

been made with the Wongan Hills line. Regarding the socialistic enterprises to which I was referring, namely, meat, fish, and so on, I venture to say that they will be a heavy burden on the taxpayers of the State. The hon. Mr. Walker, in an unfortunate and infamous utterance he made in May last—it was unfortunate that he made it at all, it was unfortunate that he made it on the 13th May, a day which some people regard with superstition. It was on all fours with the unfortunate transaction of Mr. Scaddan when he took up land on the first of April—All Fools' Day—and transferred it to Mr. Bath on the 13th. Mr. Walker, in an utterance on the night prior to the Legislative Council elections, said people who had any blood to lose would be bled, and he predicted extra taxation. The taxation, State, municipal, and Federal, is fairly high at the present time. It is getting so high that it is approaching the breaking point. We do not want these enterprises which will result in heavy losses, and which will make it necessary for the Government to levy additional taxation. The burden is quite heavy enough now for us to carry without having unnecessary taxation forced upon us. If the Government have the welfare of the people at heart I ask them to pause in some of these enterprises before it is too late. If they ceased from dismissing some of the State civil servants they would be serving the interests of the country better than they are doing. There were civil servants capable of carrying on their duties, who for political purposes as the House and country know, have been sacrificed. But a day of reckoning is coming, and the punishment of the Government will be sure and heavy. I said when I started on the matter of the elections, that I would be content to allow bygones to be bygones, and if it had not been for interjections regarding the Dalkeith estate, I would probably not have had so much to say. I will let bygones be bygones, but I will never forget what happened during that election. Whatever my feelings might be, I recognise that I have a duty to perform to the electors of the Metropolitan Province and to the

people of the whole State, and I trust that I will never forget that duty. I promise the Colonial Secretary that I will criticise his measures when I consider they need it, but that I will be fair and give him a square deal, and that I will do all I can to forward the interests of this State.

On motion by Hon. C. A. Piesse, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 10.17 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 10th July, 1912.

	PAGE
Questions: University appointments	287
Unemployed at Fremantle	288
Leave of absence	288
Bills: Tramways Purchase, 1a	288
Excess, 1910-11, 1a.	288
Industrial Arbitration, 1a.	288
Workers' Compensation Act Amendment, 1a.	288
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 1a.	288
Nedlands Park Tramways Act Amendment, 1a.	288
North Fremantle Municipal Tramways Act Amendment, 1a.	288
Address-in-reply, fifth day	288
Personal Explanation: Mr. Foley and Bishop Riley	330

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

QUESTION—UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS.

Mr. UNDERWOOD asked the Premier: 1, Is it the intention of the University Senate to advertise for professors and lecturers in Australia as well as in England? 2, Will Australian scholars be given a chance to teach in our University?

The PREMIER replied: 1, I am advised by the Chancellor that the University Senate has decided to advertise the professorships in the leading

Commonwealth newspapers; and the conditions of appointment, with a covering letter, are being sent to all Australian Universities. 2, Certainly.

QUESTION—UNEMPLOYED AT FREMANTLE.

Mr. CARPENTER asked the Minister for Works: In view of the large number of men thrown out of employment through the cessation of work at the Graving Dock, has the Minister any other public work at Fremantle which can be proceeded with at once to absorb the men now unemployed?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: There has not been any serious reduction of hands, owing to the Government's determination to proceed immediately with the conversion of the dock works into wharfrage accommodation

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motion by Mr. HEITMANN, leave of absence for one week granted to Mr. Bolton, on the grounds of ill-health.

BILLS (7)—FIRST READING.

1, Tramways Purchase (introduced by the Premier).

2, Excess, 1910-11 (introduced by the Premier).

3, Industrial Arbitration (introduced by the Attorney-General).

4, Workers' Compensation Act Amendment (introduced by the Attorney-General).

5, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (introduced by the Attorney-General).

6, Nedlands Park Tramways Act Amendment (introduced by the Minister for Works).

7, North Fremantle Municipal Tramways Act Amendment (introduced by Hon. W. C. Angwin, Honorary Minister).

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

Fifth Day.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Mr THOMAS (Bunbury): I listened to the member for Northam when he was speaking yesterday with a very great deal of interest, in order that I might be able to pick up the various points of his speech that were worthy of notice or that I might be desirous of making a reply to; but I am sorry to say that throughout that lengthy and somewhat tiresome address I did not find very much to which I could attach any importance. As a preface to his speech, the hon. member made the statement that the Premier's speech was composed of length without breadth. This struck me as being rather an unfortunate statement from the lips of a gentleman like the member for Northam, to whom nature has been so unkind, if I may so put it, in her gifts of the power of oratory. I do not suppose there is any member, and I do not say it unkindly—

Mr Underwood: You speak sympathetically.

Mr. THOMAS: I feel a good deal of sympathy for the Opposition altogether. They seem to be in that peculiar position just at present that they very much need it. The member for Northam could not have used a more unfortunate expression, when he said the Premier's speech had length without breadth,—

Hon. Frank Wilson: He never referred to the Premier's speech in those terms.

Mr. THOMAS: I copied out the words. I think the words apply aptly to his own speech. It had length but no width nor depth. It was long enough. Part of it was his family history in connection with his land transactions. It has been said by a philosopher that the one subject upon which all men are eloquent and never interesting, is their own affairs. The hon. gentleman on this occasion was neither interesting nor eloquent. However, as the speech was unsavory, to say the least of it, we may bury it, as it should be. There is only one other point I want to take exception to in the hon. member's speech. The rest of it is really too small to be worthy of one's notice. In the course of his remarks, in referring to the retirement

of Mr. Despeisses, he said that this gentleman was discharged by the Government because he was a political opponent. Now, although I am not an admirer of the member for Northam, I think that remark was unworthy of him. That is the reward of political life, the reward for Ministers who, after years of service to their country, rise to the highest position the voices of the people can give them, that they are to have a paltry epithet of that description thrown at them. It is unworthy of the hon. gentleman, it is degrading to political life, the Opposition are unfortunate if no better charge can be found against the Government than language of that description without proof, without any portion of evidence to support it. I regret very much indeed that in politics in this Chamber it should be found necessary to indulge in that class of debate. I did not think any politician in the House had reached that depth of degradation at which he would be guilty of such a paltry and miserable act as that contained in the charge of the member for Northam; therefore I say it reflects discredit on the hon. member that he should be guilty of such an expression of opinion.

Mr. Underwood: But Deakin used the same tripe.

Mr. THOMAS: However, to pass on from the hon. gentleman's speech, most of which is, as I have said, to say the least of it, unsavory, and to turn to the leader of the Opposition, I must say that I listened to this gentleman, as I always listen to him, with interest, because he generally says something worth hearing; but it occurred to me that on this occasion there was a sort of spirit of unconscious humour pervading the debate. It seemed peculiar to me that the hero of a hundred failures, the gentleman who, with more valour than discretion, led his party to their political graves on the 3rd October last, should turn round and tell his triumphant opponent how he ought to govern the country, and that the hon. gentleman, who is the author of the perennial deficit, should teach the present Treasurer how to achieve a perfect

budget. The hon. member may have been serious, but I suspect him. I do not think that he could possibly have meant what he was saying. When he marched down to the House in the valiant manner in which he did, with the tumultuous applause of those 13 Liberals at Bayswater ringing in his ears, it was with the intention of doing something noble and grand to resuscitate his party; but when he got on the floor of the House, I am disposed to think, that coming events began to cast their shadows before; because it was noticeable, although the hon. member got up with his usual vigour, that as he marched along the line of his debate he became decidedly feeble. I have always listened to the hon. member with interest, but never on any occasion have I heard him make a more feeble attempt to discredit his opponents and uplift his own party than he did on this occasion. I was much struck with one phrase in the Premier's speech; that was when he replied to the leader of the Opposition about the matter of stagnation, and said that the hon. member looked at the mirror and saw Stagnation staring him in the face. If the Premier will permit me, I would like to add just a little to that remark. I should say that, looking over the shoulders of Stagnation there were the lean and hungry features of Pessimism, and that in the right hand of Pessimism, held aloft, was the decaying body of a stinking fish. If the Premier will permit me, I would like to add that to his little point, because it pretty nearly makes the picture complete, and I offer it to Mr. Ben Strange, free of charge. It is a very peculiar thing that when the hon. gentleman was on the Treasury bench enjoying the fruits of office, he always preached optimism, whether he felt it or not; but since he has been in Opposition, and particularly during the speech he made on that particular occasion, it was "croaking" from beginning to end; the speech was overcast by a feeling of gloom the whole time. There was not a single bright or optimistic thought in it. I have heard of politicians growing hungry for office, but I think on this

occasion the leader of the Opposition has grown positively ravenous, and in his futile efforts to get back to the Government benches again my sympathy goes out to him because I know the hopeless fight he is waging; I know how his heart yearns to get back again. He has a long way yet to go. I compliment the Premier on the speech he made in this debate. I felt intensely proud of my leader; I consider he made the finest speech that has been made in this Parliament since I have had the honour to be a member, and during the many occasions it has been my privilege to attend this Parliament as a stranger the same remarks apply also. Such a speech, if it were needed, gives inspiration to his followers. We felt we had a leader worthy of the cause he represents. Another reason for my sympathy with the leader of the Opposition was because during the course of the Premier's speech and the manly effort he made, figuratively speaking, he cut pieces out of the political cuticle of the leader of the Opposition. Before we part company with the leader of the Opposition—

Hon. Frank Wilson: Oh, do not part company with him.

Mr. THOMAS: I am afraid we parted company long ago. Before I cease making any remarks about the leader of the Opposition, I want to take exception to one little remark I have treasured in my memory since the close of last session. It is very much on the lines of the remark made by the member for Northam. In an interview the leader of the Opposition gave to one of the metropolitan papers at the close of last session, he said in the last paragraph that the Labour party would be so busy trifling with the finances that during the coming session they would not have time to go to night school. I do not know whether there is any question as to the meaning of that remark.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Have you got the report of that?

Mr. THOMAS: It is in the *Sunday Times* under your own photograph, and it is the last paragraph. It said they would not have time to go to

night school. I consider that remark is only another evidence of the many evidences the hon. member has shown of want of good breeding in dealing with matters of that kind. It is a cheap sarcasm to heave at an opponent to tell him he needs to go to school.

Mr. Underwood: He is somewhat uncouth.

Mr. THOMAS: I do not desire to indulge in any language of that description, or to get quite down to the level the leader of the Opposition occupied when he made that remark. I consider that in the political life of this country we can fight our battles upon a higher plane than that. If I chose to follow the hon. member down to the particular level he stood upon, and proceeded in a survey of the various qualifications of the members of the House, and made invidious comparisons, I have no doubt I could make out a very good case, but I do not think if I succeeded in doing so it would be any credit to me. I think the time has arrived in Western Australia when the members of the Liberal party should have learned to attack us upon politics. These gibes and sneers at the Labour party for their want of education are unworthy of the hon. member.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Practice what you preach.

Mr. THOMAS: I do practice what I preach.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You do not. What about your remarks against Sir Newton Moore on the platform at Busselton?

Mr. THOMAS: Yes, and I will repeat the remarks I made against Sir Newton Moore at Busselton, and I will give the history of those remarks. I shall take up the time of the House to do so. At the election before last I was opposing the leader of the Opposition for the Sussex seat, and though I was a raw recruit, it being the first time I ever addressed a political meeting on a public platform, I very nearly had the hon. member's political scalp, for I got within 70 votes of him. Two days or three days before the election, Sir Newton Moore came down to Busselton to deliver a speech on behalf of the

hon. member who was in a very bad way at that time. The hall was packed to the fullest extent and hundreds of people stood outside that hall having come there to hear the Premier of the State. During that campaign I made use of the statement that the Moore-Wilson Government were reducing the wages—and I proved it—of the railway employees and had granted concessions in railway freights and wharfage charges to the various timber companies amounting to nearly £20,000. I made a very strong feature of that part of my statement.

Mr. George: When did they do that?

Mr. THOMAS: I made the statement that approximately £20,000 was being granted to the timber companies and I made a strong point of it, thereby securing a large support on that account. As I said, Sir Newton Moore came to Busselton and he said that labour men were seeking to enter Parliament and some were not fit to manage a lollie shop. That was an unworthy statement for him to make. Sir Newton Moore said, after the remark about the lollie shop, "this labour man has been making a statement that we have granted concessions to the timber companies amounting to £20,000 per annum." He further said, "We have granted one concession of £4,000 and we have granted another of £3,000." Then he paused and looked at the audience and they cheered him heartily. I have no doubt that there were some people in that audience who said, "This labour man is a 'rotter' in misrepresenting this to us during the whole campaign." What was the result? After the meeting was over—for I do not believe in interrupting an opponent's meeting—I was in Stone's hotel in Busselton with Senator Lynch and another person, whose name I forget, when Sir Newton Moore and the town clerk of Busselton walked into the same room, and after some remarks I said, "Was your statement on the platform to-night of the amount granted as a concession to the timber companies correct, or not?" He said, "Well, you know it was part of the concession we made to the timber companies." Then I said,

"Approximately what is the right amount?" and he replied, "£17,000 or £18,000." Sir Newton Moore, the Premier of Western Australia, stood on a platform in Busselton and branded me a liar. And who was telling the truth, when before men, who could give a sworn declaration if necessary, he admitted that in order to defeat an opponent he was not telling the truth?

Hon. Frank Wilson: I bet he did not do anything of the sort.

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member will deny anything.

Hon. Frank Wilson: I will send this speech home to him and get his denial.

Mr. THOMAS: What was the result? I stood on a platform in a hall in Busselton and I told the people the tale much as I am telling it to-day and I said, the Premier who forgets the dignity of his office and everything attached to his high position and uses his position to rob me of my chance of election by stating what is not the truth, is guilty of telling—I do not know that I used the word "lie" at any rate I use it now, and I will use it if necessary a thousand times.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Keep on using it.

Mr. THOMAS: There is no other word that fits the occasion and by those tactics those people who listened to the Premier on that occasion never attended another meeting of mine and I lost my election by 70 votes. I have no hesitation in saying that that misstatement lost me my election and here am I to-day accused of having done something that was unfair. Does it appeal to members that in defending my honour and my honesty that I was doing anything wrong? No one would be more ready than the hon. member for Murray-Wellington himself to make a more passionate reply if the same charge were laid against him. Those are the absolute facts of the case. I want to depart from that phase of the question and turn to another, the question of the alleged meat ring in Western Australia, and incidentally to the steamers that were purchased for the North-West. I was much struck the other evening when listening to the member for Moore delivering his speech on the amendment

of the leader of the Opposition. In the course of his remarks he said we need not deal very much with the question of the steamers for the North-West because, he said it is only a trivial matter; it did not, in effect, amount to much importance. It may seem to the members of the Opposition that the people's food supply is a matter of little importance. The question of saving thousands and possibly hundreds of thousands of pounds to the people of the State may not appeal to that member or others as of any importance, but it appeals to me as of the greatest importance.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Show me how you are going to save the hundreds of thousands.

Mr. THOMAS: I will proceed. We hear a great deal from members on the Opposition benches that we are tilting at a windmill, or that we have found a mare's nest, that there is no such thing as a meat ring. In order to prove my case, I have gone to some little trouble and have read up the report of the Royal Commission which sat in 1908. That Commission was composed chiefly of members of the same political belief as the leader of the Opposition and I have taken some remarks from the findings of that Commission and I am going to quote the hon. member's words.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Tell us who were the Commission, to start with.

Mr. THOMAS: I daresay I can find it for the hon. member, it should be here somewhere. I have the names: Mr. Pennefather, Mr. Robert Laurie, Mr. Daglish (one of the hon. member's own friends) Mr. W. D. Johnson and Mr. W. B. Gordon.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Mr. W. D. Johnson.

Mr. THOMAS: Yes, the one bright star amongst the others. It was all in your favour and it has been obvious to me right throughout the debate that the attack on the Government for purchasing the steamers was not made with that particular object only, but a thinly veiled and disguised attempt at the protection of the hon. member's supporters. The members who formed this combination are no doubt good

liberal subscribers towards the funds of the Liberal party and it is necessary that there should be a defence of their interests notwithstanding how it affects the people of Western Australia. The hon. members are not game to show their true political feelings; they are attacking the purchase of the steamers as a socialistic proceeding, but they are not likely to succeed. I want to quote from this report.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Show us how the steamers are going to reduce the price of meat.

Mr. THOMAS: I am going to. Give me time. The report of the Commission says this—

The prevailing practice in regard to the wholesale disposal of meat is extremely unsatisfactory. The trade is almost entirely in the hands of six wholesale firms, three of whom control the largest pastoral interests in Western Australia. These firms distribute nearly all the meat consumed in the metropolitan district, the retailers purchasing from them at prices fixed by a grader employed and paid by the sellers.

That is number one. Now another—

The independent retailer has had an undoubted difficulty in holding his own against the unfair competition of the large and wealthy firms when retail as well as wholesale prices have been determined solely by the latter.

Mr. George: Yet one firm lost £50,000, and another £80,000.

Mr. THOMAS: That is only hearsay, that is only tittle tattle from the street corners. I am quoting from the Commission's report and I do not want any tittle tattle. The report goes on to say—

Necessarily many of those financially weak have suffered heavily. The methods which may be adopted to destroy competition objectionable to the large firms are indicated by the evidence taken at Kalgoorlie. There a butcher opened a cheap shop in the main street, only to find himself at once opposed by a new competitor who went especially from Perth and opened two new shops in the immediate

vicinity within a fortnight of each other. Whilst the independent cheap butcher was refused supplies—

This is sworn evidence.

by the local wholesale firms, his competitor obtained what he required without difficulty, and so far as could be judged on the evidence, practically at prices fixed by himself.

Further than that, they again say—

There can be no doubt that the wholesale firms have refused supplies to certain retailers, whose prices were lower than those agreed upon by the Retailers' Association.

And lastly, I would like you to hear this—

This power, exercised by those already in the trade themselves, to prevent fair competition, cannot work to the advantage of the public. Nor can it be justified except by those who advocate the maintenance of a monopoly.

That is the finding of the Royal Commission as the result of the sworn evidence laid before them. I do not think in the face of that there can remain any question as to whether there existed the meat ring or not. Assuming from that evidence that the meat ring existed on that occasion, and there is little reason to doubt it, beef was being sold at that time wholesale, the best beef, at 4½d. per pound. According to the evidence of this Royal Commission, given I think by Mr. Copley and others, they were buying beasts at Wyndham at £5 to £5 10s. per head. Further on in the report I have figures which show that the beasts bought at this particular price were being brought from the North-West and sold in Perth at from £8 10s. to £8 15s., and I may presently quote you the profit made on them at £8 15s.

Mr. George: Not much profit was made on the bringing of them down.

Mr. THOMAS: Not on the bringing of them down, perhaps. Mr. Connor gave this information before the Royal Commission: he said that they had brought down 3,437 head of cattle—bought at the usual price, I presume, at Wyndham—and the sales averaged in Fremantle £8 8s. 6d., showing a total

profit of £1,463 after paying all expenses.

Mr. George: About 7s. per head.

Mr. THOMAS: He made a profit of over £1,000, exclusive of freight and expenses. At that particular time in this State they had 600,000 head of cattle only, and it is given as evidence in this report that they had ample for the supplies of the whole State. What do we find to-day? The best fat cattle are being sold and delivered at Wyndham at £3 5s. per head, and we know that if the expenses of transit have not been reduced, they have not been increased. The cattle are being sold at £3 5s. per head and they cost £3, covering all expenses, delivered at Fremantle, thus making a total price of £6 5s. and I learn that cattle have been sold as high as £25 per head. On this point I have been quoting from what appeared in the *West Australian* this morning. Except that that statement is perhaps an extreme one, it is probably correct. I think you will admit that a great many cattle have been sold at £17 and £18 per head. I would like to know what becomes of the difference between the £3 5s. purchase price and the £3 transit expenses, or £6 5s. in all—what becomes of the difference between that £6 5s. and the £17 and £18 for which the cattle are sold? There is no ring, of course. All these people are paupers.

Mr. Allen: Is £17 or £18 the average price?

Mr. THOMAS: I am not in possession of that information, but I should not think it was so.

Mr. Wisdom: It is more like £7 or £8.

Mr. THOMAS: Even on that there is a very big profit; but we know that £17 or £18 has been paid for a great many cattle. I made some enquiries in the city the other day, as a result of which I find that within the last three months the wholesale price of beef has been as high as 5½d. per pound for the best cuts. It was proved before the commission that a ring existed four years ago, when beasts were at £5 at Wyndham and meat was being sold here at 4½d. To-day beasts are £3 5s. at Wyndham, and meat

was being sold wholesale in Perth within the last three months at 5½d. per pound.

Mr. Broun : You require to average it all up with the loss on the sheep.

Mr. THOMAS : The hon. member is finding excuses. I want to proceed still further with this. I am trying to show that we have evidence of the actual cost of the purchase of meat. We have proof of what it costs to bring it down. We know that you can buy the best cattle at Wyndham for £3 5s., that they cost £3 to bring down, and that they are sold here for prices as high as £17 or £18. Unless the members of the Opposition can bring forward proof—I do not mean street corner gossip—but some proof to the contrary, we must presume that there is still a meat ring in Western Australia, and that it has the people tighter in its tentacles than ever before. I cannot understand what it is that inspires the hon. gentleman to defend these people who are trying to keep up so high the cost of living in Western Australia.

Hon. Frank Wilson : How far are you going to reduce it ?

Mr. THOMAS : I will explain. The report of the Royal Commission tells us that the mean average consumption of meat per head of population, as estimated by statisticians and experts, is one head of cattle per five head of population per annum. I have taken that seem that the consumption of beef is about equal to the number of market-as a basis, and there being 300,000 people in Western Australia this would give us 60,000 head of cattle. Working my figures out from that, and taking the average fat beast at Fremantle as at 650 pounds weight, I find that for every farthing per pound we save the people on the price of beef, we will be saving them £40,625 per annum. Is it not worth the effort, that we should attempt to do this for the people ? Yet the member for Moore says it is a matter of no importance. To his great financial brain, seeing the visions that he does, a trifling saving of a few thousand a year to the workers of Western Australia is of no importance. I estimated a modest sum. We are not only going to

save one farthing per pound, but we will save at least 2d. per pound in the price of beef, and if we save this 2d. per pound we will be saving the people £325,000 per annum. "A trifle," the member for Moore would say, "a mere trifle."

Hon. Frank Wilson : You are misquoting him.

Mr. THOMAS : I would not be guilty of such a thing. This is a mere trifle which I wish to see saved to the people of Western Australia. To revert : The cost of cattle at Wyndham is £3 5s., transit expenses, £3. Assuming a bullock would work out at 650 pounds—

Mr. George : It will be more like 500 pounds.

Mr. THOMAS : You should have given evidence before the Royal Commission, among the big pastoralists. You may bet they did not exaggerate much against themselves ; more likely were they to cut it fine. Well, taking a bullock that has cost £6 5s. landed at Fremantle, and having a bulk of 650 pounds, if the Government were pushed to the extreme, when they have established their own abattoirs, if they were to buy the cattle themselves and slaughter them in their own abattoirs in Fremantle they could sell the beef wholesale at 2½d. per pound, or thereabouts ; because in addition to the weight of that bullock I believe the fifth quarter brings 25s. and the slaughtering costs, according to Mr. Copley, amount to 6s. or 8s., that is, slaughtering and delivering in the market. So there is another profit of about 17s. or 19s. on the quarter. If it comes to the extreme, if the meat combination fights them long enough and refuses to give the people of Western Australia a fair deal, the Government should say, "If you do not deal fairly with the people, we will deal with you. We will become the wholesale butcher, buy the cattle, land them here, and sell the meat wholesale at 2½d. per pound, thus allowing the retailer to make 100 per cent. and still sell at 5d. or not more than 6d. per pound."

Mr. George : What does he get now ?

Mr. THOMAS: I can give you that information. For fillet steak he gets 1s. 2d., for rump steak 1s. 1d., for roasting beef 8d. and 9d. The friend who supplied me with these figures went round to the shops and got the quotations from them as a customer. Several shops quoted the same price.

Mr. George: It looks as though the retailer was getting the profit.

Mr. THOMAS: It does look suspicious, to say the least of it. However, I do not know that that is the case. I think that when we come to that point, it seems a fairly ample justification for the Government to take the steps they have done. It seems to me that when we have a prospect of making that vast saving, and assuming, as our friends on the Opposition insist, that we are going to make a loss on our boats, if we made a loss of the whole of the interest and sinking fund, with another 10 per cent. thrown in, we would still retain for the people of the country a profit of something like £300,000. If that does not justify the making of an effort, I would like to know what would. We have heard a great deal about the great loss in transit from Wyndham to Perth. I mean the loss on the voyage, not the loss in weight. On the sworn evidence of Mr. Walder, who brought down thousands of cattle, the losses were one-half per cent.; that is to say, losses by death and accident. The leader of the Opposition the other day declared that they lost in weight during the voyage something between 100 and 150 pounds. The average loss of weight, the commission learnt from Mr. Copley, would be from 50 to 60 pounds on the voyage. If members go through this report they will find I am not far out in my estimate, that after losing 50 or 60 pounds a prime beast bought at £3 5s. could be landed at Fremantle weighing something like 600 to 650 pounds. That is the case so far as I see it. I noticed a letter in the Press the other day which for the moment has escaped my attention, but I remember the facts. It pointed out that recently at Kimberley something like 6,000 head of cattle have been sent away to the Northern Territory. They

were sold for £1 2s. 6d. per head, and out of that £1 2s. 6d. had to be paid the cost of driving. Landed at their destination the price secured by the seller was 18s. per head for his cattle.

Mr. Broun: What sort of cattle were they?

Mr. THOMAS: The report does not go very deeply into that, but the writer concludes his statement by saying that with cattle selling at £3 5s. at Wyndham and four times that value at Perth, there is something peculiar. When you find that 6,000 head of cattle are sold in the North-West and driven to the Northern Territory, and realise a value of only 18s. per head—

Mr. Taylor: Is that profit?

Mr. THOMAS: No, only 18s. per head went to the seller. That shows that there are plenty of cattle to be had. Regarding smaller growers, all sorts of efforts are made to prove that these men can get their cattle to market if they desire. In the evidence it is shown here that they can get their cattle to market if they give certain notice, six or twelve months' notice, but I have not the slightest doubt that if they gave that notice when the time came to ship the cattle the monopolist would not have the space, and the small grower would have to drive his cattle back again. Some of the speakers on the Opposition side will say that cattle are being sold in the open market, and any man can buy there in open competition. I put that point to a couple of retailers yesterday, and one of them stated, "Yes, that is true, there is open competition, but when the auctioneer puts the beast up, and it realises a certain price, he says to the man standing near him, 'shall I sell'? If it has not reached the price they want it to reach, there is no sale, and since there are only a few dealing together, and there is what is called in commerce an honourable understanding, no one man ever sells a beast cheaper than another."

Mr. Taylor: They are all put up with a reserve then?

Mr. THOMAS: Yes.

Mr. George: That is not an unknown thing on the part of a seller.

Mr. THOMAS: I am giving the hon. member a lot of information free of charge. I think it seems to the public that one can go into the open market and buy as one likes. So one can, but on the condition that the charge which the combination feel disposed to make is put up. There is nothing on this earth to guide them, except their own free will, as to what they shall charge. There is no competition. There is only one set of buyers in the North-West and only one set of sellers in Fremantle.

Mr. George: The people have been sold then?

Mr. THOMAS: Yes. The people in Perth have been sold for a long time. I do not desire to labour that question any longer.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You have not told us how your steamers are going to bring the price down.

Mr. THOMAS: The steamers will hold the balance of power. They will be able to bring down cattle belonging to any settler in the North-West.

Hon. Frank Wilson: How will it affect the market and the so-called ring?

Mr. THOMAS: Steps can be taken to enter into competition and bring the cattle down here without reserve.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Had not you better put chilling works up there.

[The Deputy Speaker took the Chair.]

Mr. THOMAS: I will turn again to the report. The evidence of experts shows that chilling and freezing works are of a very doubtful character. I am not prepared to say they will not be of assistance, but before offering my opinion I would like to have further expert evidence. Before we determine upon a matter of that kind, we should go thoroughly into it. If we are to have freezing, canning, or chilling works, that has nothing to do with the principle we are working for now. I want to tell the hon. member one little fact. Before the Government bought their steamers the price of meat wholesale in Western Australia a few months ago was 5¾d. The very shadow of the act we have done has resulted in meat to-day being 4d. and 4½d. wholesale, and there is every prospect I think that in a few weeks it will be 3d. or 3½d.

Mr. George: There was a scarcity of bullocks on the market at the time you speak of.

Mr. THOMAS: Yes, that is the old, old story of supply and demand, but I would remind the hon. member that the supply begins in April, and the good old price of 5½d. and 5¾d. was being charged to the retail butcher until the Labour Government stepped into the arena and said, "We are going to have our boats and do something for the people to bring down the cost of meat." In order to defeat our efforts, those engaged in the business are combining, and I anticipate you will have meat at 3d. to 3½d. a pound wholesale in the next few weeks.

Mr. George: They are shaking in their shoes, are they?

Mr. THOMAS: Yes. I saw a man in St. George's-terrace a day or two ago connected with one of the six firms mentioned as controlling the meat trade, and he approached me in a most excited manner and said, "You Labour members are doing a wrong thing altogether." He went on in a most hysterical manner, and as he proceeded I said, "We are on the right track, every time." The worse he got the more I realised that we were hurting him. The more he squealed the more I realised that we are on the right track. That little incident convinced me more than anything else. I only want to say towards the conclusion of my remarks that I appreciate very much the work of the Minister for Lands is doing in connection with the establishment of agricultural schools in Western Australia. It is the customary thing to hear members of the Opposition enlarge upon all they are prepared to do for the farmer. The hon. member for Northam, whom I am sorry to say is absent—I would have liked to have said a few things if he had been present, but I do not care to say too much behind his back—had any amount of opportunity to take steps to help the farmers in Western Australia, but in all his years of office he did nothing in that particular direction. Again, that hon. gentleman spoke most vigorously on the floor of the House, or as vigorously as he could, because he is never very vigorous as far as I have heard him; but he did his best—

Mr. George: You wait until—

Mr. THOMAS: He is not as vigorous as the hon. member. What the hon. gentleman lacks in intelligence he makes up in sound. I appreciate very much the effort to establish agricultural schools in Western Australia, because I, as a Labour man, profess to be genuinely in sympathy with the farmer, and the Labour party in general are genuine in their sympathy with the farmer, as is evidenced by the various proposals in the Governor's Speech. We know that in Western Australia, although the farmers have done splendid work, and although splendid people have gone on the land and made efforts to fight the battle with nature, while science has been applied to almost every other occupation in this country, very little science has been applied to the development of agriculture. When I say very little science, I mean there is not so much scientific agriculture in this State as there might be. Science is marching with rapid strides all over the world. In America, in Denmark, and in other places they are going in for scientific culture. It is to the credit of the Minister for Lands that he is making a genuine effort to provide facilities for the farmers of Western Australia to gain a scientific knowledge of their occupation. Nothing will conduce more to the prosperity of the State than to give the man who is tilling the soil the best knowledge that money can procure. It is money well invested in this State. I understand, by the way, that the Minister proposed to establish one or two agricultural schools. I fancy he has his eye on the Avondale estate for one, but I would remind my friend, the member for Murray-Wellington, that there is a splendid place in his own electorate for another, at Brunswick, and if he is alive to the situation, and values the welfare of his constituents, he ought to bring pressure on the Minister to get an agricultural school at Brunswick. I consider that there is more in this little proposal than appears to the eye, and that it will do a great deal of good for Western Australia. While on this subject I would like to pay a little tribute to the Commissioner for the South-West, Mr. Connor. In the whole of my

work in connection with agricultural matters, and although a Labour man, no member of this House takes a more genuine interest in the agricultural development of this country than I do, in all my efforts I desire to say that I have received great assistance from Mr. Connor. His splendid enthusiasm has always been a tonic to me whenever I have met him. His enthusiasm has infected others, and as a result of his splendid efforts fine work has been done towards the development of the South-West. He has spread knowledge, and people are realising that in the South-West we have some of the finest land, not only in Western Australia, but in the whole of Australia. The member for Forrest stated the other day that the South-West might be called the Warrnambool of Western Australia and quite so too. As regards potatoes, compared with Victoria, acre for acre, we beat them by a very considerable percentage. Western Australia, with its land eried down by most people, land which was said to be patchy, is proving to be the finest potato growing country in Australia. We have only played at the game so far and have not yet touched the finest potato land. In the past potato growing has been looked upon with suspicion, and it has only been carried on in little patches, and growers have not always selected the best land.

Mr. George: It has not paid them very much yet.

Mr. THOMAS: They have not learned the true science of producing potatoes. Growers in Victoria have been engaged in the industry for many more years and have vastly more experience behind them.

Mr. Gill: What about the swamps?

Mr. THOMAS: I believe the best land has not been touched yet. In connection with the establishment of agricultural schools, the Attorney General was one of the first members of the Ministry to mention them. He visited Bunbury in connection with an agricultural conference, and on that occasion he said they were going to provide agricultural schools throughout Western Australia. If that can only be done, and done effectively, bring the best science our money can buy, give it to the farmers free of charge and let them apply it to the development of

the soil, it will give us in the future some of the best farmers to be found in the world. We have the bone, the muscle, and the intelligence; give our people the scientific training, and I am satisfied that they will do it. Further than that, I am very pleased to notice in the Governor's Speech the remarks about irrigation. The present Ministry have given an irrigation scheme to Harvey costing a considerable sum, and they propose, according to the Governor's Speech, to carry out the Roelands-Bunbury irrigation scheme. This is a work that will be of very great importance not only to that part of the State but to the whole of Western Australia, for the reason that it will mean the introduction of the dairying industry upon a safe and sound footing. I hope, and I anticipate I might say, as a result of this scheme the supplying of a million gallons of water daily to Bunbury, and we will be able to supply sufficient water to irrigate 20,000 acres of land, and most of it in the constituency of the hon. member for Murray-Wellington. I know it is the intention of the Government to purchase land before they start the irrigation so that they may sell it for closer settlement in 50 and 100-acre blocks, and each little farmer will have his 10 or 20 acres of land irrigated.

Mr. George: That will be good work.

Mr. THOMAS: And that will be instead of one man holding 2,000 or 3,000 acres.

Hon. Frank Wilson: Did I hear the hon. member say "Sell it?"

Mr. THOMAS: That was a slip of the tongue. The hon. member is quite right, for once. I should have said we would lease it to them. With a generous and regular rainfall I want to see intense culture in that portion of the State upon the most scientific lines which can be applied to Western Australia. I want the Government to come to the assistance of the small farmer in purchasing his dairy herds upon a time-payment system if necessary, a system of clearing some portion of his holding and placing the men there under fair conditions, and then we will have the foundation stone laid of the dairying industry in Western Australia. When we overtake the demand which exists in the

State for dairy produce, the old quotation about £1,000 a day going out of the country for butter will no longer be heard.

Mr. S. Stubbs: It is more than that now. Butter has risen to £40 per ton during the last three months.

Mr. THOMAS: That magnificent sum will remain in the State, and it will be as a result of the efforts of the present Government that it will be saved to the country.

Mr. George: Who brought your dairy expert over?

Mr. Lander: You did not use him properly.

Mr. THOMAS: Not only did the Minister for Works state, when he was in Bunbury, that he will deal with these two schemes, but he announced that he was obtaining estimates from his experts to see what could be done in the matter of irrigation throughout the whole of Western Australia, and wherever it was possible to tap the stores of nature to give supplies for the purpose of increasing the productiveness of the soil wherever that could be done without loss on the transaction. The Labour Government of Western Australia, who, it is said, have no sympathy with the farmer, are prepared to do what no Liberal Government ever attempted to do, viz., to bring into use all those supplies, and increase the productivity of the soil wherever it is possible throughout the State. There is only one more subject that I wish to refer to, and it is one in which I am particularly interested. I am pleased to note that the Government are going to do something for the harbours of Western Australia. There is a project that is near to my heart—the Bunbury Harbour. Notwithstanding the fact that the leader of the Opposition, when he wanted my seat in Bunbury said "Here is £500,000 which we are going to spend on the Bunbury harbour, if you elect Mr. Ewing to Parliament," the people of Bunbury were a most intelligent class, and they were able to see through the wiles of the hon. gentleman; they saw the political birdlime that he was spreading around to catch them, and, like the old birds that

they were, they cried off, and stood to their colours, and gave me an increased majority.

Mr. George: That was out of sympathy for your youth.

Mr. THOMAS: They did not increase the hon. member's majority out of sympathy for his youth, anyhow. The hon. member had the shave of his life, and the next time, I will remind the member for Murray-Wellington, that it will be closer. I very much appreciate the action of the Government in taking into consideration these matters, and in rising to the occasion, and realising the necessity that exists in this country not only for the improvement of the Bunbury harbour but other important harbours—Albany, Geraldton, and Fremantle.

The Attorney General: Not forgetting Esperance.

Mr. THOMAS: I appreciate the attitude of the Government, and I recognise, and the Government recognise, that if the export trade is to be cultivated as it should be cultivated, we must of necessity have proper harbours for the export of our produce. We have at Bunbury the possibility of exporting an enormous quantity of coal; we have the possibility of becoming the chief centre for the export of fruit, wine, wheat, wool, and other products of the State; but, to carry on this work to perfection, we must have a harbour worthy of the centre that Bunbury is. It is to be the metropolis of the South-West and it is the Labour Government that is going to help it to achieve its destiny. I would point out that Bunbury, in the matter of export tonnage, is the fourth port in Australia. I thank the leader of the Opposition for supplying that information. It will be seen, therefore, how we are going ahead.

Hon. Frank Wilson: What about Busselton? Are you not going to give it a show?

Mr. THOMAS: The hon. member has been the millstone that has hung around the neck of Busselton so long.

Hon. Frank Wilson: When are you going to reside there, according to your promise?

Mr. THOMAS: I was thinking of going down to oppose the hon. gentleman again, and if I do so, I will bring his political scalp and hang it up on this side of the House.

Mr. Heitmann: The Sussex map would scare you.

Mr. THOMAS: I really believe I had more to do with the framing of that famous map of the Sussex electorate than any other man in Western Australia, because of the fear that I might oppose the hon. member. But, much as I enjoy a little repartee of this description, I feel I have taken up sufficient time. I am pleased and delighted with the programme that the Labour Ministry have laid before the people. I look upon it as the finest programme for the development of this State that has ever been presented to this Parliament since responsible government was introduced. The Labour Government have shown confidence, determination, and optimism in this young country. We do not want your croakers or your pessimists; we do not want men who are always walking around the country crying "wolf." We do not want individuals finding fault with everything. The leader of the Opposition will not do any good by finding fault with our proposals and devoting his best energies like the political dervish who stood over the grave of his opponent crying out in the wilderness to awake and arise. The hon. member will never stimulate the Liberal party into action again; they are dead. I think there is something wrong with an hon. member who will stand over the grave of the political dead and cry out to them to awake and rise and fight again. I do not think the time is ripe for his dead to arise. Further than that, I think there was something sacrilegious in the action of the hon. member when, supported by that magnificent audience of 13 at Bayswater, he asked the dead to get up and fight again. After life's fitful fever, may they sleep well. However, I consider that the Labour Government have offered us a splendid programme and the carrying out of that programme into effect will bring about prosperity to

the people of Western Australia: There is one small plea that I desire to make, in conclusion, and that is in regard to the Industrial Arbitration Act, which it is proposed to amend during this session of Parliament. I really think it is a subject on which there should be no party feeling. I approach the question of arbitration purely from a judicial standpoint. I do not want anything unfair to be given to one side or to the other. We have seen the devastation that has been caused by industrial strife throughout the world, and no man regrets more than I do the misery, poverty, and suffering that has been brought about. But I recognise also that when you do not give the workers the opportunity of properly settling their grievances in a constitutional manner, there is nothing left for them but to use the one weapon in their hands. I feel sure that even the member for Murray-Wellington will give his support in this matter. I appeal to all members to assist the Government in developing and maturing one of the finest arbitration Acts that it is possible to turn out from Parliament. Let us put something on the statute-book of Western Australia that will be a credit to the Opposition and the Ministerial benches alike. Let us see if from one combined effort the collective intelligence of this House can frame a measure that will offer the best possible inducement to bring about industrial peace. If we accomplish that alone in this session, we will have done something that will justify the whole of our existence.

[Mr. Speaker resumed the Chair.]

Mr. GEORGE (Murray-Wellington): I desire to congratulate the member for Bunbury upon the enthusiasm with which he has approached the subject upon which he has been speaking, and in regard to a great many things he can rely that he will receive assistance, as well as criticism, not only from my leader, but from all members of the Opposition. I take it that he is not alone in his statement that it is the duty of both sides of the House, when the whole of the interests of the country are at stake, to give what ability and experience they have to

bring about the moulding of measures that will be beneficial to all. It is true that in the clash of party warfare at times there may be little charges one against the other, which perhaps in our calmer moments we would put on one side. But I must say that the member for Bunbury has given us something to think about for more than a day. I hold no brief for the meat ring. I do not know that a meat ring exists; if I did, I would condemn it in as unmeasured terms as any member of this House.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Mr. Butcher said that there was a square.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member may call it a ring or a square, or a triangle, or anything he likes, but if there was any combination to deal with the food of the people in such a way as would cause the people and their children to go crying for food because they had not the means of providing it, it would be the duty of this Parliament, and of all Parliaments, to do whatever was possible to remedy such a state of affairs. But first let us get our postulate well settled. If there is a meat ring operating in connection with the food of the people, then let us squash it, but do not let us act on a statement that is not yet proved to be correct. The hon. member who has just resumed his seat spoke about the wholesale price of meat being at times about 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per pound. I believe that is a fact, but the hon. member knows perfectly well that on any given article, whether it be beef, or mutton, or labour, or money, or bread, if there is a scarcity of supply, up goes the price and the man who holds the supply gets the benefit of the rise.

The Minister for Mines: And up goes the price very often when there is no shortage.

Mr. GEORGE: But on the other hand, when there is a surplussage of any supply, down comes the price, and the people get the benefit.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: No, they never get the benefit, that is the trouble.

Mr. GEORGE: Well, I know of one man in the South-West (hon. members may call him one of the cattle kings if they like) who had a contract to supply

the Co-operative Timber Hewers' Society and Millars' Company with beef at $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound, and I know that he had to pay in open market something like 5d. or $5\frac{3}{4}$ d. for his supplies.

Mr. A. A. Wilson: That was through the operations of the meat ring.

Mr. GEORGE: But this is a member of the meat ring that the hon. member is speaking about.

The Premier: You are speaking of Mr. McLarty, are you not?

Mr. GEORGE: Yes, and that hon. gentleman is too big a person for even the meat ring to make him a victim. If he were in the House, and could speak for himself, he would confirm what I am stating, namely, that he was supplying meat and paying more than 1d. per pound above what he was getting for it.

Mr. Dooley: He had to purchase it in the market controlled by the meat ring?

Mr. GEORGE: No, the reason was that the bullocks were not here.

Mr. Dooley: Those were the circumstances.

Mr. GEORGE: The circumstances were the shortage of steamers.

The Minister for Mines: Then you are supporting our action in correcting the shortage.

Mr. GEORGE: The member for Bunbury was pointing out the inequality of the wholesale prices, and I was instancing the fact that one of the largest cattle kings in this State, in order to keep his contracts, had to pay more than he was receiving for his beef.

The Premier: Not for long.

Mr. GEORGE: No, not for long, like the hon. gentleman who occupies the position of Premier of the State. He may not occupy the position for long, but I feel quite certain that while he is there he will make provision for a rainy day.

The Premier: That proves nothing.

Mr. GEORGE: Of course I cannot supply the hon. gentleman with a discriminating brain; he has to put up with what nature has given him.

The Premier: You cannot give what you have not got.

Mr. GEORGE: The brain that the Premier has got is not too bad, but he

has not the discriminating power. The member for Bunbury gave us information with regard to the price of beef, and I asked him in my mild way what was the retail price, and the hon. member, with an honesty which beams out of him, and which he would not hide if he could and could not if he would, said that he did not know but what there might be something wrong in connection with the retailing. Here is the position as stated by him. Meat is being sold at from $3\frac{1}{2}$ d. to $4\frac{1}{2}$ d. per pound wholesale and is being retailed at prices from 9d. to 1s. 2d. The hon. gentleman, in the course of his argument, pointed out that if the Government by buying these beasts, bringing them down to the market in their own steamers, and killing them in abattoirs could offer to sell the beef at $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., another $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. per lb. would be a fair thing for the consumer to pay. Now, as beef is being sold at the present time at about 5d. per lb. wholesale, allowing the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. to the retailer, the margin mentioned by the member for Bunbury, the retail price should be $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. and not 9d. per pound.

Mr. Gill: How do the persons you mention lose so much money if there is such a margin for the retailer?

Mr. GEORGE: I am telling the House one way of losing the money, and that is they have to give credit and they do not get paid. If the Government enter into the butchering trade I trust it will be on cash terms only, and then they will have a fair chance of getting through.

The Premier: That is what we introduced in the only State butcher's shop in the State, but the Government you supported were giving credit.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member for Bunbury also spoke about the establishment of agricultural schools, and I say let the Government establish agricultural schools and farms and colleges; let them give the people in the State the best that is possible to guide them in their work, and I am satisfied that any criticism we may make will be more with the idea of aiding their efforts rather than of hindering them. The hon. gentleman spoke also of the Bunbury harbour, and I am at one with him there. I am satisfied that Bun-

bury is the port from which the bulk of the exports of this State will eventually go. I am satisfied that the great fruit-producing parts of the State, where fruit can be produced for the whole of the world of quantity and quality that cannot be surpassed, will have to make their shipments at the port of Bunbury.

The Attorney General : Or Albany.

Mr. GEORGE : Good as Albany is, we have room for 50 Albanys in the South-West.

The Premier : But when is that time coming to pass?

Mr. GEORGE : It is going on now. The hon. gentleman does not know what is going on in the hills beyond the Darling Ranges in the South-West.

The Premier : I used to hear a good deal a few years ago.

Mr. GEORGE : If the Premier has time for a few days holiday and will go as my guest or the guest of the member for Bunbury we will take him round, and show him the possibilities of the South-West as he has never been shown them before.

The Premier : I venture to say that I have been over more of the South-West than you have.

Mr. GEORGE : Perhaps the Premier has, but if so, he has not assimilated his observations as well. If the hon. member should happen to be at Bunbury in the wool season he will see an immense quantity of wool being shipped, a quantity that is increasing year by year. It is coming from as far as Narrogin in one direction and from long distances in other directions; the quantity is increasing year by year, and the people of the district have this view, that although some of them have interests in Fremantle, they will develop their own natural port and assist it in every way possible.

The Premier : That is a different thing to exporting fruit.

Mr. GEORGE : Why should they not export fruit from Bunbury?

The Premier : It cannot be exported the same as wool.

Mr. GEORGE : The hon. gentleman has the opportunity of a lifetime. Let him build the Bunbury harbour big enough to take the ships that will call there to carry away the produce.

The Premier : You know that is part of our policy and that is why you are saying it.

Mr. GEORGE : Nothing of the sort. Before the hon. gentleman came to this State, or even before he was ever heard of or dreamed of in politics, down in the old House I was supporting the Bunbury harbour when Sir John Forrest was Premier of the State. So why does the hon. member talk so foolishly?

The Premier : Why did not Sir John Forrest do this work?

Mr. GEORGE : Bunbury harbour was proposed and developed by Sir John Forrest, but the requirements of the trade of that harbour have gone far beyond the dreams of the original projectors. When the Bunbury harbour was originally proposed two schemes were put forward, the one for that retaining wall, which has proved practically a failure, and the other for an inner harbour, such as the present Government intend to carry out. The funds of the State at that time would not allow of an inner harbour being undertaken and the Government had to adopt a makeshift. But at that time the shipment of timber from Bunbury was infinitesimal; to-day Bunbury is the biggest timber shipping port in Australia. We had then, as we have now, to deal with the circumstances of the day, and to use such foresight as we possessed in order to enable us to anticipate the things of the future. The scheme for a bigger harbour at Bunbury is one that recommends itself to all sides of the House, and is one of the things which the people of the South-West expect from any Government, whether it be Labour or Liberal.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : What are you going to do about Busselton?

Mr. GEORGE : I leave the hon. member for Sussex to speak for Busselton. All I know of Busselton is that the last time I was there I expected that before

long I should be able to drive down that immensely long jetty and touch Mozambique or some other place on the African coast. However, whatever may have been the short-comings of the previous Government, the Premier and his colleagues have to-day got practically a clean slate to work upon with their own designs.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We want harbours all over the State.

Mr. GEORGE: Yes, and we want harbours where we can earn the revenue.

The Premier: Do not forget that we have cleaned the slate.

Mr. GEORGE: I hope so, and I hope that the hon. gentleman's writing will leave nothing for us to clean up when we come after him.

The Premier: Sleep easily on that point.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. GEORGE: The Minister for Lands took the leader of the Opposition to task in connection with a minute to which the Premier referred in his speech, and accused the leader of the Opposition of twisting matters on purpose to put a good face on what might otherwise have been considered a bad case. But I think if the Minister had taken a little more care, on going into matters he would have found the error lay, not with the leader of the Opposition, but with the Premier. The Premier spoke of a minute that the leader of the Opposition, when Treasurer, had sent to the heads of the departments, in which minute the words were made use of that the outlook of the finances was not very promising. The Premier, without having the actual words of the minute and quoting from memory, said that the minute read—

I want you to ask all departments to bring all revenue possible to account during the present month, and to keep down expenditure as much as possible.

The implication the Premier made from that minute was that, in order to square the finances as much as possible on the 30th June, 1910, the then Premier had issued this minute, yet I have with me a copy of the minute in question which has

been supplied by the Premier to the leader of the Opposition, and I shall take the opportunity of reading it to the House. It reads—

The daily card showing revenue and expenditure returns is not promising. Every effort must be made to collect as much revenue as possible this month and to keep down revenue expenditure, as I am extremely anxious to have the deficit wiped out if possible.

The Premier's words were that the minute read, "I want you to ask all departments to keep down expenditure as much as possible." Where he made the mistake was that he applied it to the revenue expenditure for the year ending the 30th June, when the leader of the Opposition was not in the country, and when the minute which he quoted as applying to the 30th June was not written until the 20th September following.

The Premier: Will you explain why he issued that in September?

Mr. GEORGE: When the Premier is conducting party warfare in the House the least he can do is to be accurate in his statements, and not use ammunition for his purpose which applies months afterwards.

The Premier: My statement was to all intents and purposes accurate. I quoted the minute from memory and was just about correct. Now, tell the House why the late Treasurer was so anxious to square the finances in September.

Hon. Frank Wilson: He was always anxious.

The Premier: Because you wanted to gerrymander the finances.

Mr. GEORGE: When dealing with an opponent the Premier could surely have been careful to be accurate so far as these dates were concerned. To apply a minute to June when it was not written until three months afterwards is not to play the game fairly.

The Premier: I referred to a circular that went out to the departments on which they acted, and then I said I had sighted a minute from the leader of the Opposition in those terms.

Hon. Frank Wilson: You quoted it.

The Premier: Yes.

Mr. GEORGE: The Premier referred to a report by the Auditor General and, to bolster up his incorrect conclusions on that Auditor General's report, brought in a minute which was not in existence to deal with the files the Auditor General dealt with. If the minute had been written early in July it could have been fairly applied to the revenue expenditure of the year ending 30th June, 1911, but, for the purpose of party warfare, to bring a minute written in September and apply it to what was properly dead and gone in regard to the finances of the previous year is not what we would expect from the Premier.

The Premier: Why did he write that? There was likely to be a deficit; and it was an attempt to gerrymander the finances.

Mr. GEORGE: I have the Premier absolutely on the hip in connection with this minute, and he cannot get away from it. No amount of abuse in the shape of interjections will take away from the purpose for which he used this minute which was unborn at the time to which he applied it.

The Premier: I referred to the circular; I said I had sighted a minute, which I had sighted.

Mr. GEORGE: It did not refer to the circumstances to which the Premier applied it. The Minister for Lands, also in endeavouring to put up a good case for the Government in regard to the deficit, referred to the question of the carriage of water on the railways, and quite inadvertently, I am sure, made it appear that the 200,000 extra train miles run in connection with water services were for the purpose of supplying water for the use of the Railway Department. In that he made a mistake, because if we take the Premier's speech we will find that he said—

During the past year the Railway Department found it necessary to run 295,000 extra train miles. This is accounted for almost wholly by the haulage of water. The additional revenue derived was £34,000, but this amount could have been earned by 95,000 additional miles, taking the previous

year's figures as a basis. The balance of 200,000 miles can only be accounted for by the haulage of water, representing £50,000 that the railways have given away by the haulage of water.

Then he asked members on this side of the House whether the leader of the Opposition would ask him to refuse to carry water to the settlers who required it. However, I am positive that it was a slip on the part of the Minister for Lands, but I desire to correct it. The member for Bunbury has referred to the irrigation schemes the Government have taken up from the beginning made by the previous Government. I congratulate them on the fact that they have taken up the irrigation question, and I congratulate the Minister for Works because he has taken it up in no half-hearted style, but in a way that I am satisfied will be of advantage to the country. I had the honour and pleasure of accompanying the Minister through the South-Western districts, as the works are principally in my electorate, and I quite willingly and gladly bear testimony to the fact that he went into matters in a thoroughly businesslike and practical way; and from conversations I have had with him since, I am satisfied that, having dropped on a lucky find in the pigeon holes of the past Government, they are going to push this irrigation business throughout the South-West, and that it will develop into a scheme beside which the previous water schemes of the State will pale, even the great Coolgardie Water Scheme itself.

The Minister for Mines: There was no lucky find.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member cannot gainsay that the irrigation scheme was started by the previous Minister; not promised, but started. The necessary initiatory steps were taken. I had the honour and pleasure of bringing the matter before the previous Government and getting it into form. The present Government are lucky that among the pigeon holes of the late Government they found a scheme which, if they carry it out, will have all our co-operation, and will make a name for them they need not be ashamed of and we will be proud of.

The Minister for Mines: If the scheme was in the pigeon holes of the late Government why did the present Minister have to go down there to make a thorough investigation?

Mr. GEORGE: The start of the irrigation in the South-West was in the pigeon holes of the late Government; but the present Minister for Works, being an astute man and a practical man, when the matter was brought before him by representations from the member for Bunbury and myself, was cute enough and good enough to take it up wholeheartedly. We congratulate him that he has done so much good work in that respect. I congratulate the Government on the matter. They propose a great deal of railway extension. I have never been one to oppose any scheme for the extension of railways in a new country like this.

The Premier: Light railways?

Mr. GEORGE: I have never been one to oppose the putting forward of schemes for railway extension in this State, because I am a thorough believer in the State, and I know that the bigger the facilities we give the greater will be our settlement and prosperity.

Mr. Green: Then why did you oppose the Esperance railway?

Mr. GEORGE: I will deal with the Esperance railway directly, and I will deal with light railways directly. I want to say to the Government it is all very well to put in the Governor's Speech a reference to further extension of railways, but would it not be just as well to see if there is any probability of being able to carry out these schemes within a reasonable time. At the present time the Government have close upon 500 miles of railway to construct, and although we know the Public Works Department is well equipped for the construction of railways, still the tackling of close on 500 miles, with also the obligation hanging over us of constructing a double line to Kalgoorlie, probably 800 miles of heavy line, in connection with the Trans-Australian railway, means that the country is committed to a railway policy which will take many years to carry out.

The Premier: Who said it was to be a double line to Kalgoorlie?

Mr. GEORGE: It was an undertaking given by a former Premier, Sir Walter James, whose telegram to the Federal Ministry of that day was to the effect that as soon as the Federal Government were prepared to start the construction of the Trans-Australian railway his Government would be prepared to commence the construction of a double line to Kalgoorlie. If it be that this Government are thinking of discounting the promise of a previous Government I would like to remind the Premier that the character of Western Australia is weighed by the readiness of our public men to carry out the promises of other public men who have preceded them.

The Premier: The promise you refer to lapsed because the Federal people did not keep their part of the compact.

The Minister for Mines: What would be the good of a double line to Kalgoorlie, seeing that there will be only a single line from that point onwards?

Mr. GEORGE: I say the obligation of this State is to construct a double line to Kalgoorlie as soon as the Trans-Australian railway is commenced.

The Premier: No.

Mr. GEORGE: That was the obligation entered into by a former Premier. Even supposing the Government deny this, and that we make them a present of the contention, and say that only a single line is to be built, still, coming on the top of the 500 miles to which we are already pledged, we will have 400 miles of heavy road to Kalgoorlie, or a total of close on 1,000 miles. So long as this is hanging over us, it is futile to go about the country promising other railway lines, because we cannot construct them within a reasonable time; we have neither the plant nor the men to carry out these lines with anything like reasonable despatch.

The Premier: You leave that to us; all you have to do is to pass the Bills.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. gentleman may make as many light remarks as he cares to, but he cannot detract from the practical part of the question which I put before the House. I notice also in the Speech an intimation that in connection with the land policy of the State, as interpreted by the present Government, it

is intended to keep back from selection any portion of the State where the rainfall is doubtful. On that I can commend the Government; they are doing a right thing. Before they induce the people to settle on the land they should satisfy themselves, not only that the land is fit for the purpose of agriculture, but also that the necessary rainfall and conveniences are there. But I would like to ask the Government, does this mean that they have taken out the Esperance district? During last session we had a discussion on the Esperance railway, and it disclosed the feeling of many members, and of a great number of the people of Western Australia, that our knowledge in regard to the district between Esperance and Norseman is hardly sufficient to warrant us in constructing a railway like that. I congratulate the Government, and more especially the Minister for Lands, on the fact that the Minister is trying to put an end to the speculation in land that has been going on. I have always held that there has been too much speculation in land in Western Australia, too many openings for dummying, and too much opportunity for the robbing of the settler. I know this from practical experience and from friends of mine who have well nigh torn out their soul cases in trying to make the land pay. Every cent you take out of the pockets of settlers in the pioneering stage is worth more to them than, perhaps, ten times the amount would be in years to come. There is a feeling that there has been too much opportunity given to a class of men whose one aim and object it is to bleed the man who is eventually going to settle on the land. I say it is a disgrace.

The Attorney General: I hope your side will take note of what you say.

Mr. GEORGE: Perhaps when we are dealing with this question of land I may touch upon a point in which the House has a particular interest. There has been a feeling among a great many people, and more on that side than on this, that it is not desirable that a person should hold too large an area of land, that in fact it is more desirable to have closer settlement. But there are instances, many of them I believe, in which cutting down

of land allowed to be held by one man is really retarding progress. Most of us are aware of instances in which perhaps, a man with a family of sons is desirous of getting them settled on the land about him if he possibly can. In cases of that sort surely it is not wrong to allow the selection of sufficient land, provided the person who selects it is prepared to carry out his obligations in a *bona fide* manner. I have a case before me which I know is correct; it relates to a gentleman who settled in the South-Western district, close to my place. For many years he occupied a position in the Indian railways, but came to this State, bringing with him four sons, great, big stalwart men, who can work and who are quite willing to work. This gentleman came with a certain amount of money. He had been led to believe that he would be able to get the land necessary for himself and his sons, but after wasting month after month during the last half-year in trying to get land he has found it necessary to break up the family home, so to speak. One of his sons has gone to work on day wages, another has secured a block of land for himself, while two others have gone to the Eastern States. Why, in the name of all that is just, should obstacles be thrown in the way of allowing a family party like this to select a thousand acres each? They had the money to carry on the work, they had the strength, and the willingness and the desire. Why should a man like that be prevented from getting the land which is necessary to enable him to work it profitably? The circumstances of the case were related in the last issue of the *Sunday Times*, and I am in a position to say that the report is an accurate one.

Mr. Underwood: It is about the first time the *Sunday Times* has been accurate; it must have been an accident.

Mr. GEORGE: The Premier spoke cheerfully about the deficit. He was not ashamed of it, and he told us how it was made up by deferred rents, water, increases to railway men, retrospective increases, and so on. I am not afraid of the deficit, and would not be afraid if it were twice as large, because I know that Western Australia can respond to any

reasonable call in connection with the finances. The Premier spoke very feelingly about the increases given to railway men, but he did not tell the House, and I do not know whether the Minister for Railways is going to tell the House, that while they increased the wages of the wages men, they left in a hole the salaried officers, who are not receiving very much more than the wages men. There are numbers of railway stationmasters and night officers along the lines who are doing their twelve hours a day.

Mr. Lander: You never tried to alter that.

Mr. GEORGE: There are numbers of railway officers who are putting in their twelve hours a day and are getting less per hour than the porters on the stations who are putting in eight hours a day.

Mr. Lander: You introduced the system.

Mr. GEORGE: I did not, and during the time of my commissionership the hon. gentleman had no opportunities of judging the matter, or he would not talk like that. The system as I found it I improved. Anyway, if I were as black in sin as Satan in regard to that, it does not alter the necessity for reform when we have a reforming Government.

Mr. Lander: You do not expect them to do all in nine months?

Mr. GEORGE: I should not expect them to reform you in twelve months.

Mr. Lander: You were at it for 20 years.

Mr. GEORGE: I have not known the hon. gentleman for twenty years, thank God. Now we come to the Savings Bank question. With regard to this, the Premier told us with any amount of light-heartedness that he for one is going to fall in with the plan of the master mind, that he has arranged, or will arrange with the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth that the State shall keep all that there is to the credit of depositors in the Savings Bank at present, and in future shall have the right to deal with 75 per cent. of deposits that may be made. I think we are entitled to ask the Premier for the exact terms of the agreement he proposes to enter into. It is all very well for the

Prime Minister of the Commonwealth to offer to Western Australia in a patronising sort of way the whole of our money at present lying in the bank and 75 per cent. of future deposits, but we have a right to know on what terms that money is to be left in our hands or transferred to us. Is the position to be taken up by the Commonwealth Savings Bank that the Prime Minister becomes the money lender to Western Australia, and lends to her her own money and takes the liability and undertakes interest and repayment? If that is the case, then we want to know on what terms of interest and repayment and recall the money is to be lent to us. Surely, as a purely business matter, it is necessary that these things should be made clear, not only to this House, but to the whole State.

The Minister for Railways: The Government do not make things clear while they are carrying on negotiations in important matters.

Mr. GEORGE: I think the stage of negotiations has passed when we find the Premiers of other States are taking the necessary precautions to protect their Savings Banks and keep them in their hands. Therefore, the stage of negotiations is long past, but if it is not, it could not be wrong for the Premier to answer simple plain questions on the point.

The Minister for Railways: This State will be better protected than the Eastern States when the matter is finally settled.

Mr. GEORGE: I am very glad to hear from the Minister, who represents the Premier and the whole of the Treasury benches for the time being, that that is the case. There has been a certain amount of talk in this Chamber and a certain amount of feeling throughout the whole State in connection with what is known as the Trades Hall grant, and the Premier has told us that whatever may have appeared in the Press, his policy is qualified by the words, "sanction of Parliament," and he tried, with more or less lack of success, to place the grant of the Trades Hall in the same category as a grant to the Royal Agricultural Society, and tried to get this House, and through this House the country, to believe that the

Royal Agricultural Society was a political machine.

Mr. Lander: So it is, the Liberal League.

Mr. GEORGE: If it were, which I do not know, then it would only be on an equality with the Trades Hall, which is the biggest political machine of modern days.

Mr. Lander: What about the Cricketing Association?

Mr. GEORGE: Let me point out to the impetuous gentleman who is interjecting that, whereas from the Trades Hall no revenue is returned to this State in any shape or form, the Agricultural Society is a revenue returning source because it brings to the railways a large amount of freight for the exhibits, and a large amount of money in the shape of fares for the passengers, and that cannot be ignored. That is more of a justification for assisting such a society rather than the Trades Hall, which does not bring one cent into the State.

The Minister for Railways: Why, the Trades Hall was responsible for two or three special trains the other Sunday.

Mr. GEORGE: Were they granted free?

The Minister for Railways: No.

Mr. GEORGE: I am glad to see that the spirit of commercial enterprise is enveloping the Minister for Railways. With regard to the important departure made by the Government, these trading concerns to which this State is practically committed are the most important propositions made by Western Australia during the 22 years I have been here. While listening to the addresses, I find that we have embarked on a fairly large trading proposition.

Mr. Lander: And a lucrative one.

Mr. GEORGE: That has to be proved. There is no bankruptcy court for Western Australia, or that point might have to be considered. The steamers have been purchased; they have to be run. The tramways have been purchased and they have to be run. Incidentally I might say I think the Government have done right in purchasing the tramways. The Government have also started a motor-car

service, and with the exception of the cabs plying in the different towns, practically the whole means of locomotion have been taken in hand by the Government. Then we are told they are going to start brickworks, they are going to start timber mills. They have started a milk supply, and they intend to engage in the manufacture of agricultural implements. They have started a State hotel, which I believe is paying very well, and I believe the Minister for Works intends to put up an iron foundry. The Government must also intend to be going in for the butchering business, because from a speech made by one of the members of the Government who does not sit in this place, I conclude that if the carrying of the meat does not satisfactorily bring down the price, the Government will have to retail it themselves. They are also going in for house construction, because a paragraph in the Governor's Speech states—"My Ministers are now in a position to undertake the construction of houses on terms set forth in the (Workers' Homes) Act." I have not noticed yet that they have started a furniture factory, or that they have made more than a puny start in the laundry business. They have tried to start the laundry business in the way of washing dirty linen here. That is not all, for if pre-election utterances are of any account I might refer to a speech made by the Premier on 8th August, 1911, when he stated that he proposed to establish a State Insurance Department, which might well embrace fire and life insurance.

Mr. Lander: That is coming.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member seems amused and pleased because I have studied these matters to ascertain their intentions. We only want a State bakery, as I believe the maternity business is being arranged by the Prime Minister, and then we will have the whole hog practically.

Mr. Heitmann: Do you disagree with the Prime Minister's maternity proposal?

Mr. GEORGE: I will discuss that presently. I will not disagree with anything likely to help the people along. I want to know how much further we are going.

Mr. Underwood: You are kicking up so much dust behind that you cannot see.

Mr. GEORGE: The policy of the Premier is to nationalise industries if controlled by rings and combines injurious to the public welfare. I do not know how far that will carry him, and I am sure that the country does not know.

Mr. Turvey: That is not all, is it?

Mr. GEORGE: No, there are a few more on the platform of the party.

Mr. Heitmann: Well, let us have the platform.

Mr. GEORGE: Let us take this question of the Appropriation Act, and the words used by the Premier to justify the purchase of these steamers. He told us that £250,000 was handed over and was applicable to and could be applied for purposes such as the purchase of these steamers. I do not care what previous Governments have done, but that £250,000 was never intended for such a purpose. I remember the time and other members of the House will recollect, when there was a form J in the estimates, and on every occasion there was a long discussion upon it. That form was used for the purpose of extending a vote when the funds voted were found to be insufficient, and this £250,000 that has been spoken of so frequently was intended to abolish form J which was felt by members on all sides of the House to be contrary to the Constitution. The object was to abolish that form, and to provide funds which would in the following Parliament have to be clearly dealt with and explained and debated by the members of the House. It was never intended and never suggested that it should be used to find capital for starting new enterprises.

The Minister for Mines: It was never laid down that it should not be so used.

Mr. GEORGE: The Minister was not in the House at that time.

The Minister for Mines: It does not matter.

Mr. GEORGE: I know what the debate was about. Let me point out that the Premier had nothing to fear, so far

as this House is concerned. If he brought in a Bill to call black white, if he had his orders from his government, he would be able to get it carried. He admitted that the Government were negotiating for the purchase of these steamers while Parliament was sitting last session. For him to tell the country that he could not indicate his views to the House because he would have had to disclose the amount of money to be paid is to tell us the biggest balderdash I have ever heard from an occupant of that office. There was no necessity to disclose either the actual or the proposed figures, but there was a necessity to indicate to the House and the country that it was the intention of the Government to go in for trading in this way, and the amount of funds which would be required.

Mr. Lander: You were told that before October last.

Mr. GEORGE: I say keeping the thing in the dark as the Premier has done was unconstitutional and unworthy of a gentleman occupying the position of Premier.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): And you never raised the question previously when some one else did a similar action.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not quite follow the hon. member.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): When your leader purchased the cattle station.

Mr. GEORGE: I did not know anything about it.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): We let you know, but he did not.

Mr. GEORGE: I do not suppose the hon. gentleman knows everything that goes on. I might say that I did not agree with everything that the late Government did.

Mr. Heitmann: It is the first time I have heard you admit that you did not know something.

Mr. GEORGE: There is hope for the hon. member, and even for his lack of knowledge. If at the eleventh hour a sinner repenteth we are told that he can

get into heaven. I hope the hon. gentleman will become repentant quickly. The Premier spoke about the late Government, and the sawmill which it established for the Railway Department. That sawmill was built for the Railway Department to provide timber for its own use, and not to enter into trade. It was put up because the Railway Department could not get its supplies either at reasonable prices or as quickly as it required them. The sawmill was, therefore, put up to cut the timber; but to draw an analogy between that, a departmental matter, and the starting of State sawmills, and the entering into contracts with the Federal Government to supply one and one-half million sleepers is more childish than I should have expected from the Premier of this State.

Mr. Swan: That mill was put up to save the people's money, was it not?

Mr. GEORGE: Yes.

Mr. Swan: That is the object of these sawmills.

Mr. GEORGE: The object of the Railway Department's sawmill was to save the people's money in this way: When a department is carrying out work, such as the Railway Department was doing, it requires supplies of timber. If the men are kept waiting for timber, their wages have to be paid. When the mill was put up it was with the object of supplying that timber so that we could be sure to cut the timber before the men were started. In that way we were saving the people's money.

Mr. Swan: And we will help the Federal people in the same way.

Mr. GEORGE: There is a difference between cutting timber for your own use and going into the trading world. Does the hon. gentleman know very much about this timber business? One and one-half million sleepers will take nearly 500,000 loads of timber in the round, and will produce approximately 100,000 loads of sleepers and 130,000 loads of scantling, and the scantling will have to be disposed of.

Mr. O'Loughlen: What would you have done with the surplus, would you have

carried it in stock, or sold it to the public?

Mr. GEORGE: I do not know anything about the mill established by my successor.

Mr. O'Loughlen: But by your predecessor.

Mr. GEORGE: I have nothing to do with him in this matter as he never established a jarrah sawmill. That was done long after he (Mr. Davies) had left the State. The Premier, in that light way in which he deals with these big concerns, says they require scantlings, for the Worker's homes. Has he any idea whatever how much 100,000 loads of scantlings are likely to turn out? If he is to build homes with the scantlings from timber mills we will have to import workers to occupy them. He has not got the men to put up the homes. And is going into business to cut sleepers for the Transcontinental railway, but, so far as these sleepers are concerned, if it is not possible for anyone else to supply them, I would rather see the State supply them than that no one here should get the contract. But before the Government enter into a matter of this sort they should satisfy themselves that the other means of supplying sleepers within the State are inadequate. Another thing too, and I am sure the Premier will not take this in the form of hostile criticism, we are entitled to know under what terms he is going to supply the sleepers for the railway. If these sleepers have to be supplied within twelve months, he has not got the mills to cut them unless of course he buys them.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He can supply 10,000 sleepers a month until the mills are ready.

Mr. GEORGE: The justification for the establishment of these mills is to exploit a large area of karri country in this State. The hon. member for Forrest knows well that so far as sleeper timber is concerned you are not going to get more than 35 per cent. out of the log, that is with sawn sleepers, so far as jarrah is concerned. I am not going to deal with the question of the meat supply any further; I have said quite enough already. But, if it can be

proved that there is a ring, or a combine dealing with the food of the people, then it is up to the Government to see that the people get meat cheaply and plentifully. We have also been told that it is desirable that there should be a referendum to get a convention of about twenty persons elected, and who they are to be goodness only knows.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You will know that when you get the Bill.

Mr. GEORGE: What is the convention to do, is it to amend the constitution of Western Australia?

The Premier: No.

Mr. GEORGE: Well, what is the wording of it?

The Premier: Read it.

Mr. GEORGE: It says "to amend the constitution."

The Premier: We do not expect you to understand it, but read it.

Mr. GEORGE: Yet Parliament is supposed to be the latest expression of the people's will, and the people's intelligence.

The Premier: One Chamber is, not the two.

Mr. GEORGE: The late elections have shown the Premier that he is wrong, and I do not believe that Western Australia will ever be so foolish or ignorant as to simply have one chamber. If the necessity existed for this referendum to bring the question forward in the way the Premier wishes us to do, why was it not put forward as a big cry at the late elections?

The Premier: It was.

Mr. GEORGE: To do away with the Legislative Council or reform it, was the question, but not to ask the country to elect representatives to provide brains and information. Why it is an absolute travesty on politics, and it is an insult to the intelligence of the people to ask them to deal with the matter in that way; at any rate I am satisfied that the common sense of the people of Western Australia will give the Government the same rebuff that they gave to the Federal Government when they submitted their referendum to the people some time ago. The hon. gentleman

opposite tells us that all this is the mandate of the people; that is what he says when he gets into a corner. But what do the hon. gentlemen opposite represent? Have they carefully analysed the figures of the last elections? If the Premier does not know it, twelve of his members were only elected by 1760 votes; and let me tell the hon. gentleman further that few as we are on this side we represent more people per head than the majority opposite.

Mr. Green: When did you discover that?

Mr. GEORGE: I discovered it a long while ago, and let me tell members opposite that whereas they won 24 seats—I am not speaking of the uncontested ones—their average is only 2,023 voters. We won 16 seats and our average is 2,611, and the difference between their 24 and our 16, is 6,788 voters, and yet the Premier has the effrontery to come to this chamber and talk about the mandate of the people. Another thing talked about last election and which has also been used in this House, is the right to work. The Government acknowledge, and we all acknowledge, that any man who is willing to work has the right to work if it can be found for him. But above the right to work he has the right to live, and members who are supporting the hon. gentleman are denying the people of the State the right to live and earn their daily bread. The hon. gentleman may say what he likes, but he cannot get away from the fact that there are men in the State who have been refused the right to work because they dissented from the programme of the Labour party. Do not we remember only a few nights ago when the leader of the Opposition was speaking, some gentleman opposite—I do not know whether they have found a name for him yet—said, when an instance of this kind was mentioned "More power to them, if he ratted." And yet they prate and talk about the right to work. What about the recent case in the *West Australian* office.

Mr. Underwood: That is all right.

Mr. Lander: The iniquitous jury system.

Mr. GEORGE: The hon. member thinks it is all right for a man who has worked honestly for sixteen years on a newspaper to find on the *ipse dixit* of some of the employees that he is forced out of his position; but, when the matter came before a jury, those gentlemen concerned were told they had acted wrongly. What is the result? If the *West Australian* columns are to be believed the proprietors have been threatened that that paper shall not come out. More power to them if they ratted, I suppose. But it is not first the right thing to find out whether they ratted?

Mr. Green: These men did right.

Mr. GEORGE: But the man concerned had the right to live. Would the hon. member carry the thing to its logical conclusion, and say that every man who does not agree with what they do should be shot at sight? What nonsense it is for hon. members to talk like that. The member for Leonora, speaking the other evening about the tyranny of unions, said "they were not combined to injure, but joined in union to assist," but their duty does not consist of allowing those who do not agree with them to have the equal right to work and to do their best for their families and themselves. I am simply pointing out that when our friends talk about the right to work they should not interfere with the liberty of the subject. The hon. member spoke about the tyranny of the employers and instanced his own case where he could not get work; yet if he wants to be logical and his union declares that they will not allow a man to work because he does not belong to that union, he cannot deny the employer the right to engage whom he pleases.

Mr. Foley: I distinctly stated that the unions do not do that.

Mr. GEORGE: With the permission of the House I would draw the hon. member's attention to a little extract I have here from the *West Australian* of the 1st July. It is a cablegram from Berlin. What does it say—

The social democrats," (and they have democrats in Germany) "at

Reichenhall recently gave the master six weeks' notice that they must not employ non-unionists.

Mr. Green: Is this Government responsible for what happened there.

Mr. GEORGE: I am showing the universal practice of unionism, even in democratic Germany. The extract continues—

In consequence of this notice, an elderly baker was dismissed and he sued the baker's union with the result that the latter was ordered to indemnify the plaintiff against loss, and pay him 28s. per week until he secured employment."

Mr. Underwood: What do they do in China?

Mr. GEORGE: That statement has been published and it has not been contradicted yet.

The Minister for Mines: Would a contradiction reach here from Germany?

Mr. Foley: There are not many statements made on that side of the House that have not been answered.

Mr. GEORGE: Well some men are given one occupation and some another, and if we on this side of the House did not put up cock-shies for the hon. member to knock over, his occupation would be gone. The honourable gentleman, as I understand him, said that he wanted the Arbitration Court to fix the wages on a scale from the minimum to the maximum, and that every man in employment should rise by 1d., 2d., or 6d. per hour according to his value.

Mr. Foley: I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I used the word "graded."

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. member is not permitted to make any remarks at all.

Mr. GEORGE: If you will pardon him, Sir, I will. The hon. gentleman desires that the Arbitration Court, instead of fixing a minimum wage and leaving the rise from the minimum to the maximum to be arranged by the employer and the employees, for that is what it amounts to, should come in and say to the employer, "You shall fix up so many grades in your employment and we will put the men into those grades," thus calling on the employer to practically justify his grading of his men.

Now, I am sure the hon. members, with very little reflection, will see that that would be an absolute bar in the conduct of any business which it was desired to make successful. I am satisfied—at least it has been my experience—that any employer I have ever had since I came out of my apprenticeship has always recognised the power of his different servants and paid them according to their value.

Mr. Heitmann: You graded them in the railways.

Mr. GEORGE: I am willing to admit that, but I would like to remind the hon. member that dealing with 6,000 or 7,000 men, as in the Railway Department, who, by their daily work are divided into classes and grades, is very different to doing the same thing with industries which may employ only 10 or 12, or at the most 50 men. The theory is probably right, but the practice would be to hamper the carrying on of a business and to militate against the interests of the men. But when the Arbitration Bill comes forward, if it can be shown that these difficulties are not difficulties, or that they can be overcome, I am sure that members on this side of the House will be prepared to assist the hon. member. The reason why I am speaking so strongly in connection with this union matter is that I have never ceased, and I hope I never shall do so as long as I live, to claim that equal liberty shall be given to every subject of the Crown, and equal opportunity shall be given to every man who desires to work. The two main objections I have to the militant unionism of to-day are the facts that they outstep those bounds, and make life unlivable for those who do not agree with them, and I say that any Government of the day, whether they be a Liberal Government or a Labour Government, have a bounden duty imposed upon them by the Constitution. They do not exist to govern merely for one class or for two classes as the case may be, but to look after the well-being of the whole of the people of the State; and if, by this fostering of militant unionism and by this preference to unionists which is being

attempted to be introduced throughout the length and breadth of Australia, they are trying to carry out their policy, I say they are absolutely false to the great duty which is cast upon them to govern the State for the well-being and interests of the whole of the people. We might as well go back to the dark ages, from the time of King John and the barons onwards, when the men in England had to fight for the liberties which these gentlemen do not seem to value. And are we going to replace the tyranny which centuries have thrown away by the tyranny of trades unionism, which is going to refuse people the right to work and think for themselves? Both unionist and non-unionist are taxpayers, and have each the right for consideration, neither more nor less. The Government have no right to discriminate between one and the other, and still less to use the funds contributed by all for the advantage of either solely. True democracy does not so discriminate, but works for the good of all, irrespective of political creed.

Mr. UNDERWOOD (Pilbara): I desire to make a few remarks on this auspicious occasion, as the hon. member for Greenough might phrase it. I would just like to say shortly in reply to the hon. member who has just sat down that on the Savings Bank question he is entirely wrong. I must admit that it is an extraordinary circumstance, but still we are all likely to be wrong by accident. As a matter of fact, so far as we have gone in the negotiations to date, this State is guaranteed three-quarters of the new deposits. In the Eastern States there are going to be two banks, and I am of opinion that with the advantages they have got, the Federal Government will get considerably more than the State Governments, that the Eastern States will not get one-half, and we will be at least one-quarter better off than they will be without going to the expense they will have to incur. The remarks of the hon. member in regard to unionism I will reply to later, but there are one or two matters that I would like to speak on which have not been touched on in this debate, and the

first is in regard to the Standing Orders of this House. I desire to say, that if, during my remarks on this question, I make any reference to commonsense, or the want of it, they do not apply in any way personally to yourself, Sir, or to anybody in the House. But I contend that our Standing Orders very seriously require amendment, and one of the first amendments required is the striking out of the first rule, which says that anything we have not provided for is to be decided by the rules of the House of Commons. This rule, in my opinion, makes it absolutely impossible for any lay member to know the rules of the House. It makes it possible by the employment of a number of clerks to find out various rulings, but it also makes it possible to have different rulings. For instance, one speaker may look at the existing rules of the House of Commons and get an authority in one direction. Another speaker may be more studious and get an entirely different ruling, and a third speaker may go further still and get yet another ruling. We have to remember that the House of Commons has been in existence for a considerable number of centuries, and that there must have been a great number of rulings given during that time; and to put a rule in our Standing Orders that we must abide by those of the House of Commons is, to my mind, absurd. For instance, the position we were placed in in connection with the amendment moved to the Address-in-reply must have struck anybody as being very absurd. The position was such that had the leader of the Opposition possessed a majority following he could have come along and made charges of every description against the members of the Government, both personally and as regards their policy, and the Premier would have been absolutely debarred from replying to them because the leader of the Opposition had moved an amendment on a trifling matter, and Ministers were bound down to that amendment. If they had had a majority, the Premier was absolutely helpless. I contend that Standing Orders which allow us to get into that position require altering at

once. Of course, it has been said that the Premier would have had an opportunity of replying, but only when he got on the Opposition benches, which is a position the Premier would have no desire to reply from. There is another matter I desire to touch on, and that refers to our University. We see an undoubted attempt to foist upon Western Australia a few professors from Oxford and Cambridge, and from Oxford and Cambridge only. I just want to repeat one or two extracts referring to things that have been occurring in regard to universities. At the opening of the Congress of the Empire's universities in London recently, Lord Roseberry said that "the Empire was belted round with universities," and a few other things, and then he said—

Parliaments and municipalities all looked to the universities to supply honourable, incorruptible and strenuous men—

with the usual arrogant university assumption that they are the only honourable and incorruptible men. He went on to say—

Australia's seven parliaments represented a drain upon the intelligence and vitality of the Australian nation, which would be adequately met only if the universities did their duty.

I want to assure his Lordship that I have not been a very heavy drain on the university, and that this Parliament, at any rate, has not been a heavy drain on the universities. Four per cent. of the men in this Chamber, that is two out of fifty, have been trained at a university, and if they were a drain on the university, the university must be a ricketty old thing. Mr. Lowrie said also—

The extension movement never touched the Australian workers, for in economics and politics, the latter were apt to think they could teach the rest of the country including the universities.

I want to say that we have taught them one thing, namely, that we can get into Parliament and they cannot; and I am of opinion that getting into Parliament

is the first essential to politics, and until the university men get into Parliaments their assumption is a bit big. That is by the way. The point I come to is this—on the third day—

The conference of the universities of the Empire was brought to a close to-day, after it appointed a permanent bureau in London, to 1, assist in making appointments, 2, publish a year book, and 3, distribute information.

Undoubtedly they intend, if possible, to make the appointments in Oxford and Cambridge, to make Oxford and Cambridge the places where professors are to get jobs. No doubt their idea is to appoint men of Oxford and Cambridge to "Colonial universities," as they term them, that will accept them.

The Attorney General: I do not know that that is quite correct.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know that the hon. member knows more of this than myself. I submit to no man in my knowledge of this. Now we come to something decidedly near at home, the appointment of Mr. Gunn as organiser for this University. He was appointed by the then Premier, Mr. Frank Wilson, Dr. Hackett, and, I think, Bishop Riley, and one or two other extraneous persons. We have heard a great deal about acting constitutionally, but we have never had a more flagrant instance of a breach of the Constitution than in the appointment of Mr. Gunn. It was not only that Parliament had not agreed to the appointment, but Parliament had passed a Bill which provided for a University Senate, and provided that this Senate should make appointments; and it comes badly indeed from the leader of the Opposition and Dr. Hackett, through his newspaper, to speak of fracturing the Constitution. I think before they speak of that they want to explain how they came to appoint Mr. Gunn. Now, that is all from a constitutional point of view. Look at it from the practical point of view. We have heard that universities are going to do marvellous things for Australia, and that they are going to raise the condition and education of the

whole country. We have had universities in Australia for over 50 years, and yet we find, according to Dr. Hackett, and the then Premier, that during the 50 years we have not turned out one man capable of organising the University in Western Australia. I have said many things in condemnation of the university system; but that, in practice, is the greatest condemnation I have ever heard of concerning Australian universities, Mr. Gunn having been appointed, and no doubt pushed into the position, by Lord Milner, I think it was, and one or two other lords. He was out of work at the time, and I take him to be one of those gentlemen, like many of those superior cultured persons, who always need influence to get them a job. He was appointed as organiser under a wot years' appointment, and it took him almost one year to go round the English universities and learn his business, learn as to what he had to do. He went round England looking for information as to how he was going to organise the Western Australian University. Then, having got his own job, along comes a letter from Doctor or Professor Sargeant, at any rate apparently a highly cultured gentleman. Certainly he knows how to look after himself and his friends, and the proposal is that all appointments for the Western Australian University shall be made by one or two colleges at Cambridge, and he puts it down as a real good scheme. I have no doubt he put it before the Attorney General and the Minister for Lands, who are on the Senate. The scheme is that these gentlemen are to be appointed for three years, and then that they are to go back to England again if they wish to. From the point of view of the English professor it is an excellent scheme. I should term it—and I think I would be correct in my phraseology—a system of providing holidays for certain Oxford and Cambridge professors. We are to pay £800 a year to these gentlemen, and with the exception of the judges, they will be the best paid positions in the State. We have engineers in the Government service doing really good work at half that, and they are men who are

really capable. Our under secretaries do not get that much money ; no civil servant in the State gets £800 a year, and our civil servants have to work for their money, but these professors will give a few lectures and we will appoint them on the three years' system. I think it will take them six months to get here, and after they have done two-and-a-half years it will take them six months to get back again. It is about the first really good thing I have heard a university man propound ; it is a really sound scheme for providing holidays for English professors from Oxford and Cambridge. I trust the Senate will see that the University is given something of an Australian flavour, and that Australians will have at least equal opportunities with the professors from Oxford and Cambridge. I say that Oxford and Cambridge are absolutely the last possible thing in ultra-conservatism in teaching in the world. I have only to add that, if there is any system of foisting English professors on us, I am going to endeavour to have a few words to say yearly on the Estimates in regard to it, so long as I am in the House. Now we come to one other subject that is not of much general importance, that is, with regard to the wreck of the "Koombana." I had no intention of touching on this but for the most foolish assertions that were made, by various people. For instance, Sir John Forrest made the assertion that if the Federal Government had erected a wireless station at Fremantle the "Koombana" could have been saved. That is the most foolish of all the foolish statements that have ever been made. As a matter of fact, once the "Koombana" left Port Hedland, no power on earth could have saved her. Even if anything could have been sent to her from Fremantle it must have been sent to Port Hedland, and anything that could be sent to Port Hedland by wireless could be sent by wire. Sir John Forrest forgot there was a telegraph line to Port Hedland and that they could have telegraphed anything they wanted to. There was a contributor to the *West Australian* who wrote fairly and sensibly on most ques-

tions, but he also put in the assertion that if there had been a wireless station further north the "Koombana" could have been saved. The *Sunday Times* also had an assertion that if there had been a wireless station somewhere else the boat could have been saved. Others made the statement that there should be a wireless station somewhere. There is no place north of Port Hedland that could have given information of that storm ; there is no place in the world where so much information about that storm could have been got than at Port Hedland itself where the steamer was lying. They had the best possible information, all the information men could possibly gather as to a coming storm. Their barometers were very low. There were over 80 pearling luggers that had run into the creek, and the skippers of those luggers told them they had come in because they were sure there was a blow coming in. The pearlers arrived at this conclusion, not by the sky or appearance of the sky, but by the condition of the water under the surface. These pearlers came in with this information, and the ship's barometers were falling. It should certainly have warned them that there was to be a storm. Added to this, the sky gave all the indications man has ever seen that a willy-willy was coming. Further than that, when the ship left Port Hedland, the spray could be seen breaking on the back beach of the town, and to do that, it must certainly have been about the roughest time they had ever had. The inquiry which was held was simply a farce. The board seemed to look only for evidence tendered by the shipping companies. The Adelaide Steamship Company gave their evidence, and that was the end of it. As a matter of fact, it should have been the duty of the board to have a thorough inquiry into many points that were not touched on ; and above all, they certainly should have had independent witnesses from Port Hedland, as well as witnesses in the employ of the Adelaide Steamship Company. I regarded Captain Allen as one of the best seamen on the coast. He was very steady, and he was a good navigator. Undoubtedly

he was a most courageous seaman, and I have no desire to say one word against him, but I have something to say against the system which practically compels men in command of ships to run their vessels out in almost any weather. The first thing that should be done on that coast is to issue instructions to all navigators that in the case of there being any indication whatever of a willy-willy, they should remain in a safe port, if they are in one, or try to get in one if they are at sea. But if Captain Allen had remained in Port Hedland and no serious blow had come on, when he got back from his trip he would have stood a chance of getting the sack. Certainly I would have gone out as he did in those circumstances. He had a good ship, a ship he thought would live in any weather; but at the same time it should be thoroughly remembered that, besides having the ship and his own life to consider, he had the lives of over a hundred people to consider. I contend that it is the duty of the State to see that instructions are issued to sailing masters on that coast to take particular precautions against getting into these blows. Now, we come to matters of perhaps of more importance. In regard to the ships for the North-West, I have been advocating them for the last six years. They are here now, so I propose to let them talk for themselves. I have not the slightest doubt as to their success, and I feel sure that my friends opposite have not the slightest doubt about them.

Mr. A. E. Piesse: They will talk for themselves at the end of the next financial year.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: And they will talk in such a tune that when the next elections come along hon. members will be running over themselves to claim some credit for having brought them about. In regard to the constitutional point, I rather appreciate sticking to the Constitution. But I might be prepared to an extent to join with those opposite if they had a strong constitutional case and if they were sincere; if only I could believe they were sincere. But when we come to think of the extraordinary breaches of the Constitution of which

they were guilty within twelve months of the time at which they were speaking one cannot take them seriously. And we have to remember that even in another place they forgot all about breaches of that kind until a Labour Government came into power. It has been said that the Premier had never indicated his intention of going in for this sort of thing, that it was an entirely new departure and had never been before the public. In point of fact this matter has been before the public for the last five or six years. A considerable time ago Mr. Gregory, then acting Premier, told a meeting of, I think, the Chamber of Commerce, that his Government would run State steamships along the coast. However, he hedged a little bit, and came down to getting a report from a responsible departmental officer. I have that report here. It recommends the purchase or chartering of boats if certain things were not carried out. He had a promise from Dalgety & Company, and Moxon, of the Adelaide Steamship Company, that they would reduce freights and give the people on the coast some better chance of getting a living. The report of the departmental officer said—

Seeing that we have such conciliatory replies from these companies, I do not think it is necessary at present, but if these companies do not improve on their present system I should recommend the purchase or charter of State steamers for this coast.

That is three years old.

Mr. Green: Whose report is that?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That is Sinclair's report. He was told also to inquire into the possibility of bringing down cargo through Fremantle and getting freights to London from Fremantle. He found out this—

That an adjustment exists is borne out by information furnished, which proves that Singapore steamers are able to quote a lesser freight to the United Kingdom than regular traders via Suez, and the natural inference is that the agreed schedule of rates and the partition of traffic is brought about through important and powerful inter-

ests; for in considering the question of the oversea traffic for the North-West ports, one is carried more and more into a comprehensive study of Australian oversea and inter-State traffic, and from thence almost to the study of the world's oversea traffic, which is governed by what has been termed the "European Freight Conference."

He goes on to say that he wrote to the Orient, the P & O., and the German lines of steamers, not one of which would reply to him. As a matter of fact, while we have been talking all about the North-West coast the freights and conditions on that coast have been decided, not in England, but in Europe, by Frenchmen, Germans, English, Yankees, and others. The leader of the Opposition talks about the power behind the throne. This is the power behind the Liberal throne, and when you come to compare Mr. McCallum with the freight conference, Mr. McCallum appears to be about the size of a subsection of a microbe. In regard to this constitutional question, the matter was fully before the House and the people, but above all it was before the electors, and the electors returned a two to one majority in favour of it. It had been advocated on every platform in the State and denounced by our opponents. The people certainly wanted it, and in my opinion so enormous and overwhelming a decision of the people as that was fully warrants the Treasurer in taking action, if he finds that by taking action at a given time he can save those people some thousands of pounds; and no doubt by buying when he did the Treasurer saved the State a good few thousand pounds. I certainly think his action was more warranted than many of the actions of those who now pretend to criticise him. I would like to say a word in regard to the Liberal policy, and also their methods of attack. On looking through the papers, I find that their policy has been framed, I think somewhere in the East, and has been distributed throughout Australia. So far as that policy is concerned it has been well defined by that cool, calm, judicious lawyer, Mr. Irvine, as food for political infants and invalids. The speech of the

leader of the Opposition was to a great extent a replica of the speech delivered by Deakin in the Federal Parliament. There were in both speeches the same old platitudes, the same old gags, and the very same flat utterances. I suppose for important speeches these two were the flattest ever delivered in Australia. A man from outback has likened it to me as being about as flat as a damper half-cooked and in which the bloke had forgotten to put the baking powder. So much for their policy. What are their methods of attack? They run on these lines: No. 1, appointing political partisans to public offices, or spoils to the victors; No. 2, unconstitutional methods; No. 3, personal Ministerial extravagances. In regard to the first, may I say this has been put right across the continent both ways, in fact from the Leeuwin to Cape York, and from Wilson's Promontory to North-West Cape they have continually told the public that the Labour party have appointed political partisans, incompetent men, to high positions. The leader of the Opposition said the Premier had been guilty of appointing political partisans. They have never attempted to give any proof whatever of incompetence, but that must be the inference. If they have appointed political partisans those partisans are incompetent, because if competent they have the right to be there. I made a little interjection while the leader of the Opposition was speaking; I suggested that he had put a few squibs into the department. He called me rude, ungentlemanly, uncouth, ungrammatical, discourteous, vulgar, and in fact everything but a gentleman or a blackguard. I presume he did not call me a gentleman because, like George Washington, he could not tell a lie, and he did not apply the other epithet because it was not permissible under the Standing Orders. The position is that the Liberal party can go about the country telling the people all sorts of things about our appointments, but we cannot retort even by interjection without drawing a torrent of wrath upon our heads. Mark Twain put the case pretty fairly when he said that in a discussion of this sort it is the truth that

hurts; that you can make what assertions you like about people so long as those assertions are not true, as in that case they do not hurt. We have laughed about Joe Cook, and Deakin, and a few of our own leaders in regard to appointments, which is a proof that there is nothing in it; but as soon as we say one word to the leader of the Opposition, we are ungentlemanly, rude, uncouth, ungrammatical, vulgar, discourteous, and all the other epithets. Again he threatened that if I came outside I might stop them, but I did not go out. He said further that it was unfair to attack a public officer who had not the chance of replying, and almost at the same moment his great deputy leader was denouncing the engineers in the Government service as a disgrace to their profession. The Hon. Mr. Moss can make these assertions without rebuke. What is highly cultured in Mr. Moss is vulgar in me; however, I am going to make them all the same and risk being vulgar. The next complaint is personal Ministerial extravagance. In my opinion, the leader of the Opposition, when dealing with this, got down just about as low as I have found him plumb so far. In regard to the trip to the North-West, he asked who was invited, at whose expense had they gone to the North-West, what was the total cost, had the visitors paid their own expenses, and if so had they been returned to the Treasury. This is also part of the campaign laid down for putting the Labour party out of power. I have here a newspaper cutting in regard to the Prime Minister himself. It says—

When Mr. Deakin went to the Imperial Conference at London four years ago it cost £500 for his trip. Mr. Fisher took £1,000 for his expenses, and for Mr. Pearce, £700. When Mr. Deakin went home he took no one with him, not even a private secretary, but when Mr. Fisher went he took an under secretary at £450, a private secretary at £450, and a valet at the same figure.

Now, Mr. Fisher is supposed to have done all that on £1,000; yet it cost our own then Premier, now leader of the Opposition, for the same trip, some £1,900, or nearly twice as much as it cost the Prime

Minister of the whole of Australia. And look at the fairness of the criticism. It is no wonder the people fail to take notice of a paper of that description. If it criticised this expenditure entirely one might have given it credit for honesty, but it finds out Mr. Fisher's £1,000 and forgets Mr. Wilson's £2,000. Again, in regard to this trip north, I am of opinion that at times it is necessary to send a representative of the State to England; and sending him there I am of opinion we should give him sufficient funds to do the trip thoroughly, and represent this State in the best possible manner. I appreciate economy, but at the same time I allow a great deal for a man's taste and manners, and I say we should give a man a chance of representing us without having to pay anything out of his own pocket. I want to say, however, it is far more important to send members of Parliament along the coast to see places they have not seen before, and so get a thorough knowledge of the State for which they are legislating. That is of more importance than a trip to London, which consists chiefly of attending social functions and taking in liquids and solids and emitting platitudes and hiccoughs. Just a word in reply to the hon. member who has just sat down, in regard to the tyranny of trades unions. He told us in what I suppose he presumes are eloquent words, they were certainly very loud, that the tyranny of trades unionism prevented men from working. Now, what are the facts of the case: the facts are that in certain cases we have laid it down that a man working on a job shall belong to a union. To join that union costs him from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. and the weekly contribution is 6d. It is admitted on all hands that trades unionism has done an immense amount of work in improving the conditions of the workers. There are special statutes dealing with trades unions, and it is admitted repeatedly from the big tonnage liberals in paragraphs like the following—

He did not object to unionism, in fact he approved of it. Unionism had done a great deal in improving the conditions of life of the workers. But he

did object to unions acting as tyrants to other working men who could not see eye to eye with them politically.

It is undoubted that trades unionism has done very great things to improve the conditions and wages of the workers in this and other parts of the world. To obtain these improvements, it is necessary to have some money, and the unionists have put their hands in their pockets for centuries back and paid not only their entrance fees but their contributions. They have also given of their time, and they have been victimised and sent from one State to another and from one country to another on account of what they have done for unionism. These people whom the great Liberal party want to stand up for desire to come in and get the benefit of all that without paying 6d. a week for it. All they are asked to pay is 6d. a week and they refuse to do it. They want to get the benefit of the money we have paid in and the benefit of our brains and energy, and at the same time they refuse to pay what we do. When we consider the question of tyranny, a unionist is in exactly the same position as a taxpayer of the State or a ratepayer of a municipality; certain things have been done, certain benefits have been procured by the expenditure of money, and as a citizen a man is compelled to pay his share towards the government of the country. There is no question of tyranny about that. He is not allowed to come here and receive the benefits of citizenship without paying his share towards the government, and if it is tyranny to make a man pay his share to the union, the same as other men have been paying all their lives, it is tyranny to make any citizen pay his rates. Further than that, what sort of a man is he that the great Liberal party are standing up for? They are going to put up a fight for a man who is a mean, miserable crawler and will take the benefit of what other men have got and refuse to pay for it.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Non-unionists do not refuse to take the increased wages that the unions get.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: It is the crawling of them that I object to. They think

that by keeping out of the union they will get some benefit that the men who are paying into the union and keeping the union going will not get. In regard to the second portion of the paragraph I quoted, reference is made to them not seeing eye to eye with us politically. The man who made that statement knowingly and deliberately told a lie, it cannot be attributed to ignorance. We have a ballot Act and we cannot compel anyone to vote except in the way he likes. We cannot tell how he votes, and to say that we will not admit a man on political principles is not an absurdity, but a deliberate lie, told knowingly and with a view to deceive people. I want to say a word or two in regard to that gentleman who was hounded out of this State, according to the leader of the Opposition.

Mr. O'Loughlen: He said his parents and brothers too.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know anything about that. I do not consider a man is responsible to anybody but himself. Dealing with Mr. Wells, the case is this: he was employed by the Light of Asia; Wells was deliberately put up to refuse to join the union with a view of catching the member for Cue. They deliberately set a trap for him. The bosses of the mine sent in urgently to Cue to bring him out to see if he could settle the dispute, and after being urged once or twice he went out in good faith to make an effort to settle the dispute. He did his best to settle it, and then he told the man that if he could not pay his 6d. a week he must go, and that the man could not be much good, anyhow. Of course, he was right, absolutely. Then they sued several unions and the member for Cue. Mr. Heitmann got out on a technical point, I think, and the *Mining and Engineering Journal*, which used to be subsidised by the Mines Department—I do not know whether it is now—

Mr. Heitmann: It has been withdrawn.

Mr. UNDERWOOD: That journal published a paragraph giving the result of the case and regretted that the interfering Heitmann was not among the punished. Wells, in addition to being a crawler was also a perjurer. He stated on oath that

having lost that work he could not get another job, and as soon as he got his verdict he went down to the timber country and obtained employment. The leader of the Opposition says it is wrong to refuse to stay in the same boarding house with a man like that. I would sooner camp in a creek than stay in the same boarding house. There is no telling what might happen. If that gentleman has been hounded out of Western Australia, I am very glad to hear it, and I hope he will never come back. I endorse the interjection which was made the other day that "it served him right if he ratted." I contend that it was one of the best things that ever happened to Western Australia when he left; we have lost one who was no good to us. A man who would do as he had done is not one whom we should be desirous of retaining. In regard to the case of the *West Australian*, that has been described as a frightful thing. Every Liberal top dog and bottom dog has referred to the *West Australian* case, and I intend to refer to it from an entirely different point of view. It has been said that it is murder to protest against a boss and to turn him out and take away his living, but that boss had sacked two men already. Where is their living? Has not the workman a right to live as well as the boss? Is the boss absolutely sacred, and is he to do as he likes with his journeymen? I do not think that he should, and I do not think this Parliament and I feel certain that the people of Western Australia will not say so. In this case several of these men had been sacked, the *West Australian* was advertising in the Eastern States for men, obviously to take their places. Their position was that two had been sacked for no reason and men were being brought over to displace others. They would be poor men if they sat down under such treatment as that, and I cannot conceive how any man with any spirit would sit down and wait for the sack under such circumstances. What else could they do than tell the owner of the paper that they were going to leave? They had every bit as much right to leave that paper as Coy

had to leave. That is justice, and justice we shall have to get sooner or later. This same Coy is a poor, miserable waster. He cannot earn his living, and he is put in charge and over men who are competent workers. There is something wrong here. Why should Coy, who is not a workman, be put in charge of men who are? Unless there is something else under the surface, it is the best policy to put a tradesman in charge of tradesmen. If you want a navy boss you put a navy on, and if you want a bootmaker boss you put a bootmaker on, but apparently in this office they want someone to look after printers and put a man on who cannot print. Coy says he cannot get work anywhere else. I am of opinion that Coy's statement on oath is worth about as much as Well's. We have this position now, that Coy, having got his verdict, put in a garnishee on the wages of those three men, and the result of that is that these men are unable to earn a living in any part of Australia. There is no tyranny whatever with the great Liberals, not a bit of it, simply three men are debarred from earning a living in Australia. While that garnishee exists every penny they earn can be garnisheed, and of course unless men get their wages they cannot live. The effect of the law which has been so well vindicated and so highly approved by the great Liberal party is that for simply trying to protect themselves these men can be pushed out of Australia and even be compelled to work their passage out. I have no intention of saying anything derogatory to the *West Australian*. I believe that the firm has been a fairly good employer, but in regard to the threat of the men to go out if the garnishee is enforced, I fail to see what else the men can do. It is true it is not the fault of the *West Australian*, but whose fault is it? It is somebody's fault and the men must do something to resent such treatment.

Mr. A. E. Piesse: How can the *West Australian* prevent the effect of the garnishee?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: Who is going to do it? The men could prevent the paper from coming out.

Mr. A. E. Piesse : But how can the *West Australian* prevent the effect of the garnishee?

Mr. UNDERWOOD: I do not know and I do not particularly care. I want to know how we can prevent these men being sent out of Australia, and that is of more importance to me than the *West Australian*. I endorse their action and I trust it will not be long before the Government will amend the laws so that it will not be possible for men to be placed in such a position. As a matter of fact, I contend that a man has as much right to leave a job as his boss has to sack him. If a boss can complain about the man, the man can complain about the boss. It seems to me that that is absolutely incontrovertible, and when find that is not the law; when we find that by speaking against what is apparently an injustice, you can be sent clean out of Australia, it is up to the Government to alter the laws and give us something more in accordance with justice. These men were tried under the Special Juries Act, an Act made especially for cases of this description, an Act under which the worker is absolutely barred, and in which the present day Liberals are represented to the fullest extent; and it is impossible, absolutely impossible, with a jury constituted as that jury was, to get justice in a case of this description. I am not commenting upon the attitude of the Judge, but I do comment upon the verdict, and I want to say that if it was a conspiracy on the part of these three men it was most emphatically a conspiracy with the whole 21 men, and those three men were no more blameable than all the others, and when the Judge found that there had been a conspiracy between these three, he should most emphatically have found that there had been a conspiracy on the part of all. That shows that the conclusion of the trial was not in accordance with law or justice. The great Liberal party apparently stands for the encouragement and support of blacklegs and strike-breakers, men who are too miserable to pay sixpence for the benefits which have been earned with the money of other men.

I am pleased, and will be pleased at all times to go on the platform in front of the people of Western Australia and contest any part of it against those whose great policy is the support and encouragement of scabs and blacklegs. On the other hand I want to say that the Labour party stands for equality for all whether it be workmen or pannikin bosses, or the head bosses. In conclusion I want to say that I appreciate the efforts of the Government up to date. The last Labour Government which was in power was known as the "mark-time" Government, but I think I can assure the people of this State that as soon as this Government gets into its stride it will shift things a little bit.

Mr. BROWN (Beverley): I have listened with interest to the speeches made by members of the Ministry, and also members on this side of the House, and a good deal has been said about the great amount of help that the present Government have given to the farmers in Western Australia. I am not going for one moment to say that the present Ministry have not helped the farmers in Western Australia or assisted them in any way, but I would like to mention that the previous Government deserve a great deal of praise for the considerable amount of work they carried out. I would like to admit that the present Ministry had to face a very bad year in those Eastern areas, and it was only natural for them to have to carry out a great amount more work than was necessary for the previous Government to undertake, but during the time I was up in those areas on my campaign there was evidence on every hand of the great provision which had been made by the Wilson Government, then in power, to provide water facilities for the settlers. We have only to look at the report of the Department of Agriculture for the year ended 30th June, 1911, to find that 76 tanks, 17 wells, and 40 reservoirs had been constructed, and that 923 miles of road had been cleared for the benefit of the settlers. All this was undertaken by the previous Government, and I am very pleased to say that the present Government are also undertaking

to provide farmers with those requirements. I would like to congratulate the Minister for Lands on the remarks he made last night with regard to the settlement in the dry areas, and the provision which has been made for water facilities before throwing those areas open for selection, and also for making provision for railway facilities. But it would be much better for the Government to go a step further, providing they do not go too far out into the dry areas, and that is to have the railway routes surveyed before the settler takes up his land. We have more than one instance at the present time where settlers have taken up land along the line of a proposed railway, and when the railway has been constructed it has been found that they have been further away than they anticipated they would be. I would refer principally to the Wickepin-Merredin line, which was promised by the previous Government. A number of men who took up land along the locality of the promised route, now find that the Minister for Works has seen fit to construct that railway a considerable distance to the west, and a number of settlers who fully expected to have railway facilities at no great distance from their holdings will now be a long way off. However, that will be dealt with in this House at a later date, and I hope then I will have the opportunity of saying a few more words on the matter. But, as I have said, in regard to making provision for water in these districts, the farmers extend their thanks to the previous Government for the work they did in that respect, and they fully appreciate the efforts which are being made by the present Government. There is no doubt about it that, owing to the dry season, the Government have had a lot to contend with, and they are now placed in the unfortunate position of having to supply farmers in the dry areas with seed, to enable them to put in their next crop. But when the Minister for Lands made some remarks last night about the crop during the past year, I think he was out in his figures, and I will prove this from the statistics for 1912, which must be reckoned as very nearly correct. The

Minister for Lands last night said that there was a shortage of two million bushels of wheat during the past year, and in reckoning this at 3s. per bushel it amounted to £300,000. The Minister quoted these figures when he was dealing with the shortage of money circulating in the State. I want to inform the Minister for Lands that although the last season was dry we had £61,000 more in circulation as the result of the harvest than in the year 1910/11, and this too, in spite of the fact that the average yield was three bushels below that of 1910/11.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): You had no falling off at all.

Mr. BROWN: I am going to prove that there was a falling off per acre.

The Minister for Lands: You have misinterpreted the point. I said, if we had had the average return for the area under wheat, instead of having seven bushels we would have had ten or eleven bushels.

Mr. BROWN: That would make no difference whatever in regard to the tightness of money.

The Premier: Oh yes it would, the money has been advanced on those improvements that have been made on the assumption that they would get the same harvest this year as last year.

Mr. BROWN: Money was advanced from the Agricultural Bank?

The Premier: And from the other banks.

Mr. BROWN: To a certain extent. But when you take the amount of the whole harvest you have £61,000 more in circulation this year than before. The Minister for Lands was quoting the difficulties the Government had to cope with, and he specifically declared that there was a shortage of £300,000 so far as the harvest was concerned. That would be so if we based it on the whole of the amount put in for wheat. I am quoting these figures so as not to make people in other parts of the world believe that Western Australia has suffered at all from a drought. In the Eastern districts it will be found that the average has been pretty nearly as much last year as in the previous year, and in many of those old districts there was only a shortage in the wheat crop of a decimal per acre. In the

York district, for instance, the return for 1911-12 was 9.3 bushels, and for 1910-11, 10.2 bushels.

Mr. O'Loughlen: York is one of the safest districts.

The Premier: Do not forget that notwithstanding the harvest we had to supply that district with water.

Mr. BROUN: Not York.

The Premier: East of York.

Mr. BROUN: Only very little of it.

The Premier: While there was sufficient rain to produce a crop there was not sufficient for stock.

Mr. BROUN: The Premier could not supply the settlers in those districts with water, because he had no facilities there for supplying them, except the dams that were there, and the wells that were sunk afterwards.

The Premier: But we had to do that, although it should have been done before.

Mr. BROUN: Some of the wells were made before, but the Wilson Government had not such a season to cope with as the present Government had to contend with. Had the late Government had to face such a season they would have done the same thing as the present Government.

Mr. Lander: No; they said they would have cut the garment according to the cloth.

Mr. BROUN: Now, in quoting these figures, I would point out that, although there was a considerable falling off in the wheat average—about three bushels per acre or a total of about 1,539,636 bushels below that for the previous year—yet on top of that the hay crop averaged 17 cwt. per acre against one ton per acre in 1910-11.

The Minister for Lands: Over one ton.

Mr. BROUN: The average was 1.1 ton per acre in 1910-11, and 17 cwt. per acre in 1911-12, but we find that owing to the increased acreage cut for hay we have 97,615 tons of hay more in the State than in 1910-11. Basing this on a price of £3 per ton in the stack—a number of farmers have received £3 5s. and £3 10s.—we have £292,845 more money circulating in the State than in the previous year. Now, if we take the loss on wheat at £230,945—equal to an average of 3s.

per bushel—and compare it with the increase on hay, we come to this position: loss on wheat, £230,945; gain on hay, £292,845, showing a surplus over and above the year previous of £61,900, so that we have £61,900 more money circulating than there was last year.

The Minister for Lands: I wish you would prove how that will affect my holding.

Mr. BROUN: Probably the Minister for Lands had no crop in.

The Minister for Lands: I had 160 acres in, and I would like to see your figures translated into something substantial on my holding.

Mr. BROUN: I am dealing with the State as a whole and the state of the money market. The Minister for Lands said that the banks had been advancing up to £5 per acre, which I feel must be incorrect.

The Minister for Lands: How do you account for the decrease in wheat exported? Is that only imaginary?

Mr. BROUN: Certainly not. I have said that we had a deficiency of three bushels per acre in our wheat yield. That answers the question which the Minister has first asked.

The Minister for Lands: How much of that hay was consumed on the farms in the State?

Mr. BROUN: No more than in any other year.

The Minister for Lands: There was a much larger area under cultivation. You must remember that.

Mr. BROUN: We had a considerable amount of chaff sent to the Eastern States from this State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): A considerable amount?

Mr. BROUN: Two thousand tons: that is a fair amount. The Minister for Lands also mentioned that owing to a lesser quantity of wheat going to the ports for export, there was a loss of traffic on the railways compared with other years: but there is a considerable amount of chaff in the districts that has not been sent to the metropolis or the goldfields. That is all being held and will not be available till September or October.

The Premier: That affects our finances, does it not?

Mr. BROUN: I admit that it does. But we find that there is an increase of 97,615 tons of chaff, as against an estimated loss of 41,240 tons of wheat, compared with 1910-11, so that the Government have really 56,375 tons of produce more to carry on the railways than in the preceding year. Yet we have the Government crying out about the dry season!

The Premier: There is no comparison between carrying hay and carrying wheat.

Mr. BROUN: The freights are the same.

The Premier: You ask the member for Murray - Wellington which he would sooner carry over the railways when he was Commissioner—hay or wheat?

Mr. George: I would not like to carry your "chaff"; there would not be much grain in it.

Mr. BROUN: I would like to briefly touch on land settlement in Western Australia. There is not the slightest doubt that there is a falling off in land settlement. Very likely this may be owing, as the Minister for Lands said, to the quantity of land available for settlement being out in the dry areas, and the people will not take up that land as freely as they did previously.

The Minister for Lands: They want to take it up, and complain because I do not make it available.

Mr. BROUN: Then why does the Minister hold it back?

The Minister for Lands: I do not want them to make a failure.

Mr. BROUN: In regard to immigration, there is no doubt that the Government should do all possible to obtain suitable immigrants to settle on the land. I must say that in the past there have been a few immigrants who were not suitable and whom the country would have been better without, but taking them as a whole, I think the immigrants from the old country are a very good lot. I contend, however, that in order to settle the land in Western Australia without placing a burden on the State, anyone coming from the old country to Western Australia to take up land should be given to understand that they should

have at least £300 to start with. It is useless for anyone to say that a man can go on the land with nothing and with only the Agricultural Bank to help him, and make a success of it.

Mr. Green: Mr. Mitchell did say that.

Mr. BROUN: Unfortunately, the ex-Minister for Lands did say so, in spite of the remarks made by Mr. Lowrie, but, nevertheless, we owe a great deal to the late Minister for Lands for the optimistic view he took in regard to the settlement of the lands of Western Australia. The country would never have been so far advanced as it is at the present time if it had not been for the member for Northam so steadily pushing ahead the development of the State. We find that the present Government are endeavouring to take over many works which have been already mentioned by previous speakers, and which if all paid for will involve an amount of ten or twelve millions, and I regret very much that they are endeavouring to interfere to a great extent with private enterprise.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Will you show how the eleven millions is made up?

Mr. BROUN: I have not the figures at the present time, but I could get them. The Speech contains a reference to the manufacture of agricultural machinery, but I doubt very much whether the Government are going to manufacture machinery in Western Australia and sell it to the farmer at a cheaper rate than that at which we can buy it at the present time. In fact, I feel sure that the Government will not be able to do it, because they have always to pay a higher wage than private companies, and a considerable quantity of the material used for the construction of harvesters has to be brought from outside Western Australia.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are not the harvester companies bleeding the farmers just now?

Mr. BROUN: No, they are not. Private companies are making harvesters in Western Australia at the present time and in the Eastern States.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister): Where are they making them in this State?

Hon. Frank Wilson : Mr. Haydon is making them at Victoria Park.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Not sufficient.

Hon. Frank Wilson : It is a beginning, at any rate.

Mr. BROUN : The Government are not going to reduce the cost of agricultural machinery, and they would be doing more in that direction if they would induce the Federal Government to take off the duty of £12, and allow manufacturers outside of Australia to compete.

Mr. O'Loughlen : Would you apply that to all industries?

Mr. BROUN : To machinery, at any rate; I do not believe in freetrade completely. If the Federal Government give the Eastern States' companies a bonus of £12, why should they not be able to produce cheaper than firms in Western Australia? Why should we have to pay £100 for harvesters that last only four or five years? Again, we hear so much about what the Government are doing for the farmers, that I would like them to assist the farmers to obtain jute goods at a cheaper price. During the past year they have had to pay 6s. 9d. per dozen for chaff bags, which is equal to 16s. 3d. per ton. That is due to a great extent to the duty placed on jute goods.

Mr. O'Loughlen : If you knock the tariff off will it prevent the Indian firms from keeping the price up?

Mr. BROUN : We have to pay the high price for the bags, and the Labour Government are always very willing to put the blame for the high price of goods on the man who sells to the farmer, but I can assure hon. members that it is a very poor profit indeed that the merchants make out of jute goods in Western Australia.

The Minister for Lands : The trouble is in India.

Mr. BROUN : Figures have been given to me which prove what I have said, and it seems disastrous that the farmer has to pay 16s. 3d. for every ton of chaff he sells. That has been the case this year, and I am sorry that it cannot be remedied to some extent. The Minister for Lands spoke last night in regard to pri-

vate banks, and mentioned that they had advanced up to £5 per acre to some farmers. That, I think, must have been a mistake. The advances must have been on garden land or something of the kind, for I always find that the private banks are never too ready to advance money to farmers unless they have at least a 70 per cent. margin of security. And while the banks ask for this amount of security it is not likely the farmers are going to borrow more than they can afford.

Hon. W. C. Angwin (Honorary Minister) : Ask the manager of the Agricultural Bank whether he has not refused to take over some of those larger advances on the basis of the old values.

Mr. BROUN : I have letters in my pocket from farmers in my electorate who are now approaching the Agricultural Bank. They were not able to get enough money previously from the bank to carry out the improvements they wished to carry out on their land, and they had to go to the local banks to get overdrafts. Now they are endeavouring to go back to the Agricultural Bank and secure a further amount up to the £2,000 limit, if it is possible; but unfortunately they are not able to get it. Knowing that they have sufficient security, the only conclusion I can come to is that the trustees of the bank have not the money to let the farmers have it. One farmer came to me in the street the other day. He had let a contract for clearing 100 acres on his block, and he is in no other bank but the Agricultural Bank. The clearing has been inspected and passed by the bank's inspector, but the farmer owes £80 to the man who cleared the land. He came to Perth to obtain the £80 from the Agricultural Bank, and had been then in Perth six days when he met me but had not been able to secure the money. He was placed in a very awkward position. He had not the money to pay the man for clearing the land, and the man was waiting at his house for him to return from Perth with the money. I have not seen him since to know how he got on. But that is the position of a number of farmers. It seems, that, though the Minister has increased the amount that

may be advanced to £2,000, the money is not forthcoming to those settlers making application for it. I should like to make a few remarks with regard to some of the statements of members on the Government side of the House with reference to the Liberals on this side. It seems to me that they treat the Opposition—

Mr. O'Loughlen: The same as they treated us.

Mr. BROWN: Unfortunately if that is the case, it should not occur in the House. But it seems to be one of the hardest difficulties to obtain any information from the Government. Not only that, the member for Pilbara said to-night the Liberals practically were not worth consideration, and that their policy was a policy of assisting blacklegs and protecting men who would not join the unions. The present Government, as I stated a little while ago, have been saying a lot about protecting the farmer, but I would like to ask them whether the steps that some of the Labour members are taking in regard to the Rural Workers' Union to get the rural workers' log adopted are going to assist the farmer in any way.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Are you afraid, as a farmer, to put your case before a judge?

The Premier: You have no right to ask the workers to assist another section of the community to sweat other workers.

Mr. BROWN: That section is not sweated. Farmers can only afford to pay what they can reasonably pay. It is impossible to pay wages that exceed what it costs us per acre to put in the crop and leave a profit.

The Premier: We do not propose to ask the farmers to accept that log. We propose to give the farmers the opportunity to go to the Arbitration Court and settle the case.

Mr. BROWN: Suppose the log is accepted.

The Premier: It will be on the weight of evidence.

Mr. BROWN: The weight of evidence nearly always goes to the other side. I ask the Premier or the Labour Government whether it is helping the farmer when their members are going throughout the district canvassing it to get as

many as they possibly can of the farm hands throughout the farming areas to become members of the Rural Workers' Union. But I am pleased to say they have not been very successful so far, and I hope they will not be successful.

Mr. Green: You are a friend of the blackleg, after all.

Mr. Heitmann: Do you object to them joining the union?

Mr. BROWN: Yes, because I do not believe in it. I do not believe in any one-sided policy. I do not believe in one party being favoured more than another.

Mr. Heitmann: That is exactly the position with the Labour party. What about the Farmers' Union?

Mr. BROWN: We never thought of forming a farmers' union until this log was sent to almost every farmer throughout Western Australia; and why should we not get up to defend our own rights? Members will find that when the time comes the farmers will be up and doing, and will not be afraid to fight for their own rights. I am pleased to say that they are endeavouring to do it.

Mr. Munsie: Has not the A.W.U. been of benefit to the pastoralists?

Mr. BROWN: No. We also heard a little time ago the Attorney General say the Government were going to commence the bleeding process. What does that mean? Nothing but that the farmer is to pay increased taxation. The Government are trying to kill the man that has worked from his boyhood all his life to make a home for himself so as to remain comfortable in his old age. They are going to step in and increase his taxation and take away his farm.

Mr. Green: A little while ago you said they were helping the farmers.

Mr. BROWN: I said nothing of the kind. I said they were helping the farmers, so far as providing water in those areas where it was required. The railways the Premier has been opening so many of in the past month or two have all been built by the past Government, by the Wilson Government. They were just on the verge of completion when the Labour party came into power. When we hear these cries and read these speeches,

it is only natural that the farmers should take notice and be afraid of increased taxation, because we realise it is absolutely impossible for the present Government to carry out their policy and purchase these boats—which I feel certain are not going to decrease the price of meat one iota—and erect saw mills and take over tramways, and build a Trans-continental railway from Kalgoorlie to Perth without needing more money; and where is the money to come from? From the farmers. The farmer is the only man who has the money; at least members on the Government side think he is the only man who has money; but they will find, when they put on increased taxation to tide them over, that in the end they will be killing these men who are doing all they can to build up Western Australia. We have heard the Premier say that the agricultural industry is the backbone of the State, and yet we find that these utterances are made, and that members on the Government side are going about the country endeavouring to form unions so that the farmers will have to pay a high rate of wage or put just sufficient land under crop that they can put in themselves without employing labour. The farm labourers throughout Western Australia are quite content to remain as they are. I admit that there are a few farmers who have not decent accommodation for their hands, and who do not treat their hands as they should be treated; but why should the whole of the farmers of Western Australia have to suffer for the sake of those few?

The Minister for Lands: They will not suffer if they are paying proper wages.

Mr. BROUN: Yes, if that log is adopted, or anything near it; but when the time comes sufficient proof will be brought to bear by the farmers to show that it is impossible to do any farming under that log.

The Premier: There is no suggestion to adopt that log.

Mr. BROUN: At any rate the log adopted will not be far off the present one. We will practically be based on the rates paid in the Eastern States. The wages paid to rural workers in the East-

ern States will apply to Western Australia, though our land is not to be compared to a great portion of the land in the Eastern States.

The Premier: Farming operations here are more successful than they are in the Eastern States.

Mr. BROUN: We have good land, but we have a great quantity of inferior land. A farmer may get a paddock of 100 acres, and out of that have only ten acres of good land; the balance being hardly worth putting in.

The Premier: The farmer can do better here on the land under our conditions than he can do in the Eastern States.

Mr. BROUN: Exactly, because he has not to pay the price here for the land that he has to pay there, and he has not the rents to pay. But other things make the conditions equal; he has to use more manures, and it costs him more to put in the crop in many instances here than it does in the Eastern States.

The Premier: Take a number of years together and you will find the net result of farming operations here considerably above those in the Eastern States.

Mr. BROUN: Because of the expensive way in which we have to treat the land. The majority of the men are quite content to remain as they are without joining this rural workers' log, and I hope a greater number of them will refuse to join, so that it will be impossible for this log to be submitted. We can always come to reason with a workman if the man is reasonable at all. If the employer and employee met together and the employee wishes his wages to be raised, then if he is worth a rise it is given him by the farmer. No farmer is going to lose a good man for the sake of 5s. or 10s. a week. The wages most of the good hands are paid for harvesting is 8s. a day and food, which is sufficient for any man working on a farm.

The Minister for Lands: That is more than they are asking for in the log.

Mr. BROUN: No, because they will there be limited to eight hours a day. It is impossible for any man to work a farm on the eight hours' system, because it is impossible for any owner to be going

about seeing that this man is at work at the proper time, and that the other has not knocked off too soon, and inquiring as to how long they have all been at work. It would be impossible also to get in the time in winter, while in summer it would sometimes be necessary to work until sundown. If the hours lost were to be deducted and the worker was still to knock off at a certain time, the best part of the day would be gone without the work being done.

Mr. Heitmann: Why is it so hard to get good farm hands in this State?

Mr. BROUN: Because they are not in the State.

Mr. Heitmann: But the same trouble exists in the Eastern States.

Mr. BROUN: That is the point. There is no farmer in Western Australia who would object to pay a good wage to a good hand. Hundreds of men come to us and we have to teach them everything. It is nothing for a farmer to put a man on a harvester for which £100 has been paid the day before, and to have that man smash a part worth, perhaps, £15.

Mr. Heitmann: Does it never strike you that the conditions of keep and pay are responsible for this?

Mr. BROUN: No, we are not able to keep good farm hands because every man who comes to a farm comes with the intention of learning farming in order that he might go on the land for himself.

Mr. Green: Better be his own boss than work for a sweater.

Mr. BROUN: No farmers are sweaters. Those men are going to learn the trade, and as soon as they have sufficient confidence in themselves they take up land and make a start in their own interest. Now that there is to be no more land thrown open for selection no doubt there will be no difficulty in obtaining hands, because they will have to come to the farmers for a job. I would like to say a word in regard to the Avondale estate. A number of members have criticised the past Government for purchasing this estate, on the score that too much was paid for it. I think they might just as well leave that subject alone, because if the present Minister for Lands had been prepared to sell

it would have all gone long ago. I approached the Minister on one occasion with a person who was prepared to take 1,700 acres of the estate.

The Minister for Lands: He desired to mop up a big area which was purchased for closer settlement.

Mr. BROUN: Out of the 1,700 acres 800 acres will never be of much use for cultivation, because the area is too rocky.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Why was it bought?

Mr. BROUN: That is not the question, it could have been sold again easily enough. According to the Act the maximum area for closer settlement is 2,000 acres, and in any case it is impossible for any man to make a living on that particular block unless he takes the whole of the 1,700 acres. Three brothers made an offer to take it from the Minister on lease.

The Minister for Lands: I had not the power to grant it on lease.

Mr. BROUN: Well they would have taken it under the old conditions. However, I am pleased to hear the Minister for Lands say that the Government may turn the homestead into an agricultural college, which would be of great benefit to the district, especially if they go in for experimenting with wheat. At the present time, however, that estate is practically lying idle, and during the past year noxious weeds have grown over a considerable area of it, yet no steps have been taken to eradicate these weeds. Stinkwort, in particular, is now covering some 30 or 40 acres of the estate, and next year the adjoining farm will have a quantity of this weed to destroy, just through the neglect to eradicate it on the Avondale estate. I think the Government may well do something in the way of turning the estate into an agricultural farm or, alternately, throw it open for selection. I do not think I have anything more to say. I hope the Government may well do something in the way policy they have adopted in regard to the assistance to the agricultural industry, and that if they are determined to bring in another land tax they will not put the bleeding process on the poor cocky.

On motion by Mr. A. E. Piesse debate adjourned.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION—MR.
FOLEY AND BISHOP RILEY.

Mr. FOLEY (Mount Leonora): With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a personal explanation at this stage. This evening I received the following letter from Bishop Riley of Perth:—

Dear Sir,—In the *West Australian* for this morning you are reported to have said in the House last night with reference to the selection of the last Rhodes scholar, "One of the boys—Bishop Riley's son—at once said he had known that Dunstan would not be chosen, adding that his (Riley's) father had told him so at luncheon time that day." I wish to state emphatically that this is a mistake. I could not have made such a statement because I had not spoken to any one of the board of selection nor had any one of them spoken to me with reference to any of the candidates. Of course, I, like every one else interested in the selection, had my own opinion. I ask you in justice to the members of the board of selection, who are by inference accused of saying beforehand what was going to happen, to give my statement as much publicity as the one you in error made last night. I told Mr. Dunstan last February that I had made no such statement as that attributed to me. Yours faithfully (signed) C.O.L., Perth.

My own position, and the personal explanation I wish to make is this: I was not reported fully in the *West Australian* of this morning's issue, but I am perfectly content to take what will appear in *Hansard* as a true report of what I really did say, and which I am led to believe is substantially correct.

House adjourned at 10.25 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 11th July, 1912.

	Page
Paper presented	330
Questions: Land Transactions, details	330
Fremantle dock borings	331
Address-in-reply, sixth day, amendment	331

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

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the Colonial Secretary: Annual report of Education Department

QUESTION—LAND TRANSACTIONS, DETAILS.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY (for Hon. C. SOMMERS) asked the Colonial Secretary: (a.) What area of land has been surveyed in the South-West Division under Sections 55, 56, and 68, from the 1st October, 1911, to the 1st July, 1912? (b.) What area has been applied for under Sections 55, 56, and 68 since 1st October, 1911, to 1st July, 1912? (c.) How many sales of country township lands have been made since 1st October, 1911, to 1st July, 1912, (a.) under freehold conditions, (b.) under leasehold conditions, and the total amount realised? (d.) How many sales of country township lands have been made since 1st October, 1910, to 1st July, 1911, (a.) under freehold conditions, (b.) under leasehold conditions and the total amount realised? (e.) How many sales of country township lands have been made since 1st July, 1911, to 1st October, 1911, (a.) under freehold conditions, (b.) under leasehold conditions, and the total amount realised. (f.) How many licensed surveyors are now engaged in surveying lands intended to be thrown open for selection.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: (a.) The procedure of the department does not permit of the differentiation of the figures, as the land applied for under Section 68 is often approved under Sections 55 and 56. The figures showing the total area surveyed during the period