAN: And you wanted to mortgage everything they had for it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: No.

MR. HOLMAN: I say you did.

MR. TROY: I take the assertion of the Minister that he authorised the giving of that money; but I know for an absolute fact that his Government placed such restrictions round the giving of it that the company never availed themselves of it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: They did.

MR. TROY: I know Mr. Chesson, and I have often discussed the matter with him. I did so at the time of the general election. I know that when the Labour Government had been in power for some time, negotiations were entered into by Messrs. Chesson and Heydon, and the Daglish Government gave that grant to the Cue One Company. When Mr. Daglish visited the Murchison, he was interviewed, and on his return to Perth the grant was given. I ask the Minister, who has left his seat, to deny my statement. The money was granted by the Labour Government under labour provisions, with the result that to-day Messrs. Chesson and Heydon have been sinking their property to the 500ft. level. To-day they struck a reef which promises to be better than Messrs. Chesson and Heydon and others expected it to be. I met Mr. Heydon in Perth to-day, and he assures me that there is a very bright outlook for the gold-mining

industry in Cue. That can be attributed to no other fact than that the Labour Government as far as possible assisted the *bona fide* prospector. They gave the prospector as far as possible a subsidy which would enable him to sink to a depth; and the development which has taken place in Cue to-day has justified the expenditure of much money in the right direction. The stone is of such a quality that in a very short time the people on that property will be able to pay that money back and to pursue development work, and open up through the proceeds of that Cue One Mine several new mining districts, and so develop that locality in a manner in which I know you, Mr. Chairman, would desire it should be developed. I know, Mr. Chairman, that while you represented that constituency you did your utmost for its development, and even to-day, when you represent a metropolitan constituency, you sympathise just as strongly with the Murchison as you sympathised then. You will be pleased to note that the developments in the Cue One, the Salisbury, and the Agamemnon mines are of such a character as to hold out to the people who have struggled so long and so bravely in that locality the brightest hopes for their future prosperity. Let me quote another instance in the North Murchison Goldfield, where the Government provided prospectors with crushing facilities by subsidising batteries, thus opening up a large auriferous area, and materially increasing our gold production. And there is yet another means—to my mind the best—by which the *bona fide* prospector can be encouraged. When I read reports of speeches delivered at banquets, which speeches are always hopeful, because banquets encourage optimism—when I read speeches on the encouragement of mining, delivered by people who know very little about actual mining or about prospecting, I reflect that everything said in such circumstances cannot be taken as a fact by hon. members who do not personally understand the industry. By granting such conditions as those speech-makers at banquets advocate, the Government will not give the prospector that assistance which he needs. I wish to mention an instance in a district some 50 miles north of Black

Range; a district where, during the last 18 months, several very promising mines were found, which attracted a larger number of prospectors who hoped to find developments of a similar character. Two gentlemen from Day Dawn determined to erect a battery in that locality, but required an assurance from the prospectors that they would give them their stone to crush at what the battery-owners deemed a reasonable price. The prospectors agreed; later on the battery was erected; but after a time other mines, of a low-grade character, were found; and the discoverers could not afford to crush at that battery, because the charge was too high. So they applied to the Labour Government for a subsidy to enable them to crush profitably while paying the owners of the battery the charge demanded. The matter was not arranged when Mr. Johnson was Minister for Mines, but a little later, soon after Mr. Gregory came into power. A subsidy of 2s. or 3s. per ton was granted to the battery-owners; and by that means the district is being more widely and extensively developed, and the prospectors are being encouraged to prosecute development. By such encouragement we can with greater advantage assist the mining industry than by conceding the liberal or supposedly liberal conditions advocated by several interested gentlemen visiting this State. Having a practical experience in these matters, and representing a constituency in which the main industry is mining, carried on by prospectors, I know that the system I have outlined will give greater encouragement to mining than will the methods advocated by our recent visitors. I do not think that the conditions mentioned by Mr. Hoover are the best for the development of mining; because they will be open to so much jobbery and abuse that they will do more harm than good to the *bona fide* prospector. I have endeavoured to enlighten Ministers with regard to the mining industry; and though the effort has somewhat exhausted me, I do not think that my arguments have been lost on them. I think they have learnt more to-night about the industry, and have received a better insight into mining matters, than they have ever learnt or ever received on any previous occasion. I have disposed of the Mines Department; now I intend

to deal with the Works. I have to complain most strongly of the Works Estimates. I wish some member would go outside and tell the Minister for Works (Hon. Frank Wilson) that his presence is desired, so that he may give some explanation of his method of framing the Estimates of expenditure on public works. Let me raise my protest against the manner in which these Public Works Estimates have been compiled. I say, with deep regret, that the Minister has seen fit to descend to tactics to which only a narrow-minded Minister would descend. We find from the Estimates that he is not really administering his department in the interests of the people. He has adopted the tactics of a roads-and-bridges member. The Estimates are absolutely packed with votes for the Busselton district and the Sussex electorate generally. We find that the House has become so depraved—

MR. H. BROWN: Can the hon member reflect on the House as "depraved?"

MR. TROY: I gave the member for Perth credit for a stronger sense of justice than he displays in agreeing with the Estimates compiled by the Minister for Works. In connection with his own electorate, the Minister has descended to tactics to which few gentlemen in this House would descend.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not reflect on another member of the House.

MR. TROY: I regret that I am not at liberty to speak as I feel of this packing of the Works Estimates with votes for the Minister's own constituency, which is being sop-fed from beginning to end. I would ask you, Mr. Illingworth, whether, during the years you have been in this House, you have seen such a deplorable state of affairs as is exhibited by these Works Estimates? You have had considerable experience in the House, and were a member of a Ministry? Did you ever know a time when a Minister had so pandered to his electorate as to come to the level of a roads-and-bridges member?

MR. BOLTON: Ask the Premier; he will tell you.

MR. TROY: I cannot accuse the Premier of pursuing those tactics. He at one time represented my constituency; and far from pursuing such tactics, he was never heard of by his constituency

after he was elected. But he may have become more depraved than he was at that time; because, after all, it is understood that a member is a reflection of his constituents; and since the constituency of Mount Magnet received very little from the Premier as its representative, my constituents still pursue their old policy, and do not ask their representative to be a roads-and-bridges member, and to cram the Estimates with sops.

MR. BROWN: You have £172 provided for a padded cell for lunatics.

MR. TROY: That is necessary for hon. members visiting the district. The Minister for Works, who likes to pose as a statesman, has seen his way clear to absolutely swamp these Estimates with votes for places in his own constituency. He has even provided a school where one is unnecessary.

MR. HOLMES: You told us that three hours ago.

[11 o'clock.]

MR. TROY: During recess I shall tell the country from north to south how the Government are managing the affairs of this State, how they have treated the House and country, and how they have failed in their duty to the country. Can a man make himself more contemptible than by pandering to people who have no political ambitions other than what they can secure from the State? The member for West Perth, our Chairman, once occupied the high position of Treasurer of this State, and it is to his credit that on no occasion did he procure grants for the electorates in the shape of sops so that his election might be assured; but, while we are faced with a deficit, the Minister of Works has gone so far as to place on the Estimates a sum for the reclamation of the foreshore at Busselton. How the Minister can descend to such tactics when the country is crying out for developmental works I cannot understand. I raise my emphatic protest against his action. We have less work being done in the Public Works Department and less money provided on the Estimates than was provided by the preceding Government, whilst more money is being spent in administration. It is only natural the Treasurer should not like this criticism.

THE TREASURER: As the hon. member is good enough to allude directly to me, the only thing I object to is the way in which the hon. member is repeating himself a hundred times over.

MR. TROY: Members on the Government side of the House have supported the Government through thick and thin. They are afraid to express their opinions.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not reflect on other members. He must confine himself to the vote before the Committee.

MR. TROY: Members deserve to be reminded of their failings. When public works are being stopped and people are being starved and the country is going backward, how can they sit silent and allow these Estimates to be rushed through? The Minister for Works is the alleged statesman of this country, the most powerful man in the Government, the idol of the Tory crowd in Perth, the land sharks and the boodlers, and the greatest enemy the workers possess, and their greatest oppressor. What has the State done that such a gentleman should be placed in charge of the Public Works Department, which, after all, affects every portion of the State more than any other department? The hon. gentleman seems to have forgotten the whole of the State in looking after his own constituency. What justification is there for providing this money to reclaim a foreshore at Busselton? This item alone condemns the Minister in the eyes of the country, and it should also condemn him in the eyes of his constituents. Surely the Minister has misunderstood the ideas of his constituents. Unless he desires to insult them, he must consider them more patriotic than that they desire him to be sent to Parliament to serve the interests of Busselton alone and to neglect other portions of the State. I believe that to-morrow they would, if asked, declare that it was not their object, and that they wish their representative to be a statesman; and the sooner the hon. gentleman reaches that elevated plane the better for himself. I am prepared to give him every credit for what he does. I believe he has great interest in the Sussex electorate. But what reasonable justification is there to absolutely cram these Estimates with votes and sops for his own electorate? What

other member would do such a thing? The Government which predeceased him—[General laughter]—I do hope we shall be able to inter him, politically, at no distant date. The Government which preceded him did not give any sops to their electorates. Can any member point to any item in the last Estimates where the member for Subiaco gave any sops? It was the same in the electorates of Mount Margaret, the Murchison, and Brown Hill. The representatives of those electorates did not descend to the paltry tactics that characterise present Ministers. Now let us come to the money provided for the Point Sampson jetty. Surely this country is not being run for the benefit of Ministers? Surely these hon. members have more patriotic intentions than to provide only for works in their own electorates. A sum of money was provided for strengthening a jetty in the north-west. I am surprised that the gentleman who represents Roebourne should allow money to be placed on the Estimates for strengthening the Port Sampson jetty. Is that not money wasted? Should the jetty ever have been built? This is a great scandal and I have no hesitation in saying the people in this State will call the Government to account for the scandal they are perpetrating on this occasion. There is another jetty in the north-west that is used only for sea birds to roost on. Why not shift that jetty to Port Sampson? I do not think the House will allow the amount to be voted for the purpose of strengthening a jetty that will serve no purpose, except giving someone an opportunity of perpetrating a scandal on the State. I appeal to the member for Pilbarra, who knows that district, to say whether there was any justification for that jetty, and I will ask him to vote with me in having the amount removed from the Estimates. Whilst I am on public works I desire to say a few words regarding the proposal to construct spur railways in the agricultural portions of the State. I believe where necessity exists for the construction of spur lines, they should be built to secure the development of the agricultural industry, to open up the country and give facilities to people to permanently settle on the land. I believe that spur lines are necessary on agricultural and mineral areas, and I

will always give my vote in favour of any such line which I think justifiable, but I cannot feel satisfied that there is any justification for the construction of these spur lines and unless I am satisfied that the lines will serve the purpose for which they are intended they will not have my support. What necessity exists at present for building spur lines on agricultural areas? If the Minister for Lands were in his place he would support me in the assertion that there are very large tracks of land in the State being held by individuals who do not work them; and these tracks of land lie alongside our railways. Take the line from Perth to Busselton, there is a large area of land along that line which is being put to no purpose, miles and miles of land where not a stroke of work is being done, and this land is held by certain persons who are holding it for speculative purposes. It is an absolute disgrace. Our railways are being impoverished because these lands are not being occupied, and unless a more progressive Government comes into power there is no probability of these lands being utilised. The Government are crying out for immigration to settle on the vacant areas in this State so as to produce food stuffs. What is the use of this immigration unless we can put the people on the land adjacent to railways. The Government should compel the holders of vacant blocks to use their land or give it up. On the railway line from Boyanup to Busselton there are several large areas which are not being utilised. If it is desired to make Busselton a big dairying district these lands must be settled. The lands in the Busselton district were taken up when settlers first came to the State, but the land has not been put to any use. What justification is there for building agricultural spur lines when we have land alongside the railways and which is put to no purpose? The goldfields lines are worked to make up the loss for running such lines as that to Busselton, because this line does not pay for want of settlement. It will be the duty of the Minister for Lands to bring forward some scheme for the settlement of these lands before fresh railways are built. There is another large belt of country with which the people of the State are concerned at the present time. I refer to the Midland

Company's land, which is one of the finest belts of land in the State and which is put to no use whatever while the prosperity of the State is being retarded. Let us settle this land, and after we have done so we can take into consideration the construction of other spur lines in any areas, and any proposals of that nature shall receive my warmest support on every possible occasion. The Premier last night referred to the fact that a very considerable amount of work had been done in connection with the rabbit-proof fence. He claimed that his Government was responsible for the manner in which this work had been carried out; but I assert that the Cabinet of which he is the leader has done very little towards pushing on this work. When the Premier was Minister for Works he controlled that particular department. They first built a portion of one line, and so slow were they in doing it that the rabbits passed it and the Government had to start again. The first fence cost £70,000, and it served no purpose. The then Minister for Works (Mr. Johnson), speaking on this matter some time ago, said:—

The present Administration came into office on the 10th August. The work was transferred from the Lands Department in April, three months previously. Since that date to the present the rate of progress has been 65 miles per month, as against 118 miles per annum under the administration of the Lands Department and my friend opposite (Mr. RASON: That is not so). If the hon. member maintains it is not so, I can only say that I have the utmost faith in the figures of my lieutenants; and if the hon. member is prepared to challenge them I will give him ample opportunity to do so.

Whilst the James Government, in which Mr. Rason was Minister for Works, controlled this particular work, that Government only completed 118 miles a year; but the Labour Government, in which Mr. Johnson was Minister for Works, constructed over 800 miles a year; showing that the Labour Government was more mindful of the interests of the agriculturists and pastoralists than their so-called friends who now sit on the other side of the House. The present Government could this session have brought down legislation dealing with other matters by which the pastoral industry could be protected; but they have not done so. The Government of which Mr.

Daglish was the leader desired to bring down a Bill providing for the creation of boards in the various pastoral districts, representative of the squatters, who should have the legal right to tax the people whom they represented, and who should be subsidised by the Government for the purpose of exterminating the dingo. I find, however, that although that is a very necessary measure, and pastoralists are looking forward to it, no effort is being made by the Government to pay some attention to the wants of these people. I hope, however, that the Government will bring forward such a measure, and I have no doubt if they do it will receive but little opposition, and members on this side will show that they have at heart the interests not only of the settlers, but of the people of the State. Members on the other side can, indeed, follow the worthy example given by members on this side when they occupied the Treasury Benches. I intend now to refer to the question of immigration. I believe that the Government intend to encourage immigration, and the majority of the Government do not care how immigrants get on so long as they land in this country. People have been brought to this country as agricultural settlers who have had no qualifications whatever for the purpose for which they came, and as a result they have had to follow other occupations, and the labour market of this State is at present overcrowded. Many men are out of work because of the closing of mines, and there is a great deal of want and poverty because the Government, instead of spending money on public works, are wasting it in administration. Unless immigrants come here as agricultural settlers, and are really agricultural settlers who understand the occupation, they should not be encouraged; but if they are legitimate settlers and are prepared to settle on the land, and not go upon the labour market, they will receive every encouragement from this side of the House as well as the other. At present this is not being done. In connection with the department controlled by the Minister for Commerce and Labour, where the Department of Commerce comes in I am at a loss to judge. The Estimates do not show it, so I presume that after all it must be an honorary title. I find that

certain provision is made for the administration of our Arbitration Court; but although great reforms are necessary in connection with the administration of the department, none have been foreshadowed by the Government. I think a saving could be made in this department by abolishing the Arbitration Court at present constituted with a Judge as president, by saving his salary and providing in the various districts certain gentlemen to act as president of the court. Such officer would have the same powers as the President of the Arbitration Court, and he should be one who is looked up to with respect and esteem in that particular industrial district; one who understands the industrial condition of affairs pertaining to that district. I think there are many men in this State who are just as honourable and upright as a member of the Supreme Court. I know we could find hundreds of men in the State who could more efficiently and more economically preside over these courts than do the present gentlemen under the existing system. I throw out the suggestion to the Minister because, after all, one can hardly blame that gentleman, who has no knowledge about this. I ask people to set aside all prejudice. The greatest dissatisfaction exists in connection with this department, and the hon. gentleman opposite will be doing a service to every person in this State if he will remove the disabilities which now obtain in relation to that Act. If he likes to amend the Act he will receive my support, and no doubt the support of a vast majority on this side of the House. I ask Ministers not to allow themselves to be prejudiced because they do not agree with my opinion; but to look fairly into this matter so as to secure a more efficient and more economical service. The Premier was good enough to say in his Budget Speech that he is an optimist; and I think he told us he would rather be an optimist than a pessimist. I am at a loss to understand why he is an optimist. I do not know of any reason for his optimism, or for an assumption of a cheerfulness that I think he does not feel. What has made him an optimist? Is it the gold yield for the past 10 years, the amount paid in dividends, or the fact that the gold yield is now decreasing, and that his Government are doing nothing

to improve the state of the country ? Is it because the revenue is falling, and that we are faced with a general deficit, or because the Premier has a large majority behind him, and because he is drawing from this State the means of securing some of this world's goods, which would probably make any man in a like position something of an optimist ? I can ascribe his optimism only to his satisfaction at his being Premier, and to his belief that he will be Premier for at least six months to come; and whilst satisfied with himself, he is absolutely blind to the wants of the State, blind to the fact that he has failed to keep his promise to bring about a better state of affairs. Surely, if the Premier knew that there are thousands of people out of work in this State, if he knew that matters both in Perth and in the back country are worse to-day than they were 12 months ago, he would not be an optimist, but would do something to bring about better conditions, and to justify optimism. Any man can say he is an optimist; but there is no justification for the Premier's optimism. The outlook is not encouraging, and presents difficulties with which the Premier is unable to grapple. I fear that his optimism will give way to pessimism; and though he may think that everything is right because all is well with him, the people of the State will not endorse his opinion, because matters are going from bad to worse. The Government wish to get into recess; and when we review their many failings and the paltry exhibition they have made in this House, there is some justification for that, so far as they are personally concerned. If they get into recess, they will be safe from criticism. But if we have to judge the intentions of the Government by these Estimates and by Ministers' past records, there is no justification for going into recess for the next two months anyhow; because in recess the State will be worse neglected than it is now, and matters of urgent importance, requiring immediate attention, will be shelved. It is the duty of the Opposition to compel the Government to introduce any necessary measures, to give full consideration to the Estimates, and to enable subservient Government supporters to consider for themselves whether the Government are acting in the

best interests of the State. I know that some Government supporters are not satisfied with the Government or with the Budget Speech of the Premier. The Premier may boast of his progressive Budget; but we are going backward under the present Government policy, and many years will pass before the State will recover the ground lost while this Government is in power. The Premier has referred to the policy speech of his predecessor, the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish), as a mark-time speech. The Premier evidently thinks that if he says a certain thing is so, the people will be foolish enough to believe him. But they have only to contrast his present policy speech, his Budget, and his intentions, with those of the member for Subiaco; and they will find that the present Government is utterly reactionary, and most unprogressive. It is the duty of all members to compel the Government to move onward, and I can assure Government supporters that the Opposition are prepared to push them forward, and compel them to do what they were sent here to do—work in the interests of the country generally.

[11.50 o'clock.]

MOTION, TO REPORT PROGRESS.

MR. HOLMAN moved that progress be reported.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	13
Noes	...	...	...	26

Majority against ... 13

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bath	Mr. Barnett
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Collier	Mr. Brown
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Holman	Mr. Diamond
Mr. Horan	Mr. Eddy
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Taylor	Mr. Gull
Mr. Troy	Mr. Hardwick
Mr. Walker	Mr. Hicks
Mr. Ware	Mr. Holmes
Mr. Lynch (Teller).	Mr. Isdell
	Mr. Keenan
	Mr. Layman
	Mr. McLarty
	Mr. Male
	Mr. Mitchell
	Mr. Monger
	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. Price
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Smith
	Mr. Veryard
	Mr. Frank Wilson
	Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

RESUMED.

[12 o'clock midnight.]

MR. H. DAGLISH (Subiaco): It seemed little short of a scandal that the Committee should be asked at this hour to debate the most important matter that could be brought before Parliament, and that members should be asked to debate a Budget of this volume and deal with the lengthy speech of the Treasurer without being given some opportunity for consideration. At the general elections in every constituency the one vital issue was the settlement of the finances, and in the discussions of Parliament it was the one vital issue; yet we were only allowed two days in which to consider and digest the mass of figures and facts contained in the Treasurer's speech. We were told that the reason was that Parliament must close its deliberations before Christmas, and that because Ministers could not get away to their departments while the House was sitting, the departmental work was left undone. The Treasurer had refused to give the Opposition one extra day in which to consider the Estimates; but last week, because the Premier and his colleagues desired to lunch on the Flagship, business must needs be stopped. There was no time to consider the finances of the State, but there was time to suspend the sitting of Parliament so that Ministers could enjoy a pleasant day's outing. Also, an adjournment of the House had to be made because the Premier was away, either recovering from the lunch or preparing his Budget Speech, the official statement, of course, being that the Treasurer was preparing his Budget Speech.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member was welcome to the opinion, and ought to be a competent judge.

MR. DAGLISH: Though there was plenty of work before the House, Ministers had passed a vote of no-confidence in themselves by letting the House know that none of them were capable of filling the Premier's place and presiding over the work before the House. It seemed that the Treasurer wished to avoid any criticism on his proposals. He had avoided criticism at election time by saying nothing concerning the finances—and saying that repeatedly; and now gave no opportunity to members to

swallow his Financial Statement or digest his figures. In no other Parliament of Australia was such indecent haste displayed in dealing with the Financial Statement. No other State Parliament would agree to adjourn when Ministers desired to go to a picnic. This was one undesirable record we had made, and it now appeared that the Treasurer wished to create another. Ministers should not allow their enjoyment to interfere with the duty of Parliament to the people of the State. The financial question was no party question. All were interested in seeing that the finances were put on the soundest footing. The Treasurer himself had acknowledged this in the recent campaign, and it had been acknowledged in two Governor's speeches this year; but now the Treasurer told us that the finances did not require any consideration, and that we should simply trust the Treasurer; because all things would be right in the end and because the Treasurer had every reason to believe that the revenue would increase, though it might not meet the expenditure. The Treasurer had, during last Parliament, strongly criticised the Labour Government with regard to their financial proposals; but the circumstances then existing were the same to-day. The Labour Government had brought down their Estimates when only three months in office and, previous to taking office, had not any experience in Ministerial duties. Also they had to foot the Bills following the general election. The present Ministry had seen three months of office but five of the Ministers were possessed of previous experience in the particular departments they were administering, and thus would not require time to assimilate the details of departmental administration. However, they brought down a Budget with an enormously increased deficit.

THE TREASURER: But £80,000 had been awaiting them.

MR. DAGLISH: The hon. member should also compare the last year with the year before, and must remember that if the State spent £130,000 more than it received last year, in the previous year it had spent considerably more than that amount over the revenue for that year.

THE TREASURER: But the hon. member had met with a surplus on taking

office, whereas he had met with a deficiency.

MR. DAGLISH: Quite so; but the Treasurer had been aware that he (Mr. Daglish) had proposed to endeavour to meet the deficiency foreseen by imposing taxation.

THE TREASURER: What had the hon. member proposed?

MR. DAGLISH: A land tax and an income tax.

THE TREASURER: What would they have returned?

MR. DAGLISH: The hon. member had no figures of his there, but certain figures of his own, or certain figures that were supplied, but not on the basis supplied by him (Mr. Daglish). The whole question of the productiveness of a tax depended on the basis and extent of that tax. When members said a land tax would yield so much, they were talking absurdly, unless they specified the rate of the tax, and not only the rate at the beginning but the rate at which it progressed. It is not necessary to argue in regard to what amount of land tax should have been proposed by the Treasurer, and to what degree it should have been progressive. It was for the Treasurer to frame his own proposals; it was the bounden duty of the Treasurer, if he realised his revenue this year would be insufficient to meet his expenditure, to find some way of meeting the deficiency, otherwise than waiting for something to turn up.

THE TREASURER: Between January and June.

MR. DAGLISH: The Premier had had from August to formulate his proposals. If the Premier delayed the taxation for 12 months, it must of necessity come into force 12 months later, and if it were necessary to wait till the end of the financial year before collecting the tax, how much more reason was there to hurry on with a measure to impose that tax, because the same degree of notice would be necessary and the same time would elapse in preparing the machinery and getting it into working order after the next session as would elapse after this session. There was another important consideration affecting this question, and that was our position in regard to the Commonwealth; and the Treasurer had recognised this in some of his

utterances and in referring to federation in the recent Budget Speech. What we had to face was that, year by year, we were liable to have heavy demands made on us by the Commonwealth, therefore we were liable to have small returns from the Commonwealth, even if the same revenue was received from our own people. We had to face the danger of an abandonment of the book-keeping system at an early date, therefore there was double reason for the greatest care to be exercised by the Treasurer, and there was the greatest need where there was the likelihood of a deficit occurring, to protect the interests of the State by seeing that none of the important developmental departments had to be starved in the near future owing to the want of funds. A great deal had been said as to the cost of administration here and the heavy taxation. The reason we were spending so much more per head than other States was not because the cost of administration was greater but because we were doing so much more for our people than the other States in the Commonwealth. We must tax our people sufficiently to keep on the work of our Lands Department and the Mines Department, and other large departments, or else materially restrict our conveniences by taking away these developments which it had been the policy of Parliament to provide in the past. The question we had to face in the future was whether it was to the interests of the State to continue to assist its various industries, or whether that assistance was to be gradually withdrawn from our people. There lay the important line that was going to separate parties on this financial issue in the immediate future; it was a question that could not be too early faced if we continued the same policy that had been adopted in the past and maintained still, of endeavouring to give assistance to those engaged in our important developmental industries. In dealing with this important question, he could not understand why a member who recognised the possibilities of a restricted revenue in future should be called a pessimist. It was not a question of our opinion of the wealth or resources of the State, it was a question of what our present channels of revenue were likely to bring in, and there were several directions in which our

revenue was likely to fall off in the immediate future. The Premier himself recognised this in regard to one particular channel, that was in regard to the Commonwealth revenue, but he (Mr. Daglish) was afraid he would have to extend that recognition farther than he had done in the present Budget. He (Mr. Daglish) desired as far as possible to confine himself to the general questions, and it might be his duty later on to offer a few remarks in regard to some of the divisions when we came to deal with them specifically. He was sorry the general discussion was being hurried so much, because he believed by affording members a chance of speaking on the general question it would have largely curtailed the amount of time taken up on the Estimates as a whole. He assured the Premier that as far as he was concerned he should have been glad only to speak once in the general discussion. Just touching on one or two points in the Budget, he noticed the estimated expenditure for 1905-6 was set down as £3,721,217, or just £24,007 less than the actual expenditure of the last financial year. In other words after going through the figures of last year's expenditure the Government had been unable, in spite of their knowledge of the departments, to reduce the expenditure by a larger sum than £24,000. This saving had been effected by reducing the public works expenditure by £77,512 as compared with last year's estimate.

THE TREASURER: Would it not be fair to take the two estimates?

MR. DAGLISH: would do that if it was desired. He was giving the Premier his estimate in this case as against the estimate in another case and as against the actual expenditure. It was his own estimate of expenditure of the Public Works Department, or £27,942 less than the actual expenditure of last year.

THE TREASURER: How much less than the estimate?

MR. DAGLISH: It was £77,000. He wanted to point out where this whole saving was effected on the Estimates, considerably more than £50,000. This saving had been made solely out of the Public Works Department last year. He (Mr. Daglish) was cried down throughout the country by the Premier and those who agreed with him because it

was said he was starving the public works, and he was denounced as one injuring the prosperity of the State by the fact that he had provided only £380,000 on the Estimates for expenditure by the Public Works Department. These gentlemen were loud in their denunciations of him and fond of sneering at him for his mark-time policy, but the Government had gone £77,512 worse. If their views were right, if his policy was one of mark-time, the present Government's was one of absolute halt, absolute stagnation. The great outcry last session was that we were spending too much in administration, and that outcry had not altogether dropped, but strange to say those who denounced him were those who had built up the alleged costly administration of which they complained. Up to the present moment since their return to office, the Government had been unable to effect any economies. Perhaps the Premier would say that the members of the Government were new to office at the present moment, but no allowance of that sort was made for the Government which they succeeded. The Premier contended that as soon as the late Government took office their full responsibilities rested on them and not on other persons who were responsible for their creation. He was aware that Ministers proposed to effect economies which they could not at present specify. The late Government had considerable hope in the same direction, and were successful in curtailing their expenditure to such an extent that had the revenue expected been received there would have been no difficulty whatever in closing the financial year with a surplus. Now the Premier had come forward with practically the same proposals, and he could only hope the anticipations would be realised. He hoped the anticipated revenue would be realised. We were all largely enough interested in the welfare of the State to be able to trust the Government in power and to wish that everything might be prosperous and bright, and that the roseate picture which the Treasurer painted might be realised during his term of office. He assured the Premier that, as far as he was concerned, if he could help in any way he would always be happy to do his share towards helping the Ministry if he be behind them or facing them. The

same spirit, he was sure, actuated members generally. He was sorry to have to complain of some of the words used by the Premier the other night when speaking of the loan flotations. The Premier alleged that the last loan flotation was actually the worst in the experience of Western Australia. That was a very unfair statement, and he thought the Premier's conscience—because sometimes even a Premier had a conscience—must have struck him. The hon. gentleman said, recognising doubtless that he might have been unfair, that he did not intend to be so. He (Mr. Daglish) acquitted him of any intended unfairness, but he could not acquit him of want of knowledge of the return he submitted to the House. That return showed that at the time the present Premier was Colonial Treasurer in the James Administration money was being raised in the Eastern States at a cost for interest paid by the Government of £4 ls. 5d. per cent. The sum of £483,215 was shown by this Return No. 8 as having been realised on the loan floated on the 14th May, 1903. [THE TREASURER: What were the net proceeds?] The net proceeds were £99 ls. 5d. at 4 per cent., and the cost to the State per annum represented £4 ls. 5d. The actual net proceeds on the two loans were only to be considered when the difference in interest was also taken into consideration; and the chief factor in regard to the cost was the annual payment representing interest. Altogether there was raised under this loan £483,215 which was represented by debenture stock, and £605,525 which was represented by local inscribed stock, issued to persons applying for it. The loan, therefore, represented £1,088,540. Against this we should take into consideration the last loan floated, of £1,400,000 at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., of which the net proceeds were £93 6s. 4d. and the interest per hundred pounds sterling paid by the Government in regard to that, £3 17s. 7d., or just 3s. 10d. less than the interest payable in regard to the money received under the 4 per cent. loan. Surely this 3s. 10d. on £1,400,000 was worth saving to the State, for it represented about £2,650 per annum saved in interest. At the same time there was a farther saving. As a very large amount had annually to be paid in England

in repayment of stores purchased and sinking fund and interest, which now amounted to three-quarters of a million or a little more, it would be recognised that on every hundred pounds of this locally-raised stock remitted to London we had the farther expense of exchange, which in some instances, owing to the fact that the money had to be remitted by cable, ran up from about 15s. to 22s. 6d. per hundred pounds; so there was another very substantial saving which had to be added to the saving already quoted in regard to the interest. Had the Premier chosen to go farther, he could have found on the same Return other instances where money had been raised on less advantageous terms than that late loan. But in dealing with this question of the raising of money, the Premier must recognise that the condition of the market had to be taken into consideration. The flotation indicated that this State got as good a return as was possible at that time, and that in fact those persons who had undertaken to underwrite the loan had made an offer to the State which was better than the condition of the London money market warranted them in making. During his (Mr. Daglish's) term of office we were under very unfortunate conditions with regard to the raising of money, owing to the fact that for the bulk of that term there was a big war going on and the parties to that war were making very heavy demands on the European money market, and were paying a very heavy rate of interest in order to secure the money they required for the prosecution of the war. Then again, unfortunately—for what reason none of us were able definitely to explain—Australian securities had not stood as high in the London market as their merits entitled them to. Probably that was due to the unwise, and very often untruthful, utterances made at public gatherings by unpatriotic Australians. These circumstances had to be borne in mind when dealing with any transactions made by himself or any other Treasurer. That loan eventuated as advantageously as it possibly could have done at the time it was floated. Last year he pointed out that our stocks were not vitally affected by the question of what Government or political party happened for the

time being to be in power in this or any other State; and the then Leader of the Opposition did not altogether hold that view, but endeavoured to substantiate the case in the opposite direction. One found, however, that since the general election, when that stability had been acquired which was so earnestly prayed for, and which was going to work such wonderful results for the credit of this State, there had been no increase in the value of Western Australian stocks.

THE PREMIER : The hon. member was wrong; though not intentionally.

MR. DAGLISH would be very glad to be corrected. The latest figures he had were in regard to the 20th August, when the Western Australian 3 per cents. were quoted at £88 10s.; and on the 2nd December, when they were quoted at £86.

THE PREMIER : What about the 3½?

MR. DAGLISH : On the 20th August the 3½ stood at £96 10s., and on the 2nd December at £97: so there was a decrease of £2 10s. on the 3 per cents, and an increase of 10s. on the 3½.

THE PREMIER was afraid that the hon. member had the wrong figures for the 3 per cents.

MR. DAGLISH would be very glad to refer again to the figures. The figures fully justified the statement he made that the existence on the Treasury Benches of any political Government or party did not affect the value of our stocks; because an increase of ½ per cent. was quite unworthy of attention from one week to another, especially when we considered the date at which the first payment of £1 15s. as interest was due. Fluctuations were really due first of all to the date when the dividend was due. He was quite prepared in Opposition to listen to a statement made on the Treasury Benches, because he did not want to play the game of politics on points, but to endeavour to serve the country and put party considerations entirely out of the question; or, at all events, not allow them to affect the value of any statement made. They wished to give credit where it was due; but he was sorry he had not had much opportunity of doing that in regard to his friend opposite, who, he regretted to say, had given him numbers

of opportunities of complaining of him. However, one consolation was that

While the lamp holds out to burn,
The vilest sinner may return.

He quoted that without making any personal reflection on the Minister. There were one or two points dealt with in the speech by the hon. member last year in regard to which he would like to refresh his memory. The hon. member said:—

I should like to have been able to congratulate the Treasurer upon the style in which he delivered his speech. Those of us who have been in this House will well remember that Sir John Forrest, and indeed successive Treasurers, when they made Budget Speeches, entered upon the subject with enthusiasm; they conveyed to their hearers some of that enthusiasm, until people who came to listen to those Budget Speeches went away convinced of the sincerity and earnestness of the Treasurers who delivered the Speeches, and convinced that it was good to be in Western Australia after all.

He could not help thinking that the hon. member was exercising his prophetic instincts when he uttered those sentences. There was another extract, and it was equally brief, which the hon. member used when speaking of the rabbit-proof fence:—

I find moreover that there is absolutely no provision for the continuation of the fencing; so that either the Government intend altogether to drop the fencing, or they intend in future to charge the fencing to loan. I submit that either course, whichever they propose to adopt, is bad; and if they propose to charge the work of fencing against rabbits to loan account, then in my opinion at all events, the proposal is most improper, because it can never be held that rabbit fencing is a reproductive work. It is undoubtedly a proper charge against revenue.

The hon. member enlarged with some degree of warmth upon this question. He was sitting in Opposition at the time and opposed the proposals of the Government. It was true he pointed out that the finances of the State did not enable us during that financial year to find the money from revenue to carry on the work. The hon. member was prepared then to demand that bricks should be made without straw, prepared to demand that the then Government should construct the fence out of revenue whether they had the money or not. Now a leaf had been turned, and the hon. member proposed to do this year exactly what he

reproved the late Government for doing last year.

THE PREMIER : The late Government started him on the wrong road.

MR. DAGLISH : The hon. member was very easily converted when conversion was accompanied by translation. One was satisfied the hon. member required conversion, but did not deserve translation. [THE PREMIER said he was satisfied.] The references made seemed to indicate that the hon. member found his attitude somewhat governed by his position in the House. He desired to support the hon. member now in the action that he (Mr. Daglish) took last year. He was prepared to place no obstacles in the way of his continuing this rabbit-proof fence out of loan moneys, because he recognised it was necessary to do so. What he did condemn him most earnestly for was that in his speech, which, as far as he was able to judge, was practically a continuation of the Budget proposals of last year, there was no new ground whatever broken. There might be more apt expressions, there might be more grace of diction, which they all knew the hon. member was so eminently possessed of ; but there was no new ground whatever broken. And at the same time there was more need for new ground because of the fact that the position this year was considerably worse than the position which existed twelve months ago. Many members complained that this State was so heavily taxed that it would be impossible for the Government to introduce new taxation without an undue burden on our people. He found that according to the figures submitted of the estimated revenue it was anticipated that altogether £269,640 of our revenue would be received from State taxation, and the rest of our revenue practically came from public departments which gave some value to the persons who made payment to them. It was true the Budget statement showed territorial revenue that might be regarded as coming under taxation heading ; but the actual direct taxation imposed in this State amounted only to £1 per head of our population—a lower State taxation than prevailed in any other State of the Commonwealth. He must invite attention to what seemed the utterly illegal position that the Gov-

ernment had taken up as to its recent expenditure. Since the present Government took office, it had made no application to Parliament for supply, although its supply must have been long since exhausted. The Constitution Act provided that, "After and subject to the charges hereinbefore mentioned, all the consolidated revenue funds shall be appropriated to such purposes as any Act of the Legislature shall prescribe." Then followed certain saving provisions, relating to pensions, to sinking fund and interest, and to legal charges. The provision in the Audit Act was that "No money shall be drawn from the public account except under appropriation made by law or by the authority of the Governor." That was the very much argued Section 7, of which we had heard so frequently 12 months ago. But it had been ascertained that although to the lay mind it might appear that under the section the Governor had power to make appropriations without reference to Parliament, such power was given to the Governor only in pursuance of the powers conferred on him constitutionally ; in other words, he could act only after the authority of Parliament had been given, approving of an appropriation made by Parliament. *May*, dealing with this question, was very emphatic in the statement that, "The most important power vested in any branch of the Legislature was the right of imposing taxes on the people, and of voting money for the exigencies of the public service. The exercise of this right by the Commons is practically a law of the annual meeting of Parliament for the redress of grievances, and it may also be said to give the Commons the chief authority in the State. In all countries, the public purse is one of the main instruments of political power." Later on, the same authority stated that, "drafts made upon the consolidated fund to meet the grants voted by the Committee of Supply for the service of the current year are based upon resolutions agreed to by the Committee of Ways and Means," and went on to show that—"Upon these resolutions are founded, first, the Sessional Consolidated Fund Acts, and finally, the Appropriation Act, which endows those resolutions with complete legal effect ; and upon receipt of an order from the

Sovereign, which gives final validity to the supply grant, the Treasurer makes issues to meet those grants out of the consolidated fund." Now the supply granted during the present financial year, from the consolidated fund, amounted to £987,000, made up of £496,000 granted in the first Supply Act, and £491,000 in the second Act. However; during the five months ending 30th November last, no less than £1,420,780 was expended; and it appeared that the Government had simply ignored Parliament in this matter. The Premier had sought a dissolution without taking the trouble, in his great haste to go to the country, to ask for supply, as he should have done, to carry him on over the general elections; unless, indeed, he had sufficient. If he had sufficient to carry on until the elections were over, he had omitted, up to date, to seek any farther supply; although apparently he had expended something like £433,000 in excess of the expenditure authorised by Parliament. This matter seemed very serious. If the Government were carrying on illegally, and flouting Parliament, members were failing in their duty to the public if they did not very emphatically express their opinions as to the Government action; because the power of the purse, enjoyed by the Lower House, was the one right which gave that House the proud position it should hold in any British community. We should be false to our electors and to the noble traditions of British Parliaments if we allowed any Government to usurp the powers rightly and solely possessed by the representatives of the people. He hoped it would be possible for the Premier, before the discussion closed, to give some definite information and some reasonable explanation regarding this important matter. He (Mr. Daglish) could not conceive of any possible explanation that could relieve the Premier of a grave responsibility for a serious wrong. One other point. Though the financial year was estimated to close with a deficit of only £132,000, the deficiency at the end of November was £124,099; and seeing that it had grown from £46,522 to £124,099 in five months, in spite of the fact that in one month a surplus of £24,409 was earned, it was not obvious why the Premier expected to get his deficit reduced to £132,000 at the

end of the financial year. He (Mr. Daglish) had noticed without any surprise that the elections were hurried over between the publication of the financial returns for September and the like returns for October; apparently for the reason that there was in September an exceptionally large return from the Commonwealth, some £8,000 more than the average monthly return; and there was the usual annual payment of lands rents, amounting to about £40,000. In consequence of these abnormal receipts, the Government were able to report a surplus of £24,000 on the month's transactions. That was their first month of office; and at once they pointed out to the public that whereas in August there had been a deficit of so much, yet in September, when they had got into office, public confidence had been restored, and the people were rejoicing at the fact that the member for Guildford was now the Premier, and that peace and plenty would abound on every hand; hence the revenue had at once jumped up. Apparently that illusion had an important effect upon the general elections—the fact that a large number of people took seriously the statement that the return of the present Government to office had led to this surplus on the month's transactions. Those people overlooked the fact that almost invariably in September and in March there was a substantial surplus on the month's transactions, merely because of the special revenue received in those months, and not receivable in any other month of the year. And the Ministry—well, did not disavow any share they might have had in swelling the revenue.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member could not have expected them to disavow it, nor would he have done so.

MR. DAGLISH: Undoubtedly he would; and he now did his best to disavow it on behalf of the Premier, who should not be blamed wrongfully. Had the general elections taken place at the beginning of November instead of the end of October, even then the electors would not have entertained such glowing opinions of the present Government as they held on the 27th October.

THE PREMIER: They still seemed fairly well satisfied.

MR. DAGLISH: That he had not heard, but had heard to the contrary. However, the Government had still enough time to make a new name for themselves, and he hoped they would set out early to do it. He would have liked an opportunity of devoting more consideration to the Budget Speech. The Premier was acting very unfairly to the people of the State in preventing the people's representatives from considering the financial statement. The unfairness to members of the House was a secondary matter; but it was every member's duty to his electors to investigate the finances; and no individual, no matter what might be his official position for the time being, was justified in robbing every member of the House of an opportunity to discharge his duty. At a recent public gathering, he (Mr. Daglish) had pointed out that a large Government majority might be either a great blessing or a great curse to this country. If the Premier used his majority as he was using it to-night, it would be a great curse to the country, and ultimately a great curse to the Premier. After all, the electors desired that Parliament should have an opportunity of considering the finances, and believed that this was the most important duty hon. members could fulfil. It was more important even than keeping Ministers away for a few extra days from their departments. He hoped even now that the Premier would see the wisdom of agreeing to report progress in order that members might have the opportunity of acquainting themselves with the Estimates, and addressing themselves to the question.

[1 a.m. Friday.]

MOTION, TO REPORT PROGRESS.

MR. SCADDAN moved that progress be reported.

Motion put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	13
Noes	...	...	...	23
				—
Majority against	...			10
				—

AYES.

Mr. Bath
Mr. Bolton
Mr. Collier
Mr. Daglish
Mr. Holman
Mr. Horan
Mr. Hudson
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Troy
Mr. Walker
Mr. Ware
Mr. Lynch (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Barnett
Mr. Brebber
Mr. Brown
Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Eddy
Mr. Ewing
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Gull
Mr. Hicks
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Isdell
Mr. Keenan
Mr. McLarty
Mr. Male
Mr. Mitchell
Mr. Monger
Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Price
Mr. Rason
Mr. Smith
Mr. F. Wilson
Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

[1.5 a.m.]

RESUMED

MR. T. H. WALKER (Kanowna) protested against having to undergo the ordeal of speaking to this important subject at such an hour of the morning. He was aware that the Government were anxious to get into recess, but it was far more important that the finances of the country should be fully debated and considered in every particular than that the Government should have the comfort and enjoyment of their offices. The very foundation of Parliamentary institutions, and the justification for the existence of Parliament, was the discussion of the finances. It was the special prerogative of Parliament. The finances only came before the House once a year, and probably owing to political disturbances and changes of Parliament, it was unfortunate that the Estimates must be discussed at the end of the year when the weather was hot and conditions were trying; nevertheless, it was the duty of members to give their best talents to the consideration of the Budget. He could not help recalling some of the old historical occasions, and the time when Charles I., King of England, had demanded that money should be voted to him without discussion. King Charles had ordered the Commons to grant supply, reasoning that it was not their province to dispute as to the wisdom of it, but that they should furnish him with the funds. The King was under the impression that it was the subservient duty of the Commons to yield to his demands, but the Commons had persisted in discussing the necessity

for supplies, and had argued that supplies must be granted lawfully; and then the King, growing impatient, had gone to the Commons with his armed courtiers and with an army at his back, and had entered the sacred precincts of, the Chamber, had walked to the Speaker's Chair and demanded the surrender of those who had dared to protect the privilege of the Commons to discuss the finances before granting supplies. The civil war brought about by the conduct of that King and which had resulted in the overthrow of Royalty for the time being, had been caused by the declaration of the right of the Commons to discuss the finances. No British monarch had since dared to take away the liberties of the Commons in this regard, but here in this State we had mockeries of kings—those sitting on the Government bench—who had presumed to do what a King of England dared not do. Our liberties were to be nullified. If we were to be blocked in discussing the Estimates, where was the benefit of the blood shed in the past for the privileges of Parliament? Without any exaggeration or any forcing of opinions or conclusions in the matter, that was the actual position taken by the Government. What was the object of that? Surely the House was not prevented from discussing this matter. Because it was the only thing on the list to discuss, and therefore if it was out of the way the Government would get into recess? That was not the reason, for there was other business on the Paper that could be dealt with and necessarily must be dealt with before the session closed. But these matters were behind the financial statement, and we were suddenly seized by the throat and ordered to devour the Premier's morsel right away. That was not the conduct of a Government anxious to be fair; it was the conduct of a Government who did not desire their Budget speech to be criticised and put into the full light of day before the public. The Government had succeeded in preventing discussion; it had prevented the consideration of the Estimates. The Budget had not been discussed. The Premier might say that was not the fault of Ministers, because there had been ample opportunity to debate the matter, and members could go on all night if they pleased. The Chair-

man had had some experience of debating and criticising and analysing a Budget speech; he had had the care and worry and labour of preparing such a speech, and knew what care was necessary in a matter of such importance. One must not jump at hasty conclusions. It was not a mere matter of totting up figures, mere additions and subtractions; judgment had to be exercised in every portion of the analysis, in every comparison, and in every calculation. If the Premier found it necessary to take all these weeks to prepare his Speech; if he had at his command all the officers of the Treasury and all the public servants of the State to assist in the preparation and then found that with all these aids, and all his care and thought over it, it was necessary to postpone the delivery of the Speech more than once, was it reasonable that members who had that Budget with the elaborate tables, maps, and documents placed in their hands at a late hour on Tuesday night, could be ready at 2 o'clock the day but one after, to follow the Premier through all the avenues and labyrinths of his discourse. Was it reasonable? Was it just? The Premier did not expect it by demanding that this should be done. The Premier had effectively prevented his speech from being debated. No member, however keen he might be, or how able or capable in finance, could possibly overtake the Premier in that space of time. It would not be wise for one to presume to do it. It could not be expected that a honourable member would lend himself to these opinions and judgments in such a short space of time. Obvious and conspicuous errors might be detected, but the hidden methods of finance or figures one could not be expected to follow; yet the Government demanded that members should debate the speech now or not at all. That meant not at all. What would the country say if the Government were allowed to make their Speech, throw the documents on the table, and rush away to a picnic or their Christmas dinner, and we on the Opposition side said nothing, no one criticising? What would be the good of Parliament if that sort of thing was allowed? It was apparent to him (Mr. Walker) that the Government came to the conclusion that Parliament was no good. The Government could do better without the

Parliament, that was the position they were assuming and it was well the country should know that. The Government were taking up the position that they were capable of running the country without a Parliament. The cry of the Government was, give us our offices, let us administer. They were the Cæsars of the 19th century. The Government told members that the object was to get into recess, to do away with Parliament for the time being. That was not what the British institution of the past had devised. This institution has been ever found necessary. It was King Charles's idea that he could do away with Parliament, and for 11 or 12 years he never called one together; he did without it until he was forced to call it. [MR. HOEAN: He lost his head.] These King Charles's also would metaphorically lose their heads. These slight abuses commenced in an easy way without apparent realisation of what the consequences were to be in the future. Even supposing there was opportunity to properly digest the Budget, read it, and understand it, was it within the possibilities of human nature to properly, calmly, and dispassionately debate the Speech to-night? Was it not a tax on human nature beyond endurance, was it not the continuation of the same policy of brute force to compel members at this hour to debate the Government policy? What was the reason of it? Mr. Daglish had a right to be heard. He had unintentionally been accused of some things, not exactly blundering or unfitness or mismanagement, in the Treasury prior to the advent of the present Government, and he had the right to put himself clearly, as he understood the case, before the public. But he was compelled to speak when he could not be reported to the public, for members did not talk in the Chamber to convince each other, they talked to convince the public outside. That was the object; to put themselves clearly in their position before the public, and the member for Subiaco had the right to put himself in that place, but he was compelled to speak when he could not be reported; he was compelled to lose that privilege; he was effectively gagged. He (Mr. Walker) was an ordinary member, but he represented a constituency that had

the right to appear at this tribunal, and whilst he (Mr. Walker) might submit to be snubbed individually, whilst in the House he could not conscientiously permit his constituents to be insulted; for a wrong to him, a gagging of his liberties, and the prevention of doing his duty was an outrage to the country. Why were the Government afraid of the member for Subiaco making a statement? Surely they should not be afraid of giving him an opportunity, seeing that they had taken his Budget Speech and re-delivered it. The Budget Speech of the member for Subiaco was the Budget Speech of Mr. Rason. The policy of Mr. Daglish was precisely and *in toto* the policy of the present Leader of the Government.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not mention members by name.

MR. WALKER: The Budget Speech by the member for Subiaco and the Speech by the present Premier followed so closely on all-fours that "imitation" was scarcely the word for it. It looked more like forgery, more like practically a theft of the whole of the Budget of the late Premier. Not only did the present Premier go along the lines of the preceding Premier, taking his figures, here and there deducting a little to show what was supposed to be a saving, here and there perhaps adding a new vote to the list in the Estimates, but on the whole continuing line for line, step by step, and stage by stage, on the lines of the member for Subiaco, but he pursued exactly the same reasoning, and the same policy was enunciated, the policy of drift, the policy of what he chose the other night to call optimism; that policy which was utterly condemned by himself and by the country when it was uttered by the member for Subiaco. It was a policy of hope; that was all. At the end of this financial year we were to be faced with a deficit of £132,000. Speaking last year the present Premier said (extract read from *Hansard*, 22nd November, pages 1334-5). Why was this check on the part of the Government to be placed upon the debate? He was trying to get some reasons, some motive that would be understandable. Was it because the Budget Speech of the Treasurer the other night was none other than a declaration to the country that this Government had no policy, but

wished to let things go on as they were, notwithstanding the fact that we were drifting nearer and nearer, he did not say to bankruptcy, because the resources of this State were so great that it would take us a long time to get to that condition, but to a very difficult and trying position? Was it because the Government could not devise any new means of making revenue and expenditure meet? [MEMBER: Yes; the totalisator.] Those were mere playthings of the hour, mere trivialities. There was certainly nothing statesmanlike about these matters. Was it not our duty to provide means of equalising revenue and expenditure? What did the proposals of the Government amount to? That we were to continue to live on loan money, to run the country by borrowing. Table 8, furnished by the Treasurer was wonderfully instructive, but he did not wish to delay the House by reading it in full as the Premier had done. But let members just casually take a glance from the 14th July, 1891, to the time when the Federal Government took Sir John Forrest away. During Sir John Forrest's time all our great undertakings were commenced, and many of them completed. True, some works were left for succeeding Governments to complete; but they had appropriations in hand for carrying out those works.

THE PREMIER: Wrong.

MR. WALKER: Not at all. Till Sir John Forrest left office borrowing had been increasing, but had never been excessive. From 1891 to 1900 we had not exceeded a loan of a million; but the moment Sir John Forrest left we had loans in rapid succession. On the 22nd March, 1900, £1,000,000; on the 27th November, 1900, £880,000; on the 1st January, 1901, £500,000; on the 18th September, 1901, £1,500,000; on the 30th January, 1902, £1,500,000; on the 14th May, 1903, £483,215; on the 1st January, 1905, £500,000; on the 8th June, 1905, £1,400,000. The bulk of our loan indebtedness might almost be said to have accumulated since Sir John Forrest left us; and what great public works were in hand since then to absorb the loan moneys?

THE PREMIER: What works had to be paid for?

MR. WALKER: There were some legacies of works to be done, together with some money to pay for them. The Premier's interjection did not alter the fact that we were running the country—not public works construction, but ordinary administration—by means of loan moneys; we were fast becoming dependent on loans for the expenses of Government. Such a course was dangerous; it meant a smash by-and-by. There was the excuse that the Commonwealth had not given us the support we received from it a few years ago. The interstate duties had disappeared. But that was no excuse for relying on a loan policy. It was rather a stimulus to a Government to devise measures to enable them to overtake expenditure. But what did they propose? They had only a hope that they would be able to dock a few pounds in departmental working expenses. That would not develop the country. The country needed, not cheeseparing, but spirited and generous assistance, so that its citizens might develop all its resources. We must spend money to get money. Miserliness in public administration was inimical to progress, and checked the spirit of the people. So as not to be niggardly we must have money, and our revenue, if insufficient, must be increased. If ordinary taxation proposals were not agreeable, other means of financing might be tried, he believed, with benefit. Why could not the Government do what had been done, say, in the Channel Islands, where public works were undertaken, and paper money was issued on the security of those works as they were constructed? This course was already foreshadowed by the State Bank of South Australia. The proposal was not new, and it showed a possible means of tiding over temporary difficulties. But a policy of continued borrowing was suicidal. Every year we had to find not less than £811,920 for loan interest and sinking fund.

MR. TROY drew attention to the state of the House.

THE PREMIER: Why did the hon. member send his men out?

MR. TROY: They had not been sent out.

THE PREMIER: They had.

MR. TROY: The only member who had left the room was the member for Canning (Mr. Gordon), the Government Whip.

The Premier's assertion must be withdrawn.

THE PREMIER withdrew the statement, if the hon. member's sense of honour would thereby be satisfied.

[Bells rung and quorum formed.]

MR. WALKER: The Premier said in his Budget Speech that he purposed deferring any lengthy reference to the Loan Estimates and farther borrowing until the Loan Estimates themselves were submitted; that he thought there had grown up a practice of referring too fully to the Loan Estimates when considering the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure; that it would be better to keep the two distinct; that many of the works hitherto undertaken solely from revenue would have to be contributed to from loan funds; and that existing authorisations having been exceeded, a farther authorisation would be necessary. This was a declaration that we must live constantly on borrowed money, without making any effort to rescue ourselves from the hands of the money lenders; and that the State must be saddled with an ever-increasing annual interest bill. We were now approaching the time when we must find about a million per annum to meet our loan obligations; and according to the Premier, this sum must constantly increase. It was very well to say that if we capitalised our railways, public buildings, and other assets which we had to show for the money spent, we should find that our borrowing possibilities were by no means exhausted, and that we had untold resources beyond those visible testimonies of material wealth. But was that any reason why we should play with these resources, and pay interest to foreign money-lenders, when that interest, devoted to the development of the country, would so materially advance the welfare of the State? No matter how much money we could borrow, nor how easily we could borrow it, we must in the end pay the piper. Some sacrifice of pleasure and of happiness must be sustained by every citizen, in order to provide these easy going Ministers with a policy. What sort of statesmen were needed to pursue a borrowing policy? So long as money-lenders would trust them, Ministers would drift along piling up indebtedness; but the

pile ultimately became a weight around the neck of the State, interfering with our prosperity, depriving us directly of wealth, and producing on our citizens a still more deleterious effect, inasmuch as it roused in every thoughtful man a feeling that he was under the thumb of the plutocrat abroad; that the material wealth surrounding the citizen was not his own; that he could feel no pride in it; that the railways of which we boasted, the great water scheme—the monument of the perseverance and ability of Sir John Forrest—and all other visible public assets, were pawned to the absentee money-lender; in fact, the whole country was mortgaged. In this State above all others it seemed to be nothing but bathos. People laughed at rousing themselves out of the daily, sordid routine of dull monotony. No race had ever become great that had not risen above the morbid conditions of the hour and experienced lofty sentiments. Was there no need in Australia for an Australian patriotism? But how absurd it was to talk of it when we knew that everything was mortgaged—all our lands, public buildings, and great trade arteries—to the foreign money lender. This was a blight on the sense of patriotism and stopped the generation of that proud feeling of patriotism we should have. Despite our boasted freedom, there was still the feeling existing that we were under the control of the wealthy men of the mother country, that we were as it were paying in another form a tribute of taxation without representation, that we were not free to act on our own autonomy, and that we were not capable of creating wealth from our own resources. This undoubtedly was a blot on our national progress that could not be got rid of until we discontinued the constant borrowing which was a curse to the State. It was necessary for someone to protest against this policy of drift being pursued. Those who ought to govern us were getting into a lackadaisical condition in regard to affairs, thinking not of the future but of the hour, and trying to get through their duties with as little disturbance to their pleasures as possible, delegating duties, which in the past were performed by Ministers, to irresponsible bodies and commissioners, and allowing others to automatically work what was part of the machinery of Responsible

Government. Ministers were trying to evade the duties that had been theirs since the granting of Responsible Government; and so, when it devolved on them to formulate a policy to enable the revenue and expenditure to balance, or to enable the revenue to surpass the expenditure, we found they evaded the task by resorting to the loan market, a policy of improvidence to be condemned by all private citizens. We condemned the policy of the private citizen going to the pawnshop; and if this was a weakness on the part of the citizen, why should it be honourable in the case of a Minister? The Ministry ought to be a pattern to the people. It was a disgrace to see a Ministry publishing such a policy of recklessness and, without regard to the revenue, resorting to the loan market, forgetting they not only pledged us in a monetary obligation to those who lent the money, but pledged the public spirit of the State and robbed us of that sense of patriotism so necessary to be encouraged among the people, thus degrading our instincts, robbing us of our national ideal, and making us move about in a spirit of slavery. There was a depression which at times members felt coming on them, an intangible shadow which they seemed not to be able to lift, but which pressed on their hearts and enervated their frames, and which prevented them from undertaking with spirit and life the duties that waited them; and what might happen to the individual sometimes happened to the nation. As a nation, we were now under that shadow—the shadow of the loan market.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee were not discussing the Loan Estimates.

MR. WALKER: But the Committee were discussing the utterances of the Treasurer, who distinctly said that works constructed out of revenue in the past would have to be contributed to by Loan Funds. This was an absolute change of policy, in declining to recognise revenue as the factor for constructing our works, and it was a heinous departure for any Government to resort to loans to do so. We should refrain from borrowing, stop the headlong course to ruin as speedily as possible, and come back to a healthy condition when revenue and expenditure would balance. He (Mr. Walker) had no object in talking against

time, but it was his duty to point out what he had, and to have gone farther and discussed the whole of the statements of the Treasurer. However, he could not conclude without expressing regret at the spirit exhibited by the Government in seeking to stifle the right of members to debate the Estimates. It was a clear stroke, not at members, but at Parliamentary institutions whose existence was for the purpose of maintaining discussion on the finances before granting supplies.

[2.15 a.m.]

MOTION, TO REPORT PROGRESS.

MR. HOLMAN moved that progress be reported.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member would need to wait five minutes before doing so.

MR. HOLMAN: Progress has not been asked for recently. It was very unfair.

THE TREASURER: Chair!

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was correct. He (the Chairman) had been thinking of the call for a quorum.

Motion put, and a division called for.

MR. HOLMAN: It was very unfair to wait until there was a sufficient number of the members on the Government side to call for a division. It was one of the dirtiest points that had been shown.

Division resulted as follows:—

Ayes	...	...	...	11
Noes	...	...	...	21

Majority against ... 10

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Barnett
Mr. Collier	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Cowcher
Mr. Holman	Mr. Diamond
Mr. Horan	Mr. Eddy
Mr. Hudson	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Lynch	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Gull
Mr. Walker	Mr. Hicks
Mr. Ware	Mr. Holmes
Mr. Taylor (Teller).	Mr. Isdell
	Mr. Keenan
	Mr. Layman
	Mr. Mitchell
	Mr. Monger
	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. Price
	Mr. Rason
	Mr. Smith
	Mr. F. Wilson
	Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

MR. HOLMAN said he was sorry indeed that he had to protest against the

action of the Chairman when moving that progress be reported.

THE CHAIRMAN said he had apologised for having made the mistake, and he thought the Committee had accepted the apology.

MR. HOLMAN accepted the apology, and did so because members always had to accept the apology of the Chair. There were members in the Chamber who refused to attend to their duties, and those who spoke had to address 3 or 4 members only. An opportunity had not been given to members to voice their opinions. Not a member on the Government side had risen to say a word, and members were being treated in a disgraceful manner. Time after time labour members had been criticised for their caucus meetings, but never in the history of any political party were members so bound together as had been shown that evening. On a former occasion when a member was invited to take the highest position in the Assembly, the Speakership, the party in power held a caucus and selected the member for the post.

THE PREMIER: Was any member in order in making slighting allusions to the Speaker elected by the whole House.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member was entirely out of order in casting reflections on any member, let alone the Speaker.

[MR. DAGLISH took the Chair.]

MR. HOLMAN did not reflect on the Speaker, but on the party holding a dominating power in the House. He entered his protest against the manner in which the Government had placed the Estimates of revenue and expenditure before the country. Members were asked to dispose of this important question in a few hours, although it was a matter that affected the whole State of Western Australia for 12 months.

MR. COLLIER called attention to the state of the House.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Daglish): The hon. member not being in his place, notice could not be taken of the request.

MR. LYNCH called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and a quorum formed.

DEBATE RESUMED.

MR. HOLMAN: It was a disgrace that the Legislature should allow a momentous matter like the Estimates to

be dealt with in a few minutes practically, and members were treated like "dumb driven cattle" when raising their voices in protest against what was being done. Members should have had a fortnight's discussion of these Estimates. Never in the history of politics had an attempt been made to thrust the Estimates down the throats of members. We were asked to deal with nearly four millions of money in a few minutes, and threats were made that the general debate would have to close that night. The threat was not made in the Chamber, but in the lobbies, and members were told they would have to stay in the House until the question was put. We had to enter our most emphatic protest against public business being conducted in such a way. Members should do their duty to the public. The estimated revenue from the Commonwealth was set down at £1,362,781; from that had to be deducted the expenditure, leaving the net return from the Commonwealth £932,346. Then there was the estimate of the State revenue, which amounted to £2,702,541, which with the Commonwealth revenue made a total of £3,634,887. The Treasurer estimated to have a deficit on the 30th June, 1904, amounting to £132,851. Some time ago when dealing with the financial problem at Midland Junction the Treasurer considered that the affairs of the State during the previous 12 months had been carried on in a very loose manner and to the detriment of the people of the State. What did we find now? An effort was being made to mislead the people of the State by showing a boosted up statement, in the general summary of revenue. The time had come for members to enter their most emphatic protest against it. The Treasurer expected to derive £12,000 from a totalisator tax but it would be proved this was an impossibility.

NO QUORUM.

MR. COLLIER called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung and quorum formed.

THE PREMIER: It was within his Honour's knowledge that there was a quorum present within the precincts of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: As long as members were in the precincts, it was unnecessary

to continue the quorum in the House itself.

RESUMED.

MR. HOLMAN: The Premier estimated to receive £20,000 by a probate duty, this being some £10,000 more than was received last year. [THE PREMIER: We had £9,000 of it already.] Yes, and in all probability, if the same policy went on, the hon. gentleman would kill off the best men in the State and get more than he estimated. [THE PREMIER had no desire to do so.] The hon. gentleman's policy would kill anything. In regard to probate duty, we had, he thought, an over-estimate of £5,000 or £6,000; and as to £9,000 having been received for the first half year, we must look back and see what had been received in former years. He did not think the Estimates in regard to these three items alone would be met by some £30,000, and this with the £132,000 would bring the deficit up to some £160,000. In all probability, the same loose manner of bringing down the estimates of revenue which the Premier expected to receive during the next 12 months would be found, if we were to go through every item in this general summary of the estimates of revenue. Last year a considerable amount of work was done out of revenue, but it was the intention of the present Government to do that work out of loan money. Last year we spent £90,000 out of revenue in doing necessary work; and almost the whole of that amount was spent amongst the workers. But we found that it was the intention of the Government either not to do this necessary work at all, or else to do it out of loan. There was a considerable amount of difficulty and hardship encountered by the unemployed in this State, and if certain works were carried out and done as they should be, work would be found for some 600 or 700 men, which would increase the prosperity of the State. The Government were doing nothing at all to cope with that difficulty. The financial question was of vital importance in Western Australia at the present time, and we must recognise that during the next three or four years great financial difficulties would have to be faced in Western Australia; and it would take the combined wisdom of members to encounter and overcome those diffi-

culties. When the present Premier was leader of the Opposition, he was very strong on some matters, and one would have thought that when he had the opportunity, with such a large majority as that behind him, he would have brought forward some questions and have endeavoured to carry out what he professed to think, when in Opposition, the only thing to be done. During the discussion of the Estimates last year the hon. gentleman made the following remarks (read extract from *Hansard*, 22nd November, p. 1336). Such were the criticisms of the present Premier on the Labour Government, who at that time were only a few months in power. Why did he not now give the same opportunity as he took then?

THE PREMIER: His then proposals were now being given effect to.

MR. HOLMAN: But the Premier had been in power some four or five months, and had nothing to show.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Daglish): Members must not argue across the Chamber.

MR. HOLMAN: The Premier said he had a Bill dealing with Government trading concerns. No such Bill was on his (Mr. Holman's) file; and if a Bill had been introduced, there would not be time to give it needful consideration. During the past week, much more work could have been done. Members were forced to sit in the Chamber for four days a week, save during a few hours in the morning. Why must they put in an appearance, as they did the other day, to hear a few inane remarks from the Minister for Mines, who was left in charge of the House, when the affairs of the State were disregarded to allow a few Cabinet Ministers to fatten on the good things brought out from England on H.M.S. "Powerful"? Again and again the Government sympathisers and the Press had stated that the Labour Government would not only prevent capital from entering the country, but would by every other means bring about ruin and devastation. In a debate on last year's Estimates, the Premier, then leader of the Opposition, made the following remarks:—[Extract read from *Hansard*, 22nd November, 1904, pages 1338-90.] At that time the hon. member criticised the Labour Gov-

ernment because stocks had fallen slightly during the four months they had been in power; but after the Labour Government were in power for some eight or nine months, West Australian stocks had risen higher than those of the Eastern States; had risen from £84 to £89, which was the price of our 3 per cent. stocks last June. Our $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stocks had risen from £95 to £98 in last May, when the Labour Government had been in power for some 10 months.

THE PREMIER: Did the hon. member quote that as the price?

MR. HOLMAN: On the 10th August the price of our $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cents. was from £95 to £97.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member had said £98.

MR. HOLMAN: In June of this year the same stock was quoted at from £98 to £99.

[3 a.m.]

MR. HOLMAN: In ten months the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stocks had risen from £95 to £98, and the 3 per cent. stocks from £84 to £89; so that the financiers in Great Britain showed more confidence in the Labour Government than in the present Government, because West Australian stocks were now considerably lower. On the 9th instant the 3 per cent. stocks were £86 and the $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. stocks were £97.

THE TREASURER advised the hon. member to leave stocks alone.

MR. HOLMAN: While the Labour Government were in power, the Russo-Japanese war was in progress, but now peace was practically fixed for ten years, yet our stocks had fallen away. He did not pretend to know anything about stocks, and merely used the present Treasurer's argument in regard to them. Our stocks had fallen away; but whether it was due to the feeling at home that there might be some more secret purchases of land, such as took place some years ago, he did not know. When the Estimates were last before Parliament, members of the present Government, but then in Opposition, had complained that some inquiry was not held regarding the purchase of land for the new Fremantle Railway Station; yet no inquiry was instituted since those gentlemen had become members of the present Adminis-

tration. Perhaps £20,000 had been paid away for land more than it was actually worth. The Treasurer, as the then Minister for Works, had been responsible for the purchase of that land.

THE TREASURER asked the hon. member to withdraw, the hon. member being aware that he (the Treasurer) was not the person who made that arrangement.

MR. HOLMAN: The hon. gentleman having been Minister for Works at the time, the land was purchased under his authority.

THE TREASURER: Nothing of the kind.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must accept the Treasurer's denial.

MR. HOLMAN accepted the denial, but the member for Guildford had been the Minister, and the work was carried out by officers of the Public Works Department. He had seen the papers in connection with the matter. There was something of a scandal in it. In August, 1903, two blocks at Fremantle had been offered to the Government for £6,000 and later, they had been purchased for £8,000. In the meantime two members of Parliament had purchased the blocks and re-sold them to the Government. A statement had been made during last Parliament by the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) that in this regard information had leaked out. At any rate, some members of the present Cabinet had been in power at the time. The Treasurer talked of the great opportunities we would give to the foreign investor by altering our mining laws; but while the present Government remained in power the foreign investor would be chary of investing money in this country. More money was invested in Western Australia by outside people in the twelve months while the Labour Government were in power than in any two or three years previously. Had the Labour Government still been in power there would be a much better state of affairs in the country. There seemed to be a desire to close the session before members could ascertain something regarding Collie coal. He eagerly awaited the time when the information promised in this regard would be available, so that we could deal with the question this session. As Minister, he (Mr. Holman) had dealt with the Collie

coal question. The James Government had left to the Labour Government the task of accepting coal tenders. The Collie Proprietary and Collie Cardiff companies alone had put in prices, at 12s. 9d. per ton for coal at a certain calorific value and at 11s. 6d. per ton for any quality. These prices the Labour Government had refused to pay, but to encourage the industry they had decided to give 11s. per ton on a tentative supply, no contract being made. Two of the representatives of the companies interested who were now in this Chamber, had interviewed him (Mr. Holman) in his office and informed him that they could not sell the coal below a certain price. A gentleman named Mr. Frank Wilson had interviewed him.

PERSONAL ALLUSION.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN: If the hon. member was alluding to any member of the House, he should allude to him by the district represented by the hon. member.

MR. HOLMAN claimed to be alluding to the attorney for the company.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member was alluding to a member of the House.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN: A member of the House must be alluded to by the district he represented.

MR. HOLMAN claimed to be speaking, not of the member of Sussex, but of a gentleman named Mr. Frank Wilson, the attorney for this coal company.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN: The hon. member should deal with the member for Sussex.

MR. HOLMAN said he would deal with the member for Sussex later on.

THE ACTING CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must obey the ruling of the Chair. A member of Parliament must only be spoken of by his electoral district. The question as to whether a person was spoken of in his capacity as a business man was immaterial. He remained a member of Parliament when spoken of in the House.

RESUMED.

MR. HOLMAN accepted the ruling of the Chair, but he was speaking of the attorney for the Collie Proprietary Company, the member for Sussex. At that time the member for Sussex with the

member for Collie, who was deeply interested in the Collie Cardiff mine, attended at his office and stated that it was impossible to supply coal under 11s. 6d. per ton. Inquiries were made, and it was found that these two gentlemen had put their heads together to submit one price: they endeavoured to get a monopoly for the supply of coal to the Government, for everyone knew that the Government railways kept the Collie mines going. The matter was dealt with by the Labour Government, and a decision came to that a certain price was to be given for the coal pending the report by Dr. Jack. During the time Dr. Jack was making his inquiry the Government were not idle; they inquired into the coal question themselves. Other companies sprung into existence, and the Government were of opinion that the coal should be supplied to the Government at a much less price. These new companies made an offer to supply the coal at a lesser price than was paid to the Collie-Cardiff and Proprietary Companies. These offers were accepted, and the coal was supplied by the Co-operative Company at 10s. 6d. per ton. Another company sprang into existence and offered to supply coal at 9s. a ton. That offer was also accepted. It was stated that the company supplying coal at 9s. a ton was doing so at a loss, so to test that question he (Mr. Holman) issued instructions that the amount of coal taken from that company should be doubled, and had that company been turning out the coal at a loss they would not have doubled their loss. When they had an opportunity of doubling their order they took the opportunity and supplied the coal at 9s. a ton. That showed there was something radically wrong. The Co-operative company was selling coal to the Government at 10s. a ton, and the other company at 9s. a ton. That saved the Government of the State some thousands of pounds. After inquiries were made tenders were received by the Government and practically accepted; but the present Government refused to accept those tenders. He did not know whether it was because the member for Sussex was interested in the industry.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member should not impute anything.

MR. HOLMAN said he did not know what influence the member for Sussex

had on the Cabinet, but the arrangement which was practically come to by the Labour Government was upset, and it was found that royalties were waived and concessions given to companies. That was a disgrace. These concessions should not be made to private individuals to foster an industry. He would at any time favour the granting of concessions to forward the coal industry; but he protested against the Government putting money into pockets of private individuals. Questions were asked in the House relative to the coal question a short time ago, and it was stated that the matter was to be fixed up at some date. The matter had not been fixed up yet; and as soon as the House went into recess, and when there could be no criticism, no doubt the matter would be fixed up. If concessions were to be made at all, they should be granted to those who were engaged in the industry; but assistance should not be given to put money into the pockets of a few boodlers.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Who was the hon. member referring to as boodlers?

MR. HOLMAN: Those to whom the Minister had previously referred. He remembered the day when the Minister for Mines referred to one of his own colleagues as a boodler and swindler.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member was making a statement which was not correct.

MR. HOLMAN accepted the denial, but he could bring a thousand witnesses to bear out the statement he had made.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must accept the statement without reserve.

MR. HOLMAN accepted the denial without any reserve, but he was sorry that some members condemned others and then subsequently sat side by side with them in the same Cabinet.

NO QUORUM.

MR. COLLIER called attention to the state of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE AND LABOUR: Members were in the vicinity of the Chamber.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Daglish): In regard to this matter, the Speaker gave a ruling over an hour ago, and it was not for him as Chairman to express any opinion whatever on the question. Attention had

been called to the absence of a quorum, and the Speaker, who had sole power in the matter, gave a ruling and specified the time. Seeing that over an hour had elapsed since attention was previously called to the state of the House, it was necessary to refer the matter to the Speaker again.

[Bells rung.]

THE DEPUTY SPEAKER: There was a quorum present.

RESUMED.

MR. HOLMAN: It was a disgrace for any Government to grant a concession to an industry without protecting the country. At present the coal industry at Colliie gave work to hundreds of men, and no doubt supported over a thousand people. It was an industry worthy of encouragement. When he (Mr. Holman) was Minister he did his utmost to encourage the industry, but he considered it a disgrace for any Government to put money into the pockets of private individuals; it was a short-sighted attempt to bolster up an industry without giving adequate protection to those who were living by that industry. Some little time ago a contract was almost completed by the Labour Government in connection with the supply of Colliie coal. The coal industry was worthy of every encouragement, but he wished inquiry made as to why the Government were giving 1s. a ton more for the coal than the companies had offered to sell it for. We were also told that the Government would not make any provision with regard to people engaged in the industry. [Mr. Ewing: They looked after that themselves.] The Government looked after the private individuals by giving them this extra 1s., but he pitied the poor unfortunate men. He knew that during the last twelve months these men had had a hard row to hoe, and rather than see people in a state of semi-starvation, as he knew some people down there had been in, he would prefer to see the industry closed down for ever. An amount equalling about 100,000s. a year was paid to these private individuals as a sop or something. [Mr. Ewing: No sop; a fair deal.] In some cases the bonus paid was 1s. 6d. a ton. In regard to the construction of a railway—he

thought it was the Collie-Cardiff railway—that work was not wanted at all, because at that time there was ample coal at Collie to supply the whole of the necessities of this State. Owing to the construction of that line, we were called upon to keep four collieries open at Collie, and pay away money in that direction.

STATE OF THE HOUSE.

MR. COLLIER called attention to the state of the House.

THE CHAIRMAN: On the ruling of Mr. Speaker I cannot take any notice of the call so soon after the last call.

MR. BOLTON: Did Mr. Speaker give a ruling, or say a quorum was present?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member is not in his place.

MR. BOLTON: Then I will get back.

MR. COLLIER: I want your grounds for the ruling.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have given my ruling in accordance with the decision of the hon. the Speaker. If the House desires to object to my ruling, there is a proper course to take under the Standing Orders. That is, to put an objection in writing and place it before his Honour.

MR. BOLTON: Will you state the time when attention can be again called?

THE CHAIRMAN: No; I will not.

RESUMED.

MR. HOLMAN: Why were we asked to give a bonus to four collieries at Collie when one company could supply the whole of the coal needed? It was estimated that there would be a deficit of something like £130,000 or £140,000; but he was satisfied it would be nearer £200,000 than £130,000. The time had come when we should stop giving concessions to colliery owners at Collie, and keeping four sets of officers down there who were doing nothing for the money they received, and nothing for the men in that industry. We should consider the absolute necessity and advisability of owning the coal industries. Then we could protect the finances of this State and supply coal to our railways at 7s. per ton, the saving as compared with the present cost being something like £10,000 a year, and at the same time we could pay a higher rate of wages. [MR. EWING: Why did not the hon. member move in that direction when in power?] He did

not expect the hon. member to agree with him. He remembered when the hon. member told him in his office that coal could not be supplied under 11s. 6d. a ton. At that time two members of this House, one of whom was not then a member, tried to use their business capacity to take from this State money by unfair means, but they found that men of business in the State were not going to allow boodlers to take the State down. The Labour Government were the means of saving £10,000 a year on coal alone in connection with the Collie coal question, and that £10,000 would have gone into pockets of the colliery owners, who would have squeezed all they could out of the workers and in a great many cases have treated them in a very unfair manner. It was desirable to encourage the industry so far as we could, but we should be very careful to safeguard the finances of the State and not pay too dearly for it. If we found the companies could not pay a fair rate of wages, it would be only a proper thing to pay 2d. or 3d. a ton above the company's tender if provision were made that the money should go to the men engaged in that industry. That money would then be going back into the people's hands and not into the pockets of boodlers. [THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: How much profit per ton would the hon. member give the companies?] If they were business men they would not offer that coal at a price which would mean a loss. He would not object to another 2d. or 3d. per ton being paid, so as to secure fair wages. But he strongly objected to paying from £5,000 to £7,000 in the shape of a bonus of 1s. 3d. or 1s. 6d. per ton. He objected to this matter being held over till the Government reached recess, when there might be transactions like that of the secret purchase at Rocky Bay and the purchase of land in Phillimore-street, Fremantle. Those secret purchases were a disgrace to any Government. The Estimates showed a proposed expenditure of £1,500 on fire brigades. Of this the Perth board would receive £800 or £900, leaving only £500 or £600 for the upkeep of 27 or 28 country brigades. It was a disgrace to the Government to force the brigades to go begging from door to door. The Government, instead

of closing the session at once, perhaps to carry out some transaction which would not bear the light of day, ought to sit for some months, so as to put our fire brigades on a financial basis. The Government paid £25,000 to £7,000 a year for the benefit of men engaged in coal-mining, but allowed fire insurance companies to escape without paying a penny towards the upkeep of the brigades. It would be disgraceful to go into recess without passing an amending Fire Brigades Bill, forcing the insurance companies to pay a fair contribution towards upkeep. For the Government to contribute to this while letting the insurance companies go free, was equivalent to giving the latter a bonus; but in a Government composed of the gentlemen opposite we could hardly expect much else. The Premier promised spur lines for agricultural districts. These lines would but increase our loan expenditure and annual interest bill; and some of them would not pay axle-grease. While favouring the encouragement of agricultural districts, he protested against such expenditure while other places of greater importance were neglected. What of the construction of the Black Range line, and the extension of the Nannine line to Meekatharra? Those works would employ hundreds of men. Why was nothing done to construct the railway in the North-West? Like many other projects, that had been dropped by the Government, whose only desire was to throw sops to their constituents. The Minister for Commerce was selecting the route with a view to his own constituency.

THE MINISTER FOR COMMERCE: The route was being fixed up now.

[MR. ILLINGWORTH took the Chair.]

[4 a.m.]

MR. HOLMAN hoped it would not be fixed up like the Collie coal, in order to secure political support. Instead of paying thousands per annum to private persons for coal, better spend that money in constructing one or two light spur lines, rather than build these out of borrowed money, seeing that we were already paying £800,000 annually in interest and sinking fund. The Estimates showed an expected deficiency of over £130,000, and that deficit would be increased to

over £200,000 before the end of the year, else many necessary works would not be carried out. And we were still farther to increase the burden on the people by building unpayable spur lines! The only proposal for an increase of revenue was a tax on totalisators. The Treasurer estimated to receive £12,000 a year from this source; but as six months of the financial year had already elapsed, how could a return be expected this year? Instead of that Bill—a re-hash of the policy of the late Government—the Government should tax the unimproved value of land, and impose an income tax, thus squaring the finances. The totalisator tax was a legacy from the Daglish Government. The Premier's only desire seemed to be to show a good result on paper, and then go into recess, and so be free from criticism. In connection with public works and railways, the expense of administration was increased, less money was to be spent in works, and works previously constructed from revenue were to be constructed from loan moneys, an unwise policy. On the item of wages alone there was a decrease of £45,000. Concerning the rabbit-proof fence, he knew that there were rabbits on both sides of the fence, and knew men who had captured eight or nine inside the fence beyond Nannine. Had the policy of the Labour Government, to push forward the construction of the fence with the greatest speed, been pursued by the previous Governments, the danger of a rabbit invasion on the settled districts would not be so imminent. A quarter of a million had been spent on these fences, and they would yet cost another £100,000; also the cost of their upkeep must come from revenue. To provide that money we must retrench or introduce farther taxation, for which there was ample room. Regarding mining, we should give the industry every possible encouragement, even if it necessitated our incurring a greater deficit. What assistance was given by the present Government to prospectors? At Wiluna nearly 50 per cent. of the gold went into the sands and slimes, but the James Government had refused to erect a cyanide plant. A private individual had made an arrangement with the Mines Department to be allowed to erect a cyanide plant there, but there

had been dissatisfaction, and the late Minister for Mines (Mr. Johnson) had permitted the prospectors to treat their own slimes. The present Government on coming into office had refused that assistance, and so had discouraged the prospectors at Wiluna. Notwithstanding all the protests of the Government as to the assistance they were going to give to prospectors, we found that in almost every case the back country was sacrificed to the interests of one or two districts. Out of sixteen public batteries, eight or nine were situated in the electorate of the present Minister for Mines.

MR. SCADDAN: More; nearly 75 per cent.

MR. HOLMAN: This was a scandal. He had been refused the batteries for the Murchison district, and though hundreds and thousands were put on the Estimates to beautify Perth and Busselton, he could not get money for roads to open up the Murchison Goldfield. It was a crying shame that grants were made for roads in the Busselton district, while the Government refused to make roads to assist prospectors in the back country to enable them to get cheaper food. The Premier had said that he intended to build schools where necessary. At Meekathara, one of the richest mining districts, and where all the shows except one were owned by prospectors and small leaseholders a school was required. Application had been made time after time for a school but the Government had refused the request. The prospectors built a hall and gave the Government the use of it for a school and a teacher was supplied. It was now found that the hall was too small, but no grant was on the Estimates to build a school at Meekathara, while schools were being built in the district represented by the Minister for Works. Was this the old policy of spoils to the victors, was it a case of sop? At the present time people in the back blocks had to keep two homes, for a man could not take his wife and children into the back country where there was no educational facilities. If more facilities were granted by the construction of roads and buildings and schools in the back places that would do more to encourage the mining industry than the erection of a few batteries in the electorate of the Minister for Mines.

Every encouragement seemed to be given to prospectors in the Minister's electorate. There was a camel depôt in Menzies, and thousands of pounds were spent for the upkeep of that depôt, but when camels were desired by people in other parts of the country they could not get them. The boast of the Premier that the Government would assist the prospectors was not genuine. The prospectors all over the State should be assisted and not those in one or two electorates. He had made requests for grants for roads in his district but had been refused. The promises of the Government were not kept. Some years ago some thousands of tons of sands were taken from the prospectors and the present Minister for Mines used the returns from those sands to bolster up the battery system. The policy adopted by the last Minister for Mines in allowing leaseholders to treat their own slimes had been departed from by the present Minister. There was an amalgamated prospectors and leaseholders association in Western Australia, and when the present Minister for Mines was speaking at one of their meetings he dealt with this question and said that a certain amount of money was set apart for assistance to prospectors, but that the amount was not sufficient. It would be far better to increase the grant and spread it over the State and not spend money in one or two favoured electorates. The assistance which had been given to prospectors by the Government in the past had been of importance to the State. In connection with the Cue One mine assistance had been rendered to the amount of £1,000, and this had enabled the owners of that mine to strike a reef which might prove a great benefit to the mining industry. If more assistance was required by the Cue One mine it should be granted. The money which had been advanced would be returned. If more assistance were given to the prospectors in the Murchison district, the country would be developed and employment would be found for thousands of men. He (Mr. Holman) had asked for crushing facilities and roads in his electorate, but the applications had been refused. The gold turned out from the north Murchison district amounted to thousands of ounces a year, but the people could not get any facilities in the shape of schools,

hospitals, or roads. He would be unworthy to represent these people if he did not enter his protest against the way in which the money was being spent. The hospital at Nannine had to serve the surrounding districts for miles, and they asked for £200 to build quarters so that the nurses would not have to sleep in the dormer rooms, but that request was refused. [THE PREMIER: By whom?] By the present Government. [THE PREMIER: That was wrong.] He had made a request as soon as the present Government had come into power. [THE PREMIER: Why did not the hon. member make it before?] The request was made by him when it was required. During the time he was Minister for Labour he never granted any facilities to the people in his district until he had granted facilities to people in every other district; but things were now changed. People in the back parts of the country could not get anything, whereas others could get grants for gardens, parks, etc. Assistance was asked in regard to hospitals, but they could not get it. They also asked for school facilities which, if not refused, were not granted. They also asked for roads. They asked that prospectors out back should be allowed to treat their own slimes, so that they might get money to open up their own properties, and that was refused. Another matter having reference to the expenditure of money was the case of See Wah & Co. He found that £15 costs had been paid to the representatives of See Wah & Co.

POINT OF ORDER.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not see what this has to do with the estimates.

MR. HOLMAN: It is a question of paying £15.

THE TREASURER: On a point of order, I must protest. It seems to me that the hon. member is constantly repeating himself, and I submit with all respect that his object obviously is to block progress, and I ask you, sir, to take the matter into consideration.

THE CHAIRMAN: May says:—

A member who resorts to persistent irrelevance may, under Standing Order No. 24, be directed by the Speaker or the Chairman to discontinue his speech, after the attention of the House has been called to the conduct of the member; and akin to irrelevancy is the frequent repeti-

tion of the same arguments, whether of the arguments of the member speaking, or the arguments of other members, an offence which may be met by the power given to the Chair under Standing Order No. 24.

I hope the hon. member will refrain from repeating himself in his arguments.

MR. HOLMAN: We were dealing with prospectors.

THE CHAIRMAN: That subject has been discussed three or four times by the hon. member to-night.

RESUMED.

MR. HOLMAN said he would go on to a subject which perhaps occupied second position in regard to importance to the people in this State—that of agriculture. Next in importance came either the timber industry or the squatting industry, and he would deal with them in their turn. In the Estimates a great amount of money was set down for the assistance of those engaged in agricultural pursuits, and he agreed with that. At the same time, before that money was spent we should see that our finances were in a better position than at present. He had always agreed to give every possible facility to the agriculturists in the back country to allow them to make a market and get their produce to market. We must be very pleased to know the progress that had been made; but on the Estimates appeared a great deal more money than was necessary for expenditure on roads in agricultural districts. Instead of money being spent on roads that perhaps were never used once in 12 months, it would be far better to spend it in opening up the country. He thoroughly approved of the establishment of agricultural farms run by the State, and also of the expenditure of money for the establishment of an experimental dairy. In relation to lands and surveys, a considerable sum was spent every year for survey. The selector did not pay any of these fees, and, so far as he could learn, every area of land taken up was taken up at a great loss. [THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Let the hon. member read the Bill.] One was afraid that if the Premier had his way, this session would pass without the necessary provisions being made for safeguarding the expenditure of money in that direction. The measure was one to which he would give his support.

But we spent thousands on immigration, and put the immigrants on uncleared lands, and made them pay survey fees. They should pay survey fees, but the payments should be extended over a number of years. Immigrants should be put on land we had cleared and fenced, else the little money they brought with them would soon be exhausted, and they would join the ranks of the unemployed. The experimental dairy ought to receive every encouragement; and he would support the expenditure of a few thousands for the purpose of retaining in the country much money now sent abroad for dairy produce. Before the Estimates passed, we should have an opportunity of perusing the reports on the experimental farms.

POINT OF ORDER.

THE TREASURER: If only for the purpose of recording my protest, I again draw attention to the fact that the hon. member is manifestly wasting time. He is constantly repeating himself, and introducing irrelevant matter that has no connection at all with the Estimates under discussion. I ask you, sir, to tell the hon. member what should be his duty.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Illingworth): I have already called the hon. member's attention to a ruling in *May*. I should be very sorry to have to enforce it; but I shall be compelled to do so if he does not keep more closely to the subject.

MR. HOLMAN: I was dealing with experimental farms.

THE CHAIRMAN: The question before the Committee is the item, "His Excellency the Governor."

MR. HOLMAN: I maintain I am following the course which you, sir, have followed in times past when speaking generally on the Estimates. Latitude was given then for general speeches on the various departments; and if speakers were not in order then, the fact that attention was not called to their being out of order has perhaps led me on this occasion to transgress the rules of the House. If so, I am sorry; but if am not allowed to compare departmental reports on matters affecting the present estimated deficit—

THE TREASURER: The time you have wasted would have been sufficient.

MR. HOLMAN: I cannot keep any nearer to the point; and if I am stopped, I shall be stopped while endeavouring to do my duty to the people of the country. If I confine myself to the item, "His Excellency the Governor," I will ask your ruling, sir, as to whether that will prevent a general discussion on the whole of the Estimates, which discussion has always been allowed in preceding Parliaments.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have no desire whatever, and I have not attempted, to interfere with the rights of members to discuss the whole of the Estimates. But there must be some limitation to those rights; and I am certain that if Sir James Lee Steere were in this Chair the hon. member would not be allowed three hours to discuss the subject as he has discussed it. I think he has had sufficient time; although if he has anything fresh to say, I shall not prevent him.

RESUMED.

MR. HOLMAN: We were threatened with a deficit of £132,000, and the means proposed for reducing that deficit were futile. In fact the Treasurer had not shown how the deficit should be reduced; and members wished to know before the session closed. There must be either fresh taxation or retrenchment. Public works were stopped; and money was not being expended amongst the workers, who were the backbone of the country. If they were forced to remain idle, business people must suffer and were suffering. What would the Government do to prevent that suffering? Ministers sat in silence, endeavouring to force the Estimates through the Committee in a few hours, though in years past weeks had been given for their consideration. What an outcry was raised because the Labour Government had not spent enough on public works! Had the present Government shown a better example? Thousands of pounds less were being spent this year than were spent last year; yet we were faced with a greater deficit. Were proposed works to be constructed out of loan, or to be stopped altogether? That he intended to learn before the House went into recess.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member had not given the Minister time to reply to him.

MR. HOLMAN would be pleased to sit down if any Minister would promise to give the information requested. Much had been heard of our great gold production. Every year millions were sent out of the country in dividends. So long as mining companies reaped large profits, and were allowed to spend those profits in purchasing properties in other countries, as some companies did, it was not clear whether they paid the dividend tax; and if they did not, they ought to. Instead of having those millions sent to foreign countries, better let the properties be held by people domiciled in Western Australia; for if the money were kept in the country, other industries would be started, other mines would be opened up; and instead of a deficit of £132,000, we should have surpluses year after year, thus attracting population. Was it to be the policy of the Government regarding immigration to tax the people here in order to bring out immigrants who would take away work from those already here? He regretted that the opportunity had not been given to go more fully into these Estimates. It had not been his desire to take up the time of the House. He was merely anxious to gain the fullest knowledge on the finances of the State.

[5 a.m.]

MOTION TO REPORT PROGRESS.

MR. BOLTON moved that progress be reported.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	12
Noes	...	...	20

Majority against ... 10

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Bolton	Mr. Barnett
Mr. Collier	Mr. Brebber
Mr. Daglish	Mr. Brown
Mr. Holman	Mr. Diamond
Mr. Horan	Mr. Eddy
Mr. Lynch	Mr. Ewing
Mr. Scaddan	Mr. Gregory
Mr. Troy	Mr. Gull
Mr. Walker	Mr. Hicks
Mr. Ware	Mr. Holmes
Mr. A. J. Wilson	Mr. Isdell
Mr. Taylor (Teller).	Mr. Layman
	Mr. McLarty
	Mr. Male
	Mr. Monger
	Mr. N. J. Moore
	Mr. Price
	Mr. Bason
	Mr. P. Wilson
	Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

Question stated by the CHAIRMAN.

MR. LYNCH claimed that he had risen to speak before the question was put.

THE CHAIRMAN said he had not noticed the hon. member. The hon. member could proceed.

THE TREASURER understood the Chairman had given a ruling, and that the question had been put.

MR. A. J. WILSON: The Treasurer should not gag.

THE CHAIRMAN regretted he had not noticed that the member for Mt. Leonora had risen to his feet. The hon. member could proceed.

RESUMED.

MR. P. J. LYNCH (Mt. Leonora) regretted that the Government should use their forces with such little concern for the feelings of the minority. It was a matter of more than passing concern that the Government should only allow two days to digest such important figures. The Government had found it of infinitely greater concern to partake of a ship's hospitality than to give a favour to the minority in the House by affording ample time to consider the Estimates. The action of the Opposition was not tempered with obstinacy, nor with any desire to thwart the Government; but one result of the debate was that members were enabled to secure a partial acquaintance with the Estimates. He (Mr. Lynch) was gaining enlightenment as the debate proceeded; because, being a member of a select committee, he had not had the opportunity of studying the Estimates during the adjournments of the House. He was inclined to draw the line at working 12 or 14 hours a day for £3 17s. 6d. a week. Ministers could have postponed the Estimates, because there was ample business on the Notice Paper to have occupied the attention of members; but they chose a course which did not give the minority the slightest modicum of consideration. One reason for the prolonging of the debate was the unnecessary and brutal exercise of force on the part of the Government. He could only call to mind a few of the rather important points in the Premier's Budget speech that called for special mention. First of all special emphasis was laid on the deficit. The Premier took special care to remind the country

that the deficit instead of being £46,000 was £130,000. The credit was brought forward in the shape of the £83,000 and the year's operations wound up with a debit of £46,000. It was simply a matter of addition and one found what the deficit was. The Premier had thought necessary to magnify that deficit to a considerable extent. It was very necessary to compare the attitude of the Premier when in power and when in opposition without responsibility. One found how the Premier tempered his language and made use of terms which were in direct opposition to one another. When the Premier was addressing himself to the subject of the financial proposals of the last Administration on the occasion of the censure motion, he pointed out that it was an unhappy thing for any Treasurer to forecast a deficit. He would read to the House what the Premier said on that occasion.

POINT OF ORDER.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not read that; the quotation had already been read two or three times and according to *May* he could not allow it to be read again.

THE TREASURER: On the point of order, and to put it on record, he appealed to the Chairman that it was surely time if the records of the House were to be maintained and if the credit of the House was to be maintained in anything like the way it had been in the past, that this sorry farce should be brought to an end soon. Members on the Opposition side of the House had repeatedly—

MR. SCADDAN: What was the point of order?

THE TREASURER: There was an apparent and most deliberate waste of time. The matter which was being introduced was wholly irrelevant to the subject under discussion. Members one after another repeated the arguments that had been used by previous speakers.

THE CHAIRMAN again read the quotation from *May* bearing on the point. As the passage had been read three or four times, he ruled that it could not be read again.

MR. LYNCH bowed to the ruling of the Chair; at the same time he had not heard what had been said by others in

the Chamber. We had the Premier's opinion that the year's operations would wind up with a deficit, and there was no assurance that that deficit would disappear except by the kindly intervention of the fates. The Premier had not kept faith with his previous political professions that a Treasurer should make both ends meet. The time was not so far distant, it was fresh in the minds of every member, when the Premier found it necessary in order to court political favour to record his unqualified belief in measures of taxation that would certainly obliterate the deficit of £130,000. If the Premier and the Ministry had the manliness and the necessary financial ability as well as the confidence and support of those responsible for their existence, he would have brought forward some scheme and some taxation which would have got rid of the deficit at once. One felt that when the time came 12 months hence, this forecast of a deficit would not only be a reality but would be added to. Knowing that many of his supporters were in favour of measures which would extinguish this deficit, and relying on the loyal support of the House, why did not the Premier bring forward measures which would obliterate the deficit at once? Instead of making the national balance-sheet square, we were thrust on the old expedient of relying on the money-lender in the distance. According to the Premier's speech the old expedient would be resorted to. He (Mr. Lynch) was not an anti-borrower by any means, he believed in a judicious system of borrowing, one that would enable the State while meeting the ordinary outlay and carrying on the functions of government to go in for such a liberal instalment of borrowed money each season as not to load the inhabitants of the country to such an extent as they had been loaded in some of the other States. He entered his protest against the method of finance that prompted a farther resort to this method which had been the means of working such disastrous results in the Eastern States.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Would the member stop all borrowing?

MR. LYNCH had already clearly expressed himself on the point. The State should be run to a great extent on the lines of a family, and a family should

start off in life not encumbered with debts, but armed with every weapon necessary to battle through life. Whilst the financial policy of the Labour Government was not commendable, it was the only one available. The Premier had had to climb down from the high position he had taken up, and had to resort to the same device as was resorted to by the Labour Government. When on the Opposition side of the House, the hon. gentleman's thunder of criticism was enough to shake the Chamber to its foundations. The Premier's followers were as silent as Egyptian mummies on this question, and they were obliged to do what had been previously protested against. It might be noticed that whilst the deficit during the last 12 months was £130,000, the deficit of the Government of which the present Premier was a prominent partner in the previous year was no less than £148,000, this being an increase of £18,000. There was also to be added to that £148,000, £47,000 as the price of some land secretly purchased for railway extension in the neighbourhood of Cottesloe and Fremantle. These amounts brought the deficit for that particular year 1903-4 up to £195,000. The Government to which the hon. gentleman belonged was responsible for a deficit 50 per cent. higher than that of the Labour Government, which had £37,000 less in the shape of Commonwealth receipts than had the Government to which the hon. gentleman belonged. Turning to the Estimates for the present year, we found notable reductions made in two most important branches of the service. The Minister for Mines was obliged to cut down his estimate of expenditure as compared with last year by some £13,778, and the Works Department had suffered in a much greater proportion. It was most regrettable that in one branch in relation to mining, water supply, the vote had been reduced by some £15,000. In regard to the battery system, there was one mining constituency that had no less than nine State batteries situated within its boundaries. [MR. BOLTON: What constituency was that?] Menzies. When there were not more than 27 or 28 in the State it became a matter for the closest scrutiny and examination how one-third of the crushing power was situated in one electorate, [THE MINISTER FOR

WORKS: They were all doing very well, were they not?] That he did not know. He had come across some batteries which were as silent as the tomb. There were 15 or 16 mining districts, and if they had all been treated on the same basis and been regarded as equally eligible sites as that of Menzies, instead of there being 27 or 28 batteries there would have been something like 140 or 150. He believed the Minister for Mines had given reasonable consideration to every application put to him; but whether or not he had chosen to place himself in the position of a judge in his own application to himself in a way that did not reflect credit on him, he was not prepared to say. He thought one principle of British justice was that no man was a fair and reasonable judge of his own case. The practice in the past had been to give a lump sum to the Minister, and allow him to have an absolutely free hand, and that was a system which ought to undergo review. He cast no reflection on the Minister; but if he were in the Minister's position, he would consider that a certain suspicion had fallen on him because so many public batteries had been started in his electorate, while adjoining electorates were neglected.

THE TREASURER: That was a nice way of putting it.

MR. LYNCH: If the Treasurer asked for an inquiry, he (Mr. Lynch) would be glad to second the motion; but he was confident that the Minister (Hon. H. Gregory) had given earnest attention to the subject of public batteries and had justly decided between centre and centre. Nevertheless, considering the number of batteries in the Minister's electorate as compared with the number in other electorates, one failed to see why the Treasurer should object to the matter being mentioned. In common justice to the Minister for Mines, it ought to be mentioned. The time was not far distant when a radical alteration would be made in the method of distributing crushing plants. During the last twelve months, the Labour Government, though they were given no credit for it by anti-Labour candidates, showed practical sympathy with mining by exceeding the public batteries vote by some £18,000. For that excess no apology need be offered; for public batteries were one of the

prime agencies in keeping at work many shows which would otherwise close up. To these the public batteries had given new life. The present Government proposed to spend only the sum set down in last year's Estimates, £30,000. Whether more would be spent remained to be seen; and if only that sum were spent, Ministers would redeem some of their shaded characters. It was much to the credit of the Labour Government that they were responsible for the record mining vote from consolidated revenue to encourage the industry. But there was this difference between their methods and those of the present Government. The Labour Ministry applied cash to developing the industry, whereas the present and other Ministries relied upon talking cheap platitudes at social functions. He believed in cash rather than platitudes. Our wheat production had almost overtaken the local consumption, and we were about to become wheat-exporters. Farming representatives must recognise the need for more liberal support to the mining industry that was providing a large and increasing market for wheat—a much more profitable market than that of London, and free from the risks inseparable from an export trade. The total estimate of expenditure for the Works Department fell short of last year's total by £77,000. The Premier had from the house-tops denounced the Labour Government for cutting down the Works vote. Where was his consistency? He should apologise for his inconsistency in the past, and should promise to be more consistent in the future. Some regarded the Works Department expenditure as a sort of barometer of industrial progress, arguing, especially on the Government benches, that when the Government were not spending freely on public works and Government trading concerns, private capitalists buttoned up their pockets. He (Mr. Lynch) would never countenance relying for Works expenditure on the foreign money-lender to supplement the expenditure from revenue, or in substitution for expenditure from revenue, which source of expenditure ought to be exploited.

THE TREASURER: What source?

MR. LYNCH answered by reminding the Premier of his solemn promise to a

body of workers on the coast, when he was trying to make himself popular.

THE TREASURER: We had heard that six times.

MR. LYNCH: Certainly it touched a raw spot. For obvious reasons, the amount on last year's Estimates for railway construction was not large, being only some £7,000; yet the present Government, who boasted of their success in building railways out of revenue, were not able even to emulate the Labour Ministry, but put only £71 on the schedule. It must be a remarkable railway that could be constructed for £71. As to new works, particularly roads, it was discouraging to notice that only £17,089 was set down for new works, a shrinkage of £7,000 compared with the estimate for last year. Next to encouraging the mining industry there was hardly any work deserving more liberal encouragement than the construction of new works, but the vote this year was reduced by £7,000. Probably loan money would be used to supplement it. The Treasurer had during the last Parliament condemned the Labour Government for increasing the percentage of salaries, but that charge had been fully replied to by the then Premier (Mr. Daglish), who had shown a considerable reduction in the percentage due to the efforts of the Labour Government.

[6 a.m.]

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The percentage would be still smaller this year.

MR. LYNCH: Yes; due to the action of the Labour Government and to the close scrutiny and reorganisation of Mr. Johnson when Minister for Works. We had heard a great deal about the rabbit-proof fence being constructed by the Labour Government out of loan moneys, but seeing the desperate position of the finances at the time that Government had had no other means of pushing on the work. It was to their credit that such a satisfactory report had been given concerning the efficacy of the fence by the officer visiting us from South Australia. The State would have saved £70,000, the cost of the second fence, had the James Government pushed on the work of constructing the fence as rapidly as it had been

forwarded by the Labour Government. In connection with the unwillingness of the present Government to institute a tax on unimproved land values, also an income tax, it might not be out of place to give an instance of perpetuating the present system of taxation. There was a block of land in this city purchased five years ago for £5,000 and sold five or six months ago for £12,000. The purchaser of that block in the first instance told him (Mr. Lynch) the story. The purchaser was a member of Parliament on whose word he had reason to place reliance. That simple transaction showed that a speculator bought a city block of land for £5,000 five years ago and within the short space of five years had made £7,000 clear. He had made 30 per cent. on his bargain. The object he had was to show that the present form of taxation only bore heavily on those who contributed in the greater degree under the Customs revenue than on any others of the population. Take the person who passed this block of land and went far inland and bought a farm or engaged in the timber-cutting industry or started a boot factory or any form of industry. That person established round him a whole army of employees. There was a centre of population that was solely supported by the person who spent £5,000 in establishing an industry. These persons were all taxed through the Customs, while the speculator who bought a block of land escaped scot free and made his 30 per cent. per annum. Where did common justice come in? Any continuation of the present unscientific method of taxation was unjust. Members on the Ministerial benches were pledged to a land and income tax, and it would be found that a majority of the members in the Chamber were in favour of the principle of placing the burden on the person who speculated his money in land and relieved the person who invested his money in an industry. It was a public persecution to perpetuate the present system of taxation. It was nothing short of injustice to the workers in the interior and other persons in the interior, especially those who speculated their money in industries where the risk was very great and the profit so little.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Why did the member buy land and get the fee

simple when he did not believe in the alienation of land?

MR. LYNCH said he was not so far gone upon fidelity to a principle to abstain from taking up a farm to-morrow because he could not get a leasehold. It was not inconsistent with the principle to take up a block of land. In the past the private ownership of land had led to scenes of desperation and misery that were apparent in the large centres of the Eastern States, and far more acute in the old world lands. The proposal of the Labour party was that the lands of the State should not be farther alienated. It was quite true the alternative proposal might be workable; it was possible that rent might serve the same purpose; but from experience in the old world centres there was no objection to the leasehold system of occupation. Families lived for generations in the old country as tenants at will. He promised at the outset to freshen the mind of the Premier as to his belief at another time in taxation and land values. The hon. gentleman was written to when seeking the suffrages of the Guildford electors. There was a time probably in the hon. gentleman's career when it was rather dark and threatening, and he was anxious presumably to ingratiate himself as cheaply as possible in accordance, of course, with political consistency, with the Guildford electors; and when he was asked by the Coastal Trades and Labour Council whether he would favour two most prominent planks of the Labour platform he replied in the following strain:

POINT OF ORDER.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I wish to ask if this is anything in connection with the debate? I believe it is an extract or something read by the leader of the Opposition last year, and not any speech by the Premier. I would like you to say whether it is in order.

THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot tell until the member reads it.

MR. LYNCH: I submit that it is connected with the subject under debate.

THE CHAIRMAN: The subject is "His Excellency the Governor."

MR. LYNCH: We are addressing ourselves to the criticisms of the Financial Statement, and in that statement the Premier took upon himself to make

pointed reference to his bearing towards the land tax and income tax. In order to show what a sinuous career he has run in the past, and to draw his attention to his opinions only a few short years ago on the same subject as showing how he has thought fit to change, and at the same time showing that there is just as much warrant for his returning to the belief he had in those years, I wish to read the extract. It is for the purpose of hoping to remind him of what he believed formerly, and that he may again be impressed with that form of belief in relation to which he was so loud and unqualified in the expression of his view. The quotation is as follows:—

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: This is an extract from a speech by another person.

MR. LYNCH: The Chamber has not heard it yet, and I should have been half through it and finished with it by this time. (Commenced to read extract.)

THE TREASURER: Again I ask your ruling as to whether this question is in any way relevant to the matter under discussion? I have already protested three or four times, and if only for the purpose of having my protest recorded, I protest against the waste of time that is being indulged in by members opposite.

MR. BOLTON: So you say it again.

THE TREASURER: So I say it again.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can only debate matters in connection with the Budget.

MR. LYNCH: With perfect deference to your ruling, what I was about to quote is simply the opinion of the hon. member opposite at another stage in his political career, and if he is afraid of hearing what he formerly professed—

THE TREASURER: I am ashamed of nothing except you.

MR. LYNCH: My hon. friend need not worry about me; I can look after myself always. If the hon. member was ashamed of his former political life, he ought to know his own position better than I do, and members can assess his worth.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am giving all the liberty that it is possible to give in accordance with the Standing Orders and the ordinary rules. But the hon. member must see that he must in some way connect the quotation with the Budget, or he

is distinctly out of order. I have not heard the quotation yet, but the hon. member must not read a quotation which is not connected with the Budget.

MR. LYNCH: The subject is one which I feel is inseparable from the discussion. I feel that you would be perfectly satisfied to let me proceed were it not for this continued interruption. The reply was from the Premier.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I desire to know what the hon. member is quoting.

THE TREASURER: Whose speech is it?

MR. LYNCH: That of the Premier of this country.

THE TREASURER: If that be so, I ask the date of the speech and who made it.

MR. LYNCH: It is a letter written by the Premier, which clearly reveals the frame of mind he was in then on the question of taxation.

THE CHAIRMAN: If it is a private letter —

MR. LYNCH: It is not a private letter.

THE CHAIRMAN: If it is private it cannot be read.

MR. LYNCH: It is a public letter on taxation.

THE TREASURER: Whose speech is it you are reading?

MR. LYNCH: It is a letter from the secretary of the Trades and Labour Council, Perth, dated the 24th April. [Again commenced to read letter.]

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I rise to a point of order. I think we are quite justified in insisting that the hon. member might inform the House whether he is quoting a speech made by the Premier or not. If he is not quoting a speech made by the Premier, he certainly is not justified in reading it.

MR. LYNCH: I am quoting from what is included in a speech by the Minister for Lands during last session, Mr. Bath.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Now we are getting a little of the truth.

MR. LYNCH: It was given before this Chamber in connection with another subject of discussion, and I submit it was in perfect order. As I have stated, it reveals the frame of mind the Premier was in a few years ago.

THE CHAIRMAN: The quotation is from a speech by Mr. Bath?

MR. LYNCH: Quite so. It is a quotation used by Mr. Bath in his speech. It

was as follows. (Again commenced to read the extract.)

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not use that quotation. It is not connected with this debate, and it is not a quotation from the Premier.

MR. HORAN: Surely the hon. member is right in quoting a distinct statement made by some authority which Mr. Bath quoted in his speech.

THE CHAIRMAN: The whole discussion is irrelevant at the present moment, and I am not going to allow it to go farther by admitting still more irrelevant quotations.

RESUMED.

MR. LYNCH: In his reply to the Trades and Labour Council the hon. gentleman expressed himself as being favourable to a land tax, an income tax, reform of the Upper House, and other things. He ought never to have turned his back upon his former belief in a land tax and income tax. He (Mr. Lynch) knew that in referring to this matter he was touching upon a particularly raw subject. One never liked to be told of the sinuous paths he took. He could describe the snake track of the hon. member in politics. [THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member should not complain.] He feared not, and certainly did not fear the hon. gentleman.

THE TREASURER: This had nothing to do with the Budget.

THE CHAIRMAN: A member must not address another by name.

MR. LYNCH bowed to the Chairman's ruling, but repudiated interference on the part of the hon. member and his claim to dictate to him or advise him. The Premier perpetuated this unscientific form of taxation, though a number of Government supporters and certain Ministers favoured the land and income tax, notwithstanding that they were bound by caucus. It would be much more honourable for ministerialists to abandon their pretence of freedom from caucus rule. The Minister for Mines (Hon. H. Gregory) dared not face a Menzies audience and declare himself opposed to a land and income tax; but the Minister for Works (Hon. Frank Wilson) proclaimed himself diametrically opposed to this form of taxation.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: When? Quote the statement.

MR. LYNCH: At Busselton. The Minister's opinion was on record. If the will of the people could be given effect to, they would hurl the Government out of office on this question of taxation alone; and were it not for the exigencies of party, a system of taxation would be adopted which would do justice to employer and worker alike, which would bring under cultivation many large areas now idle, and raise much-needed revenue for aiding the gold-mining, timber, and pastoral industries, connecting centres of population by rail, and providing water. Yet the Mines estimate of expenditure showed an actual reduction of £15,000 on last year's total. The prosperity of the State rested on mining alone. If we dried up the source of prosperity, would not the prospector suffer as well as the speculator? A reduction of £15,000 was not large; but it compared unfavourably with the actual expenditure and the estimated expenditure of the Labour Government, who had established a record for expenditure from consolidated revenue.

THE TREASURER: The present Government had £10,000 more on the Mines Estimates than the Labour Government expended.

MR. LYNCH had stated the reduction as £15,000, but he should have said £13,000.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The hon. member said there was a smaller estimated expenditure this year than last year. The total Mines estimate for last year was £257,887, and the amount estimated this year was £267,529—£10,000 more.

MR. LYNCH: The Minister was comparing the estimated with the actual expenditure. That was a rather unfair comparison. If the Minister would guarantee to spend the estimated amount, his comparison might be justified. A scientific form of taxation was absolutely essential, owing to the decline in the revenue received from the Commonwealth. We should have to rely on our own resources. The best authority on the present feeling in the Federal Parliament was Mr. McLean, the Minister for the Interior in the late Reid Administration. The possible abolition of the

Braddon clause would involve a *per capita* distribution of revenue. Mr. McLean, urging on the State Premiers the wisdom of handing over the State debts to the Federal Government, thus furnishing an argument for the extension of the book-keeping period, said that the Federal Government had power to take over the State debts and charge interest to the States; but the fear was that if the Commonwealth allowed the States to retain their debts, then on the determination of the Braddon clause the Commonwealth would spend much money now handed back to the States—money which should be hypothecated to pay interest on State loans: that if the Commonwealth Parliament were saddled with the debts of the States, Parliament would reduce the amounts handed back to the States, otherwise the Federal Government would institute old age pensions, penny postage, or provide for the nucleus of an Australian navy. In Mr. McLean's opinion the Braddon clause would be abrogated; the book-keeping period would come to a close at the end of ten years, and there would be then a *per capita* distribution of Commonwealth revenue, which would reduce the £8,000 or £9,000 which our Treasurer estimated to receive from the Commonwealth. Then, whether we liked it or not, we should be obliged to impose scientific taxation, bearing lightly on those who could pay it, and not at all on those who could not. This would encourage both workers and speculators. He hoped Western Australia would adopt a form of taxation that would send it on the right road of prosperity, instead of continuing on the present system of loan borrowing; and he wished to see a condition of affairs whereby a man who worked could live happily, and by which it could be made particularly irksome for those who shirked work.

MR. BOLTON moved that progress be reported.

[7 a.m.]

MOTION TO REPORT PROGRESS.

Motion put and a division taken with the following result:

Ayes	...	...	...	11
Noes	...	...	...	18

Majority against ... 7

AYES.

Mr. Bath
Mr. Bolton
Mr. Collier
Mr. Holman
Mr. Lynch
Mr. Scaddan
Mr. Troy
Mr. Walker
Mr. Ware
Mr. A. J. Wilson
Mr. Taylor (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Barnett
Mr. Brebber
Mr. Brown
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Eddy
Mr. Ewing
Mr. Gull
Mr. Hicks
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Isdell
Mr. Layman
Mr. Male
Mr. Mitchell
Mr. N. J. Moore
Mr. Price
Mr. Rason
Mr. Frank Wilson
Mr. Gordon (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

RESUMED.

MR. J. SCADDAN (Ivanhoe) regretted having to speak on such an important question at 7 o'clock in the morning. It was in the interests of the country to have an Opposition watchful over a Ministry that brought down Estimates and forced them through the House. The Opposition had been prepared to compromise with the Premier by adjourning the debate on the Estimates until Friday.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member was aware that he was wrong. He (the Treasurer) had offered to take the debate on Friday.

MR. SCADDAN said that he had not been present in the House when there was any offer made to postpone the Estimates until Friday, or his memory must be very shallow.

THE TREASURER (in explanation): It was just as well for the sake of history that we should have the truth in this matter if we could.

MR. HOLMAN: Was the Treasurer in order in making an explanation while another member was speaking?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Treasurer was in order.

THE TREASURER: An offer to accept Friday as a compromise had been made to the Leader of the Opposition and rejected.

MR. SCADDAN was pleased the Premier had made this history, though it was the first he had heard of it. He had heard the member for Katanning (Hon. F. H. Piesse) mention Friday, but he knew full well that the Government had refused to postpone the Estimates until Friday.

THE TREASURER: The member was absolutely wrong.

MR. SCADDAN: The fact remained that he was absolutely right. We had now been discussing the Estimates fourteen hours, showing that the Government were not prepared to accept Friday. As a member of a select committee he had not had time to spare to deal with the Estimates. Last year it was thought desirable by the then Premier (Mr. Daglish) that the House should go into recess at Christmas, but he had not compelled members to consider Estimates on the day after they were brought down.

THE TREASURER: Yes; the Loan Estimates.

MR. SCADDAN: A week had elapsed last year between the bringing down of the Estimates and the speech of the then Leader of the Opposition, but the Treasurer now declined to allow members an opportunity of considering the figures before speaking on them. He (Mr. Scaddan) was satisfied that when the Estimates became known on the goldfields there would be another cry for separation. He could not find any items where the goldfields had been well treated. The Treasurer had told his supporters in caucus that if they would permit the Government to go into recess before Christmas he would meet the House in June with fresh Estimates. He (Mr. Scaddan) had learned this from a supporter of the Government.

THE TREASURER: It was wrong.

MR. SCADDAN asked for the Treasurer's denial.

THE TREASURER: It was absolutely untrue.

MR. SCADDAN claimed that he had the statement from a Government supporter who was in his best senses and who was not in any way intoxicated.

THE TREASURER: Name?

MR. SCADDAN was not in a position to give the name. Last session the Treasurer had carefully refrained from giving a name in certain circumstances. He (Mr. Scaddan) was satisfied there was some truth in the statement made to him.

THE TREASURER said an unqualified denial had already been given. The statement was absolutely untrue. He asked the hon. member not to repeat it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must accept the statement of the Treasurer.

MR. SCADDAN accepted the denial. During the general election and just prior, the Premier was very loud in his wail about the finances of the State. He had looked casually through the Estimates and found that the Premier was getting away from his word, judging by the increases in some of the departments. Although the Premier took strong exception last year to the expenditure for the upkeep of the Houses of Parliament, this year it was found the same expenditure was going on and some officers who were said to be of no use were still engaged, and at the same salaries. The Treasurer might have carried out his desire in that connection and cut down the expenses. Then he would have shown the genuineness of his statement that we required economical administration. There was the matter of literary and scientific grants. Too much money could not be spent in that direction, if we had any to spare, but he (Mr. Scaddan) entered his strong protest against the centralisation of the expenditure. This money was being expended to a great extent in and around Perth, and the expenditure was greater than the State could bear. Too much money was being expended on parks and gardens and other items in and around Perth in comparison with the population. There had been increases in that department to the amount of £2,250. He (Mr. Scaddan) would not complain so much if that expenditure were distributed throughout the State. When one remembered that the Treasurer intended to obtain more money which would bear heavily on the goldfields, the goldfields should have some of this expenditure. The member for Kalgoorlie said that the vote for the upkeep of the Observatory was excessive. He (Mr. Scaddan) did not think the Observatory was of much use to the State but it was of great utility to some of the observatories in Germany and other places. The Zoological Gardens came in for special favour this year. They were to receive their usual vote of £3,000 and £500 for the erection of a snake-house. If the trustees required to build a snake-house in the Zoological Gardens could they not have done so out of their ordinary revenue or out of the ordinary grant received from the Government? The report from this institution was not be-

fore the House; when discussing the Estimates members should have the report. At the present time we knew that the Zoological Gardens received considerable revenue from entrance fees at the gates, and the time had arrived when the Zoological Gardens should attempt to do something towards their own upkeep. The very next item on the Estimates contained another increase. These increases were really all in administration. There were not many increases to public servants, there might be one or two to favoured individuals, but the increase was more often for additional staff. He took this opportunity of entering his strong protest against the manner in which the Premier attempted to force the Estimates through the House. The Colonial Secretary's Department and the Department for Education contained increases this year over previous years. There was not such a large increase in the Education Department as in the Colonial Secretary's Department about which there had been time after time complaints as to administration. With all the talk about economical administration, this very department, against which complaints were made as to its expensive character, had increases on the Estimates. The increases were not very large items generally but when they were mounting up year by year it was understood how the country could not make both ends meet. The matter he desired mostly to touch upon was in reference to the mining industry. He regretted that the mining portion of the Estimates and the Public Works Department were considerably cut down this year, while other departments seemed to receive general increases. He could not understand why this was so. The mining industry we were told required close attention and considerable assistance, and we were told by others that such was the case. The time had arrived when the Government should take this matter in hand and show that we were determined to give the country a thorough prospecting. The time had not arrived when we should close down farther prospecting. It was said that State batteries were of assistance to prospectors. They were, but these batteries were only erected after a field had been proved. There was no assistance given in finding

a new field. What we required in Western Australia at the present time was men who would go out into the back country to prospect, and we could not expect them to do that unless the Government assisted them. The Government loaned camels sometimes and he supposed the Government thought their responsibilities ended there. We heard from Mr. Hoover that three or four years would show a considerable difference in our mining industry. He would like to join issue with Mr. Hoover for he (Mr. Scaddan) was not of that opinion. The outlook in Kalgoorlie was better than ever it was. The fact remained that greater profit was being derived from the mining industry to-day than ever previously. The Government knew this because they had made provision for an increase of the dividend tax for next year. The Minister for Mines would have to carry out the same proposals that he was anxious and desirous the previous Minister should proceed with. A statement was made by the present Minister for Mines at the Prospectors' Conference held in Coolgardie which was the strongest indictment against the officers of that department that he had listened to. The Minister was very severe in his criticism of his department, especially the State battery system. The present Minister had been in office some months and if he was anxious that the State batteries should be put right, why did he not proceed with the work? Why did not the Minister appoint the commission which he suggested should be appointed? If it was necessary at that time it was necessary now. The whole work in connection with the battery system of the State should receive exhaustive inquiry. He was not prepared to go as far as the Minister and say that the battery department was badly administered. That might be so. If it was so, the present Minister was responsible for the bad administration, because he took the State batteries in hand in their infancy. He made most of the appointments and had more control of the State batteries than any Minister before or since. When speaking to the prospectors, the Minister evidently thought he might get some assistance at election time, and he said that the battery system was bad. This was just a few months after leaving office. Was

that the attitude which should be adopted by a Minister of the Crown? It would be better for the Minister to show when he was in office that he had those views, and was prepared to act upon them, and when he knew there was something wrong to take the earliest opportunity of putting it right. There should be an inquiry into the whole of the State battery system. He believed that State batteries had been of considerable assistance to prospectors, and more particularly to corporate societies and local owners of mines who worked their own shows. We used to find syndicates and corporate societies taking the earliest opportunity of disposing of their properties to anybody who came along. To-day our best mines were held by shareholders and others in London, and instead of the whole of the benefit resulting from the special facilities given—cheaper water supply, better railway communication and all that sort of thing—being derived by the State a great portion of it was going to the capitalist in London. We had already reaped a great harvest from our goldfields, but the unfortunate part of it was that there was very little to show for it. Whilst the Government said they were desirous of doing everything to assist the mining industry, we wanted them to do something to assist local companies which derived some benefit from their shows, and hoped to hold on to them. Such a district as the Boorara district, not many miles from Kalgoorlie, required all the assistance that could be given to it. In regard to the purchase and treatment of copper ore the vote for last year was £74,650 and the actual expenditure £39,746, and in relation to mines water supply there was a decrease of £15,780.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The Cue Water Scheme made up for that.

MR. SCADDAN did not know that it did anything of the kind.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes; they borrowed the money from the Savings Bank.

MR. SCADDAN: Another point to which he wished to draw attention was the fact that there was an increase of expenditure in relation to the offices in Perth, to the detriment to a great extent of the goldfields. He did not understand why it was so. The mining industry

undoubtedly was not in Perth, and why should there be so many of these offices centralised in Perth doing a lot of unnecessary work? There was so much doing and doing over again in these departments that it was just about time the pruning knife was put in.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: If the hon. member looked at his (the Minister's) report he would see that these people were appointed when he (Mr. Gregory) was not in office.

MR. SCADDAN believed the present Minister could find he was as much to blame probably as any previous Minister with regard to piling up expenditure in the head office at Perth. In regard to the machinery department, we had few inspectors of machinery, and of course we could not have inspectors without a chief inspector. If we had two or three offices or clerks we always had a chief clerk or chief inspector. In regard to a return which was supplied, he found the following note:—"No record of the number of inspections made by the Chief Inspector of Machinery has been kept." He did not wish to single out the chief inspector of machinery more than any other person, but when a man was appointed inspector let him carry out the duty. To his mind there was not sufficient work in the machinery department for a man to sit there holding the title of chief inspector and drawing a nice fat salary. The chief inspector's offices were better fitted than those of the Minister. It was more difficult to interview the chief inspector than to interview the Minister; and that remark applied to many other officers who, until they had seen the Minister, were reluctant to give information to hon. members. In America, according to Foster Fraser's book *America at Work*, there was no difficulty in having an interview with any public officer. You walked into his office, obtained your information, and left. Here, a visitor had to announce himself to subordinates, and wait perhaps a half an hour, until the officer in question was disengaged. Possibly the delay was to give the impression that the officer had much to do. The chief inspector of machinery was also chairman of examiners for engine-drivers' certificates. Why should the two positions

be combined? The inspectors of machinery, who would be better employed at their legitimate work, sat in the country districts as boards of examiners, watching candidates write answers to questions set by the chief inspector and his board in Perth. This would be unobjectionable if there were no complaints against work done by the inspectors; but hardly a day passed without Press complaints of the administration of the machinery branch of the Mines Department—complaints from workers and from owners of boilers and engines. The Estimates did not indicate any reform. Probably the excuse would be that something would be done in recess; but all knew that during recess Ministers would take a holiday, running round the country making promises, which in most cases would not be kept, or receiving and staving off deputations. Though there were eight inspectors of mines, it was not found necessary to have a chief inspector of mines. Surely this must have been an oversight, else why the chief inspector of machinery? Possibly the State Mining Engineer performed the functions of chief inspector; but those inspectors could get on well without a chief, and the inspectors of machinery would follow suit. It was difficult to get a conviction in a prosecution of an employer for an offence against the Mines Act. He (Mr. Scaddan) did not know one instance of an employee being brought before the court without being fined, generally in a nominal sum; but it was very difficult to convict an employer. In the first session of the last Parliament, a short Mines Regulation Amendment Act was passed. It was found that the inspector had no power to compel a mine manager to carry out the inspector's instructions for the safety of the mine. That Act made this obligatory; or the manager might enter a protest, and have the matter settled by arbitration. But one inspector issued instructions, which were disobeyed, a workman was injured, and a case brought against the owner, who had absolutely ignored the instructions; yet the magistrate was not prepared to convict the owner. The monthly journal of the Chamber of Mines reported the case to the effect that the inspector of mines had prosecuted the manager of the Great Boulder Proprietary for permitting a

stope at the 1,900ft. level to be carried to a height of 18ft., in consequence of which a man suffered injury from the fall of a stone at the back of the stope. The Magistrate said he understood the inspector gave orders that the stope was not to be higher than 14ft.; and that though carrying it to 18ft. might be disobedience, it did not prove negligence. Such was the report of the case; but the Committee must remember that the inspector did not prosecute the manager for negligence, but for disobedience. The magistrate said the evidence showed that every reasonable precaution had been taken to avoid accidents. Costs were allowed the defendant.

THE TREASURER: What had this to do with the Estimates?

MR. SCADDAN: The Estimates provided eight inspectors of mines, and he was discussing their duties.

At 8 o'clock a.m. the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 9-30, Chair resumed.

MR. SCADDAN rose to resume his remarks.

NO QUORUM—COUNT-OUT.

MR. BATH called attention to the state of the House.

Bells rung, and the SPEAKER took the Chair.

At 9-35, a quorum not being present, the SPEAKER adjourned the House until 2-30 o'clock afternoon.