

BILL—INTERPRETATION ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. J. Ewing in the Chair; Hon. A. Lovekin in charge of the Bill.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 36:

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: To meet the suggestion made by the Minister last week, though I do not think it necessary, I move an amendment—

That after “by” in line 1 the words “inserting after the words ‘Subsection 2’ in paragraph (c) the words ‘and Subsection 4’ and is further amended by” be inserted.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 “to” be struck out and the word “after” inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 37:

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: I do not understand the position regarding this clause. I have a copy of the Bill as moved on the second reading, and also another copy which differs from it.

Hon. A. Lovekin: There was a misprint and it was corrected.

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION: The hon. member cannot move the second reading of a Bill and then substitute another Bill for it. The alteration should be made in Committee.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: It was not my fault. After the Bill was distributed, the error was detected and attention was directed to it, after which the printer made the correction.

The CHAIRMAN: The Bill I have is the one which passed the second reading.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: The change was made before the second reading was passed.

The CHAIRMAN: The way out is for the hon. member to move the amendment here.

Hon. A. LOVEKIN: I move an amendment—

That in line 2 the words “this section” be struck out, and the words “section thirty-seven” inserted in lieu.

Amendment put and passed; the clause, as amended, agreed to.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

House adjourned at 8.12 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 16th January, 1923.

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The SPEAKER took the Chair at 2.30 p.m., and read prayers.

ELECTORAL—SWEARING IN OF MEMBER.

The SPEAKER: I have received the return of writ for the Kalgoolie electorate by-election. From the endorsement thereon it appears that Mr. James Cunningham has been elected to serve that electorate in the Assembly. I am prepared to swear in the hon. member.

Mr. Cunningham took and subscribed the oath, and signed the roll.

QUESTION—ROYAL COMMISSIONERS ABROAD.

Mr. PICKERING asked the Premier: 1. What Royal Commissions during the past nine years have visited the Eastern States in furtherance of their commissions? 2. Were the commissioners paid whilst absent from the State? 3. If so, what was the amount paid per diem to the chairman and to the commissioners?

The PREMIER replied: 1, 2 and 3: Payment was made in some instances. Particulars are as follows: Agricultural Industry Commission and Esperance Lands Commission: Chairman, £3 3s. per day, members £2 2s. per day, plus £1 1s. per day travelling expenses. Colliery Commission: Chairman only, nil. State Children and Charities Commission: Allowance of £30 to Mr. S. M. Roche for inquiries in New Zealand. Lunacy Commission: Members only, £2 2s. per day plus £1 1s. per day travelling expenses. Railway Commission: Sole Commissioner, £6 10s. per day (no travelling expenses). Forestry Commission: Chairman only, nil.

ASSENT TO BILLS.

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills:—

1. Esperance-Northward Railway Extension.

2. Dairy Industry.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES.

Report of Committee of Ways and Means adopted.

**BILL—LAND TAX AND INCOME
TAX ACT 1922, AMENDMENT.**

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [2.38] in moving the second reading said: The House will realise that I have no great desire to bring down another amendment to the Act. When the amendments from another place were before us I inadvertently deceived the Committee in that I said the insertion of the word "net" before "income" in Clause 6, referring to the super tax, had no meaning. The Minister in another place, and the Taxation Commissioner also, told me it did not mean very much. Since then I have learned that it may mean a good deal. It is not certain that the court would interpret the amended clause as the mover of the amendment in another place would wish, but I think we ought to put it beyond doubt. When an income derived wholly or partly from dividends gets beyond £2,267, it is treated as ordinary income. Thus if a man had an income of £5,000 from dividends and £5,000 from ordinary sources, it would be treated as an income of £10,000, and the rate applying, 4s. in the pound, would be imposed over the whole of it. Then, of course, the super tax of 15 per cent. would be added to the amount taxed on the basis of the rate imposed on the £10,000 income. Deducted from this amount would be the amount paid as dividend duty. for nobody pays twice, although everybody must pay precisely the same rate. The man who gets his income from dividends has less right to be relieved than the man who earns his by personal exertion. To make this quite clear, and in order that we may get the tax to which we are entitled, I have brought down this amending Bill to strike out the word "net" as inserted in Clause 6 in another place. The result of this will be that the taxpayer shall pay as the law provides, at the rate set out in the Act.

Hon. P. Collier: That is to say, on the same basis as he has paid in the past.

The PREMIER: Exactly. I have thought it my duty to the House to make this explanation and have the matter set right. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

LOAN ESTIMATES, 1922-23.

In Committee of Supply.

Resumed from the 30th November; Mr. Stubbs in the Chair.

Vote—Departmental, £81,624:

Hon. P. COLLIER (Boulder) [2.47]: The Loan Estimates deal with a very large sum

of money covering the whole of the ramifications of the Government of the State. It is so long since these Estimates were introduced that the information supplied by the Premier when introducing them has passed more or less from the minds of members. It is rather unfortunate with these Estimates, as with the Estimates of revenue and expenditure, that six months of the financial year should have expired before we are called upon to give consideration to them. Of the sum of £4,000,000 provided in these Estimates for the current year, I suppose half the money has already been expended, and very little difference will be made to the course of that expenditure by any remarks which might be offered now. Still, the Committee should take notice of the fact that we are providing for the expenditure this year of a huge sum of money. Four millions in one year, even though the money be expended on essential development works, is a big expenditure for a population of 340,000 people to embark upon, and the matter requires most careful consideration. We cannot overlook the fact that our loan expenditure in recent years has been mounting up very rapidly. Our financial difficulty with regard to revenue expenditure is largely due to the great sum we have to provide every year by way of interest and sinking fund. In 1913 our total indebtedness was £30,276,000, equal to £86 per head of the population. Since that time we have gone on increasing our indebtedness until, at the end of June last, it totalled £54,977,000, equal to £137 per head of the population. We might deduct the amount paid into sinking fund, £8,370,000, which leaves the State with a net total indebtedness of £46,596,000—a very large amount indeed. The payments last year for interest alone amounted to no less than £2,156,311. If to that we add the sinking fund contribution of £281,000, we find that the total payment for interest and sinking fund combined for the year was £2,433,371. That is a very large sum for a comparatively small population to find each year, and to this is due the fact that the State is financially embarrassed. When this money is provided, we have very little left for the ordinary expenses of government. If we add to our total indebtedness another four million pounds, the increase of interest and sinking fund will make our difficulties much greater. We all hope that the greater proportion of this money will be expended on reproductive works, and that those people for whose benefit it is being expended will be able to meet the interest and sinking fund charge. We could not justify the expenditure otherwise. I have no doubt this result will be attained in the course of two or three years. Certainly we cannot look for a direct return by way of interest and sinking fund, or the full amount of interest, during the first year or two. The State has embarked, and I think wisely, on a policy of land settlement, and if we wish to make it a success, it will entail the expenditure of a large sum of borrowed

money. However, I hope the Government will exercise the utmost economy and will see so far as is humanly possible that the money is expended in a direction which will give a return of interest and other payments at a very early date. The vital aspect of the whole situation is that of increasing the population. Governments in years gone by have indulged in loan expenditure to a very great extent, and while the expenditure may have been justified by the works undertaken, our difficulties arise from the fact that the population has not increased at a proportionate rate in order to carry the added burden of interest and sinking fund. The State would have nothing to fear from borrowing money pretty freely to carry out necessary development works, provided the population kept on increasing proportionately, so that we had the additional taxpayers to bear the added burden, but I am afraid, and the figures available indicate, that we are not increasing our population at the rate the average person believes we are, and certainly not at a rate which it is desirable we should maintain if we are to continue expending such sums as four million pounds in one year. In 1920 the arrivals in Western Australia numbered 29,930, and the departures 31,277, an excess of departures of 1,347. In that year assisted and nominated immigrants numbered 1,364, so that, allowing for these people and the excess of departures over arrivals, we actually lost population to the number of 2,714. It might be contended that that was not a normal year, and that, being only two years since the close of the war, we had not got back to normal conditions. In 1921 arrivals numbered 29,333, and departures 29,306, an excess of arrivals over departures of 27. In that year there arrived assisted and nominated immigrants numbering 3,381; that is to say, in that year we lost 3,354 people. Either of the 3,381 people who arrived here, 3,354 left the State, or else they take the place of other citizens who left the State; the net result was that the State lost 3,354 people in 1921. Taking the 10 months of last year—I have not taken the other two months because, with the approach of Christmas, there is a considerable movement of population East, and the figures would not be very reliable—the arrivals numbered 25,497 and the departures 23,192, an excess of arrivals over departures of 2,305. During the same period there arrived nominated and assisted immigrants numbering 3,750.

The Premier: They were included in the other figures.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Quite so; the other figures include all arrivals and departures, and the arrivals exceeded the departures by 2,305.

The Premier: We would have been in a pretty mess without the immigrants.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I know that. We have been bringing in between 3,000 and 4,000 immigrants a year during the last three or four years, but have not been gaining in

population. Had it not been for these immigrants, we should have actually gone back in population.

Mr. Underwood: But the others might not have left.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I would not say that Western Australians who have left the State to go to the East have been influenced in their actions by the arrival of immigrants.

Mr. Underwood: Some of them have been influenced.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I suppose that would operate to some extent. It should not influence people in their departure from this State if the policy were a sound one, and if those who were brought here did not enter into competition on the labour market with those who were already here. During the first 12 months or so, according to the policy of the Government, new arrivals going on the land must put in that time as wage earners on the farms in order to gain experience. It would seem that to the extent they work on the farms they displace many of those who formerly gained employment in that direction.

Mr. Teesdale: Do they not mean extending the work on the farms?

Hon. P. COLLIER: That may be so. If our agricultural industry is developed each year to the extent that we can employ an additional 3,000 or 4,000 persons, and further acreage is brought under cultivation, it would follow that those already engaged in the industry would not be displaced. I do not, however, know that we have been increasing cultivation to that extent during the years I have quoted. The Premier said that the acreage under cultivation had increased last year by 400,000 acres. We know that considerable sums of money were advanced from the Agricultural Bank last year to enable farmers to place an increased area under cultivation. In that way they should have been able to absorb the new arrivals without displacing those already here. Notwithstanding that for the first 10 months of last year, to the end of October, 3,750 immigrants arrived in the State, we actually lost 1,445 persons. If our immigration policy does greatly influence the departure of our own citizens, there is something wrong.

The Premier: And the policy would be quite useless.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. We should be piling up our indebtedness by borrowing money to place people on the land, and at the end of, say, three years, after spending at the rate of four millions a year, we should find our indebtedness increased by 12 millions and still have the same population as if we had not embarked upon the policy. I hope the Premier will closely examine the figures with the object of discovering the real cause of the drift. During the past few years there has been a considerable migration of Western Australians to the Eastern States. Only a small proportion of the new arrivals have, I think gone away; and if that is so, we have been losing those who have been resident in

the State, and who by all the rules of the business ought to have been our best citizens. The figures are disquieting, and we ought to endeavour to arrest the drift of our own people to the Eastern States. If we can hold those who are already here, and still bring in large numbers of new arrivals each year, in a little while we should be able to considerably add to our population. That is the whole crux of the position. Unless we can build up our own population, we cannot bring about increased production. No matter how much we spend, we can only increase production by increasing the numbers of our population. That is the object the Premier has in view. If we do not increase our population, and go on adding to our indebtedness, in a few years we shall be in a more difficult financial position than we are in at present.

Mr. Mann: The population has increased by over 12,000 since 1918.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That was due to our returning soldiers. We were merely getting back those we had lost. During the war our population receded by about 12,000.

Mr. Mann: We fell back from 333,000 to 327,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: After the war, in 1919, we recovered that loss. That is why I have not taken the figures further back than 1920. The figures I have quoted show a position that is far from satisfactory. The reason for the drift to the Eastern States is, I think, that many of those who went to the war from Western Australia were young men who had not previously been out of the State. They saw something of the world while away, and got a taste for travel. On their return they naturally desired to see other parts of Australia. Whilst they were away they fraternised with men from the other States, and this too helped them in their desire to see the rest of Australia. I believe that many of those who have left the State for this purpose fully intend to return here after they have had a look round. Every young man likes to see something of other countries.

Mr. Mullany: This should also apply in the Eastern States, and numbers of young men should want to see Western Australia.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There is not the same appeal from the bigger States to a State like Western Australia. Most of those who went to the war from the Eastern States saw Western Australia on their way to the front.

Mr. Underwood: Many Western Australian soldiers originally came from the other States, and on their return wanted to see their old homes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is quite possible.

The Premier: The only part of the State that has lost population is North-East Fremantle, where there are so many empty houses.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I would like you to find one empty house there.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If what I have suggested does account for the drift to the Eastern States, it means that it will not be a continuous drift. It will have been evidenced only during the year or two following the close of the war, and will to a large extent have ceased after that.

The Premier: We have not lost the population at all. We only dropped it on the census. We lost 18,000 on the last census.

Mr. Underwood: That does not affect the arrivals and departures.

The Premier: Yes, it does. I have gone into the matter. I am trying to keep the people here, and I believe they are here.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If they are here, the figures do not show that to be the case. The Premier appears to be losing 25s. per head from the Commonwealth upon these decreased numbers.

The Premier: That is so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is disquietening to think that although we are embarking upon an immigration policy the people are coming in at the front door and going out at the back. That is a bad thing for the State. Since the advent of the Great Western Railway, many people have gone to the Eastern States because of the greater opportunities offered there for the training of their sons in some trade or calling. All young men do not desire to go on the land, though, if they did, I think they would have as good an opportunity of learning all about the agricultural industry in this State as in another State. The Loan Estimates show an increase over those of the previous year. There is a total of four million pounds set down on these Estimates as against an expenditure last year of £2,454,000. For the development of agriculture, the sum of £2,520,000 is provided.

Mr. Mann: The expenditure of our money in the Eastern States has meant a great deal to the population there.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. We should stop the importation of goods manufactured in the Eastern States, and endeavour to supply our own requirements. According to the Premier we purchased last year from the Eastern States £1,400,000 worth of agricultural produce. The money that we send out of the State finds employment for men and women in other parts of Australia. It may be said that the money we are borrowing is cultivating the land in the Eastern States. It is keeping factories going there instead of being used to find employment for our own people. It would make a great difference to the general trade and prosperity of the State if the money we are spending on agricultural produce in other States were circulated amongst our own people. That money would go back into our industries, and greatly assist in the development of our various activities. The greater proportion of that sum goes out to pay for products from the soil. I do not know any other way of arresting the drift to the East than that of developing our lands. If the present policy succeeds, it should not be more than two or three years when we

shall entirely overtake our own requirements and the importation of foodstuffs from the East will cease. If that should not prove to be the case, then our money will have been expended in vain and we shall be in a bad way financially. However, it is quite probable that this year, as in other years, the Treasurer will find, as the months go by, that it is not absolutely essential to expend the total amount of money which he asks the House to authorise. We usually find at the end of the financial year that the full amount authorised by Parliament has not been expended. Still, we cannot expect to succeed with our developmental policy without the expenditure of money. Included in these Loan Estimates are a considerable number of railways which have been authorised by Parliament during the past six or seven years. The construction of those lines is all falling into this year. That expenditure will not be, or should not be, recurrent. We know that three or four of the lines are already under construction. Those facts account for the increased amount set down under "Railways and Tramways." We know, too, that on some of the estates purchased for closer settlement large sums of money are being expended—the Peel estate and the Bateman estate, for instance, where relatively enormous works are being carried out. Drainage is under way there, and roads are being constructed, and all the other facilities necessary for people going on the land are being provided. A very considerable acreage of land which only six months ago was swamp land or in a virgin state, is to-day flourishing with crops. I know from my own observation that that is so on the Peel estate. It would be a revelation to hon. members who have not seen it to go to the Peel estate and observe what has been accomplished in so short a time. The estate should speedily be self-supporting; that is to say, the general taxpayer should after a very short time not be called upon to carry interest charges on the estate, but those settled on the estate should be able to pay their way and meet the interest on the capital expended. The situation of the estate is most favourable—within seven or eight miles of the port, and with a good road. The products generally are just what the State requires, and such as the State has been importing. The potatoes merely scratched in on the surface there are as fine as any I have seen. Indeed, everything grows in profusion on those swamp lands. So far as a layman may judge, I have no fear whatever for the success of the Peel estate undertaking. In connection with the group settlements now under way in the South-West there will doubtless be many difficulties to overcome, but I have no doubt whatever that those settlements will succeed and save to the State those large outgoings to the East. The responsibility for the Loan Estimates lies entirely with the Government, and one must assume that no expenditure will be incurred but such as is absolutely essential. Expenditure on agriculture, if wise, can at all times be justified.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What about the proposed expenditure on the Council of Industrial Development?

The Premier: There is no such expenditure on these Estimates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Yes, look at pages 20 and 27.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I would not be prepared to vote a pound for the Council of Industrial Development either to expend or to have a voice in expending. I remember that on the discussion of the Revenue Estimates the Minister for Mines promised to consult with me regarding a Bill, to be introduced this session, for the purpose of casting the Council of Industrial Development in statutory form. However, I have not heard from the Minister on the subject.

The Premier: That is not the Minister's fault.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The House ought not to sanction the Council of Industrial Development, as at present constituted, having any voice whatever in the expenditure of public funds. If the promised Bill should not be brought down, I hope the members of the Council of Industrial Development will, in their own interests, have discretion enough to resign from their positions, or to refuse to function any further until they have the authority of Parliament.

The Premier: The fault does not lie with the Minister for Mines.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It was my intention to return to the subject on the items. There are many matters which can best be dealt with on the items. In conclusion, I trust the Government will at all times bear in mind that we are heavily indebted, that our expenditure per head of the population is far and away greater than that of any other State of the Commonwealth, and that we are embarking on a huge expenditure, for which reasons the utmost economy should be exercised in the interests of the taxpayers of the State.

Mr. PICKERING (Sussex) [3.25]: I do not intend to repeat what the Leader of the Opposition has said regarding our indebtedness, but there are one or two general remarks I have to offer regarding the trend of our population to the East. It has been said by the Leader of the Opposition that this is due mainly to the better facilities offering there for children to learn trades, or trades other than those pertaining to agriculture. I venture to say there are many reasons why the East affords greater attractions than are to be found in the city of Perth. That circumstance, I consider, has a great deal to do with the eastward trend. This State is making a supreme effort to overcome the trend of population from the country districts to the cities. No other country, so far as I am aware, has undertaken that effort to the same degree as Western Australia; and for that effort the Government do deserve commendation. The effort is one which should lead to this State overtaking by its own

production its requirements in the way of foodstuffs. Further, it should go a long way towards establishing the position of our secondary industries. Unless we are able to increase the population in our rural areas, it is not to be expected that our secondary industries will progress as they should. From an increase in the population of our rural areas must come the necessary demand for the products of our secondary industries. Last week I asked a question in this House regarding the electrification of our railway system. I was unable to get a reply of a definite nature from the Minister for Railways. I got a reply which was of an insulting nature, such a reply as I would expect to receive from a Minister whose chief characteristic is the faculty of evasion. The question whether the Government do or do not intend to electrify our suburban railway system is of great importance. We had a special meeting of an educational nature at a certain picture show, members being invited by the Minister for Railways. Whilst I am quite prepared to concede that education in that direction may be of considerable advantage. I am rather inclined to think that the meeting in question was intended to prepare the way for an attempt by the Minister for Railways to start the electrification of our railways without the authority of Parliament.

The Premier: We have not the money.

Mr. PICKERING: We had not the money for the Como tramway either, but that tramway was constructed. The reply of the Minister for Railways to which I have already referred included the following—

The unequalled success of the Como tram line demonstrates the advantage of displaying courage and resolution in dealing with Government works that do not appeal to the parochially minded.

The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) finds some amusement in this, but he does not seem to appreciate the seriousness of the Government's action in flouting a promise they had made to this House. I hope the Government are not going to adopt similar tactics with regard to the electrification of our suburban railways. It may be that considerable advantage would result from the inauguration of such a system, and it may be that Parliament would be prepared to grant the necessary authority; but the question whether large expenditure of that kind is to be embarked upon must be entirely subservient to the will of this House. Considerable increases to the tramway system are forecasted in these Loan Estimates.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The item would not provide for half a mile.

Mr. PICKERING: There is an amount of £25,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: But the Como line has been built.

Mr. Clydesdale: The amount available is £40,000 odd.

The Premier: There is provision for about four miles.

Mr. PICKERING: The Loan Estimates do not indicate in what direction that money is to be spent, and therefore it is possible that some new system may be started without the consent of this House. The total to be expended under these Loan Estimates is very large. Provision is made for certain railways which, however, I believe are to be deleted in order to permit of our proceeding with the development scheme in the South-West. While a great deal of the proposed expenditure will not be recurring expenditure, we must not lose sight of the fact that a considerable sum will have to be expended on the Pemberton-Nornalup railway. Moreover, this State is faced already with a very large expenditure on other railways to which both Houses have not yet assented. Therefore it is not right to infer from the fact that these smaller lines are to be constructed, we are not going to be faced with considerable loan expenditure in the almost immediate future.

Hon. P. Collier: Expenditure on the Nornalup line will be spread over five or six years.

Mr. PICKERING: It may be; we do not know. I was hoping that the Premier would have said it was his intention to take in hand without delay, the work of constructing the Margaret River-Flinders Bay railway. Because we are completing certain railways, the construction of which is already authorised, does not mean that the expenditure confronting us is not to be large.

Hon. P. Collier: There is nothing to say that it will be.

The Premier: The Nornalup line will be built in sections.

Mr. PICKERING: No one will contend that that railway will be started with the intention of carrying it right through at once.

The Premier: It will be carried through some day.

Mr. PICKERING: Railway construction in that part of the State will have to be much more rapid than is contemplated. The Premier should make some announcement with regard to his attitude towards the electrification of the suburban railway system, so that the House may know definitely the intention of the Government, and particularly as to whether it is proposed to carry out the work without first consulting Parliament.

Mr. ANGELO (Gascoyne) [3.35]: I wish to enter a word of protest against the fact that although we are going to pass these Estimates which will provide for the expenditure of over £4,000,000, it is intended to spend only £72,000 of that amount in the North-West, an area comprising something like two-thirds of the whole State. The North-West certainly requires development from a defence point of view, much more so in fact than the South-Western part of the State. Probably the Premier will tell us that our turn will come next, and that another loan will be raised for the purpose.

We have had promise after promise, but if the Premier will tell us that on the next Loan Estimates provision will be made for the adequate development of the North-West, and that the subject generally will receive serious attention, I shall be satisfied for the time being.

Hon. P. Collier: There is £50,000 on these Estimates for the Ashburton jetty alone. That is in your electorate.

Mr. ANGELO: Unfortunately there is no provision for expenditure in my electorate. The Ashburton jetty is in the Roebourne electorate. All the same the Ashburton jetty is a work that should have been carried out 15 years ago. Next to the Gascayne, the Ashburton is undoubtedly the biggest sheep-breeding district in the State, but it has languished year after year because of the absence of jetty accommodation. It is hard to imagine that big stations have been compelled to send their wool by dinghy to a lighter, and then by the lighter to a steamer anchored in the roads some three or four miles away. However, I am glad to see that the work is to be undertaken. Other improvements in the North-West represent only £4,000 and there are two other small items classed as urgent minor works on which there is to be an expenditure of £6,000. This is all that is to be given to the North-West where the people are producing wealth which is being enjoyed by those in the South. Time after time we have asked for a return showing the revenue and expenditure and the wealth production of the North, but we have never been able to get it.

Hon. P. Collier: Are there any important development works for which no provision has been made?

Mr. ANGELO: Absolutely. For instance, there is that very important work, the railway from Carnarvon to Killili. This has not even been surveyed.

Hon. P. Collier: That is not Miles' railway.

Mr. ANGELO: No. It is a railway which I consider should be the first of a series of spur lines from the coast to the hinterland. Hon. members will know that Queensland was developed by such spur lines as I am suggesting. I trust the Government will before very long seriously consider the question of populating and developing the North-West. I wish to say a few words in connection with the Premier's migration scheme. I am not opposing it in any shape or form; I think the proposal is sound, but there is one addition to it which should be seriously considered, and while I put it forward I do not intend to voice my own opinion because I do not know as much about the subject as others do. I wish to read an extract from an interview with Sir John Taverner which was published in this State a little time back. Sir John Taverner was for nine years Agent General for Victoria and before that was Minister for Agriculture in Victoria. This is what he said—

Personally, I am a great supporter of Juvenile Immigration, and during my term as Agent-General I sent out some hundred batches of twelve boys between the ages of 14 and 16 years who had left school. These were placed throughout the State with farmers who boarded them for the first year in return for their labour, and then at a wage commensurate with their merits. I found in England while there that there was something like one and a half million boys and girls leaving school at 14 years of age and thrown, as it were, upon the open labour market to be handled primarily by the County Council Education Department. After the various manufacturing industries were catered for, some thousands of these boys were, from the national point of view, allowed to drift. Realising this, and coming in contact with the right people, I induced the Bent Government to take batches of these boys, and I am pleased to say that there were very few failures. The great advantage of getting hold of the boy at that age is that you get the young fellow who is going to grow on to the conditions that obtain around him, and thus produce a good class of agricultural labourer, as well as bringing up a good class of settler. My experience has been that when you get amongst the older people they are rather inclined to get homesick. The Euripides—the boat I came out in from London last August—carried 400 immigrants back to England on the homeward trip. These were all dissatisfied and disgruntled immigrant settlers. Nothing could do more damage to Australia than a repetition of that. Therefore I think it essential to get the young fellows out here on the land. I am sure if the districts were canvassed you could get a very large proportion of the farmers who would be prepared to take a boy under these conditions. It worked well in Victoria and I am sure it would work well in any of the farming communities of Australia where labour is scarce.

Mr. Clydesdale: Would it not be better to put our own boys on first?

Mr. ANGELO: I agree with the hon. member if our own boys are willing to go on the land. Unfortunately we find that very few of them are willing to take up agricultural pursuits. An utterance such as that which I have quoted coming from a man with the experience of Victoria which went through a stage in its development, similar to that which is ours to-day, should receive earnest consideration. Sir John Taverner is recognised as one of the most capable politicians of the old school in Victoria. He made good and his advice should be well worth having.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Williams-Narrogin) [3.42]: It appears from the Loan Estimates that the Government at last propose to proceed with the construction of those railways

which were authorised by Parliament in 1914 and 1915. They started one line a little while back and as soon as they began the work they took it into their heads to stop it.

The Premier: Which one was that?

Mr. JOHNSTON: The Narrogin-Dwarda line. I regret to say that the Premier has camouflaged that line in these Estimates.

The Premier: Have you been over it?

Mr. JOHNSTON: Yes. The Premier, too, has been over it and while there, saw and met some of the best farmers in Western Australia. However, it is satisfactory to note that the Government intend to make provision for the construction of those railways, for which the people have been waiting for eight years and upwards. The lines were authorised by Parliament and people naturally expected the Government to proceed with the work of construction, or else make way for a Government that would build them. That expresses my attitude to this Government. Parliament authorised the construction of the line from Dwarda to Narrogin, and the item as it appears in the Loan Estimates is "Dwarda Eastwards." The railway that has been authorised by Parliament is from Dwarda South-eastward to Narrogin, and I do not know why a Government, honestly desirous of carrying out the wishes of Parliament should camouflage the work as has been done in this instance.

The Premier: It is the same line.

Mr. JOHNSTON: That is satisfactory to me, and the interjection will stop my continuing further remarks I intended to make on the subject. I thank the Premier for that assurance, but on turning to the details which are contained on page 7 of the Estimates, which show how the money is to be spent, we find "Assembling material, provision for siding and depot at Dwarda, etc." That seems to be a very necessary and essential provision, because the Government have a State timber mill a few miles from Dwarda, which is turning out first class sleepers, and it seems to me that the Government could now make arrangements to establish a depot with the view of continuing the line to Narrogin. Throughout the South-West there is a desire that this further communication with the Great Southern should be established. Mr. Shorke, former Commissioner for Railways, held very strong views on this subject and showed it to be undesirable to build a railway, 60 miles from Pinjarra to Dwarda as a spur line, when it was possible to extend it to Narrogin as a through line. It will be of advantage to the people of the South-West, as well as to those in the Great Southern if the railway is extended the short distance from Dwarda to Narrogin. I am pleased to see on the Estimates this item of £10,000 for the provision, before the 30th June next, of sidings and a depot and the assembling of material at Dwarda.

Hon. P. Collier: The passing of the item will not actually compel the Government to spend it.

Mr. JOHNSTON: That is so. I regret that the item is not £100,000 instead of

£10,000. If the larger amount had been provided, the Government could have fulfilled the promise of Cabinet, made during the absence of the Premier in England, namely, that the railway would be completed in time to carry this year's harvest, in about August next. That was the solemn decision of Cabinet, but as soon as the Premier returned the construction of the railway was retarded and eventually stopped. I am pleased with the assurance of the Premier that this item refers to the railway which has been authorised by Parliament from Dwarda to Narrogin, and I can only urge the Government to get on with its construction immediately and, in the words of the Premier, either get on or get out.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN (North-East Fremantle) [3.47]: To one who scrutinises them closely, the Estimates are nothing short of amazing. We find in one place £45,000 for roads, and in another a large sum for roads and drains. It is impossible to tell by these Estimates what is to be spent on roads and what on drains.

The Premier: They are in the form which you left when you went out of office.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: That may be so. The form is here, but not the information which we used to give. We find here £45,000 for roads, some of which is to be disbursed as grants to local authorities, a charge which used to be shown under the Revenue Estimates. The Premier has provided these Estimates in this form in order to reduce his revenue expenditure without the real position being disclosed to the people.

The Premier: That is not so.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: There is here provided a sum of £267,000 to be used at the whim of a body which has no statutory authority.

The Premier: That is wrong.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It is not wrong. If members will refer to pages 26 and 27 of the Estimates, they will find that the estimated expenditure for the year ending 30th June next is £267,944. Then we get this explanation: "Progress expected to be made during the year. Final payment to W.A. Meat Export Company, Ltd., also any assistance recommended by the board of the Council of Industrial Development from time to time." That is printed in the Estimates, notwithstanding which the Premier says I am wrong. If the information given here be wrong, then other information in the Estimates also may be wrong. Almost as much money is to be given to this company to play with as is provided for expenditure in the metropolitan area. Out of Loan Estimates of over four millions, the Premier can raise only £322,000 for the metropolitan area.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Where are the W.A. Meat Export Company's works?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: It does not matter at all. Those works were not built for

the metropolitan area. For years have the people of the metropolitan area been crying out for a water supply, yet in these Estimates the Premier can raise only £75,000 for the purpose. The Metropolitan Water Supply is a self-supporting enterprise for which the people in the metropolitan area pay. Interest, sinking fund, and maintenance are all provided, but not by the general taxpayer. The member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) is alarmed at the suggestion of any expenditure on tramway extension. All that the Premier can find for that purpose is £91,575, of which, probably, some £40,000 has been expended already.

The Premier: No, only £30,000.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The sum is reduced every time the Premier refers to it. On the last occasion he said it was £36,000. A large proportion of the amount provided on the Estimates has been expended, not only on tramway extensions, but on rolling stock. Last year £69,000 was provided. The cars cost £4,000 apiece, and 20 of them were built, so hon. members will realise how much is likely to be left of this amount for tramway extensions to take people to their homes. Right through the Estimates we find the metropolitan area neglected. It is time we had a Government which would treat the whole of the State equitably. The present Government are not giving the metropolitan area a fair deal.

Mr. Latham: Notwithstanding which, it is growing.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I know that. We see on the Estimates a sum for goldfields water supply extension. What does it mean? Nothing but new mains in agricultural districts. The amount set down for group settlement and soldier settlement is small as compared with these other amounts. The Government will not give fair play to the metropolitan area, because they are under the control of the Country Party.

The Premier: It would be just as true to say that you are under the control of the red-raggers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I would rather be under their control than under the control of the Country Party; because the red-raggers will allow a man to carry on, so long as he is progressing, whereas the Government, under the control of the Country Party, can go only so far as they are allowed to go. These Estimates are all against the interests of the people of the metropolitan area. It is because the Government are afraid to treat equitably all sections of the community.

The Premier: There is not one correct word in that statement.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Fair play should be given to all.

The Minister for Agriculture: Why not change the executive?

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Which executive? We know the instructions that were given to the hon. member on the 5th January. He cannot do what he likes, but has to do what he is told.

Hon. P. Collier: They have expelled Hedges, and the Minister for Agriculture is to be the next.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The country requires development, but development on safe lines.

The Premier: That was said by Noah when he stepped out of the ark.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: He waited till the dove went out and brought back the olive branch to show that things were safe. The Premier requires to make sure that he is safe.

Hon. P. Collier: Those fellows will push him out of the ark directly.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The Government provide only £55,000 for the development of the goldfields, the goldfields that made this State.

The Premier: You never had so much for them on your Estimates.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: We spent more than that for we realised that the State depended on the goldfields. To-day even big mining men are aware that the industry cannot rely on the Government for assistance, because the Government are wrapped up in agriculture. If hon. members will scrutinise these items on the closing pages, they will be amazed. We get drainage and roads and surveys mentioned in several places. Instead of being kept apart so as to show what is intended, they are lumped together so as to hide the fact that everything else is being sacrificed to agriculture.

The Premier: We provide over two millions for the development of agriculture.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Included in that amount is £268,000 for the Council of Industrial Development.

The Premier: No, that is wrong.

Hon. P. Collier: They will not get a penny of it, anyhow.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: The total amount provided for the development of agriculture is £2,314,083.

The Premier: And for assistance to settlers.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: No, for the development of agriculture, items 52 to 65. I am afraid we are banking too much on the one industry. Four millions is the largest amount ever introduced in Estimates since I have been in the House.

The Premier: You have a short memory.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Nothing of the sort. When we brought down Estimates of three millions, we were told we were spending too much, were running the State into bankruptcy. As soon as the Premier took office, to prove his words he reduced the loan expenditure to approximately £1,675,000. Now it is up to four millions. Times out of number has the Minister for Education declared that this State could not afford to spend more than one million per annum from loan money. To-day our indebtedness totals over 54 millions. What I am chiefly troubling about is that so large a sum as four millions will not be expended wisely.

The Premier: Only the other day you were on a deputation asking for the expenditure of a large sum of money.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: No, we asked that you should make inquiries as to the possible development of certain land, to see if it would be a payable proposition. It was only a request for investigation. If the area was found to be suitable we thought the work should be carried out. We did not ask for a shilling.

The Premier: You said, "If you do not settle the country between Fremantle and Bunbury, out you go."

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: I would have put the Premier out if I could have done so before he made a start; not that I have much against him, but I have great objection to the system of government in force.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The crowd he is mixed up with.

Hon. P. Collier: The bad company he is keeping.

The Premier interjected.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: If the Premier were associated with the Trades Hall, he would be in far happier company than he is in to-day. He would not be dictated to as he is at present.

Mr. Pickering: He has been closely allied with you for a long time.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: I notice another very large amount, £38,773, for a school at Narrogin, additions to the Busselton butter factory, and a few minor works. When I was at Busselton the other day, I was told that the factory was already over-capitalised.

(Mr. Angelo took the Chair.)

Hon. M. F. Troy: Which it is.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: Yet further expenditure is now proposed. Is it any wonder that the member for Sussex (Mr. Pickering) supports the Estimates as they stand? The member for Sussex merely wanted an assurance that the Government did not intend to start the electrification of the railways or extend the tramway to the Mends-street jetty and, given that, he was quite satisfied with the Estimates. "Give me that assurance and you can go ahead." No wonder he was satisfied!

Mr. Pickering: That item is mostly for the Narrogin State Farm.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: No; it is for a school at Narrogin and the Busselton butter factory. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. McCallum) the other night mentioned the condition of the school at White Gum Valley, South Fremantle. I have never been in a school in Western Australia which was in such a disgraceful condition, and yet we find £38,000 for a school at Narrogin.

The Premier: Nothing of the sort.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: It is in the Estimates.

The Premier: That is the balance of an old vote.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: If it is the balance of an old vote, the Premier should have seen

that the particulars were given in that portion of the Estimates referring to the progress of works. Items 55 to 57 provide £87,100 as the estimated expenditure for additions to the Narrogin School of Agriculture, additions to the Busselton butter factory and minor works as may be authorised. In mentioning £38,773, I was giving the unexpended balance of authorisations on the 30th June. I find I made an error, as the estimated expenditure is £87,100. Notwithstanding the large number of people in the metropolitan area who need means of communication, only £90,000 is provided for tramways. This is the way we in the metropolitan area are treated by the present Government. I hope the time is not far distant when the party known as the metropolitan party will come together and see that they get fair play for the metropolitan area.

Mr. Clydesdale: Hear, hear! The time has arrived for that.

Hon. W. C. ANWIN: We shall not get fair play until we do amalgamate for the express purpose of seeing that justice is done to our electors.

Mr. WILLCOCK (Geraldton) [4.5]: I had intended to refer to immigration, but the Leader of the Opposition has dealt with that. What I am concerned about, and the same applies to a majority of the people in this State, is whether the best is being done with our loan expenditure. Almost everyone is asking this question to-day.

The Premier: I assure you that if we spent five millions to-morrow there would be some people dissatisfied.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The Government can be assured of criticism whenever the expenditure of money is involved, and criticism is the best way of arriving at sound conclusions.

The Premier: There is money for the Geraldton water scheme.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is quite an annual matter. I have been unable to find anyone who could assure me that the money being expended in the South-West will produce better results than if it were spent in other portions of the State. I have spoken to hundreds of people who have spent years in the South-Western part of the State, and they say that undoubtedly the expenditure of money there will be repaid eventually. Unfortunately, their remarks are always qualified by the word "eventually"; no one expects a return in the immediate future.

The Premier: You must cast your bread upon the waters.

Mr. WILLCOCK: But with a deficit of six millions, we cannot afford to cast many crumbs upon the water. Some of them have a habit of floating away to the ocean and being carried by currents elsewhere, and we get no permanent return from them. From my knowledge of the State, we could get better and quicker returns for the money elsewhere. It is of no use spending millions of money in a portion of the State, which will not give

a return for 10 or 15 years. We want quick returns, so that we can go on spending the money over and over again.

The Premier: How long, O Lord, how long! You have said that every year since you entered the House.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It seems necessary to reiterate it. I recently visited the Bruce Rock district and the progress there is astounding. I have not heard anyone express the opinion that the South-West will give as speedy returns as the wheat lands give.

The Premier: We are clearing as much land as we can.

Mr. WILLCOCK: There are many people who are not aware that they can get loans for agricultural development.

The Premier: But we have advertised it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Quite so, but it was not generally known. We would get a quicker return for our money if we purchased the Midland railway and lands. This question has been discussed this session and some information has been obtained regarding the proposal. If some of this money were expended on the purchase of that railway and the 500,000 acres of first-class land in the Midland concession, we would get a considerably better return during the next five years. This will be the difficult period confronting us as regards finance; we must stop the deficit in that time or the deficit will stop us. In the Midland area is land equal to the best in the State for wheat, sheep and cattle growing. I understand that the concession could be obtained for considerably less than was asked a few years ago, and as railway and rolling stock material is ever so much dearer now than it was then, we would be getting a better bargain. Judging by the prominence given to the South-West during the last 12 or 18 months, a visitor would be inclined to think that we had no other land worth developing.

Mr. Pickering: The South-West has been neglected.

Mr. WILLCOCK: But prominence has been given to the South-West only.

Mr. Pickering: And deservedly so.

Mr. WILLCOCK: It deserves prominence, but the Government should take a broad and statesman-like view of the whole State. They should not concentrate the expenditure in one portion of the State. The Government should deal with the State as a whole, instead of keeping one eye on the South-West and closing the other eye altogether.

Mr. J. H. Smith: The South-West has been greatly neglected in the past.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes, because the expense of developing that magnificent land has been so great and past Governments have not been brave enough to undertake the work. Everyone fought shy of it, because of the expense, and because there was no prospect of an immediate return.

The Premier: Now you are taking a very broad outlook.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I admit that we have magnificent land in the South-West, and the

reason why it has not been developed ere this is on account of the cost. Are we in any better position to undertake this development to-day than we were a few years ago! However, that does not concern me so much as the fact that development work is being concentrated in one corner of the State. I want to see more money expended in the wheat areas. There are 500,000 acres of good land in the Midland area which could be developed by the Government if the railway concession were purchased.

Mr. Pickering: We cannot get the security.

Mr. WILLCOCK: We could if the Government controlled the land.

Mr. Pickering: Buy the land?

Mr. WILLCOCK: Buy the whole business. It can easily be financed.

Mr. Pickering: At a price.

Mr. WILLCOCK: At a price that should give a splendid return to the State, and that would be less than the actual value of the proposition.

The Minister for Agriculture: I wish you meant it.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I know it to be a fact.

The Minister for Agriculture: We would want to buy it for what it is worth, not at the price at which it is valued.

Mr. WILLCOCK: People who understand values have placed a valuation upon it, and we know that it can be purchased at less than that value. The company has a million pounds out and is getting little or no return from it. The proposition will never be of any value to the people who own it, because it cannot be developed as it would be developed if the State owned it.

Mr. Pickering: What is the average value of the land per acre?

Mr. WILLCOCK: It is first class land. The Labour Government could have purchased the whole thing for £1,400,000. A considerable amount of land has since then been alienated. Land values and rolling stock values have also increased. I understand the railway could now be purchased at considerably less than that figure, which was supposed to have been such a good opportunity for Western Australia. Everyone who discusses Midland railway matters agrees it was a pity the offer was not accepted at the time.

Hon. M. F. Troy: There were many opponents to it in those days.

Mr. WILLCOCK: I hope we shall get more information upon this subject before the session closes. The Premier, speaking in regard to the money used for development purposes, said it was the cheapest money Western Australia ever had. The interest cannot be much less than six per cent. If we get it for six per cent. and the loan is for 30 years, I do not see where the cheapness comes in. Two-thirds of the interest payments will be met by people outside the State during the first five years.

The Premier: The money will certainly be owing for 30 years.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If we take off two-thirds of the interest for five years it leaves a rate of interest at 5½ per cent. to be paid by the State during the whole period of the loan.

The Minister for Mines: Portion of that will be interest charges levied against the Commonwealth. That will cheapen the loan to us.

Mr. WILLCOCK: These are the facts of the position, and it does not therefore appear to be cheap money. What do the Government intend to do with the Geraldton harbour? During the past six months we have had anything but frankness from them; nothing but evasions. In 1920 a sum of £20,000 was set down in the Loan Estimates for these works, but only £1,200 spent. In the following year £4,000 was set aside, but only £1,050 was spent. This year £10,000 appears on the Estimates. Is this done for the purpose of deluding people into believing that the Government intend to do something, or will the practice of former years be followed and nothing be done? The money was spent last year in locating a quarry for stone with which to build a breakwater. The quarry was located and the stone found to be suitable and sufficient in quantity for the work. On the Estimates this year we find this item—

“Commencement of harbour works: further work in locating quarry for stone.” Numerous questions have been asked as to when the work will be proceeded with. The municipality has a lease of the quarry, for the stone is required for road making purposes if the Government do not intend to make use of it. A report has been made, but seven months have elapsed and still nothing has been done. Questions have been asked in the Legislative Council, and the answer has been that a definite statement will shortly be made. It should not be necessary to justify the expenditure of public money on the Geraldton harbour. There are four ports in the South-West. Each of these should be able to export sufficient produce to justify its establishment. Every Government for the last 20 years said that money should be spent on the Geraldton harbour. No one has said the business of the port does not warrant the development of that part of the State. All have agreed as to the necessity for developing our outports. If there is one thing that has been stressed in regard to development and against centralisation, it is that we should have outports at which the trade of the State could be done. Whenever centralisation is spoken of, in the same breath the development of our ports is referred to.

Mr. Money: Every time!

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is so. If a certain area of country requires to be developed, it is recognised that its trade must go through the port that was by nature intended to be its outlet. Geraldton should be, but unfortunately it is not, the outport for a district in which there are over two million sheep. The gold mining industry only requires the natural facilities of the port to enable it to expand.

Mr. Teesdale: And lead mining.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Yes.

The Premier: There is also gold in the sea.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If it can be got at. We also have butter factories in the district. People have shown their faith in it by subscribing £55,000 for freezing works. These will be necessary during the next year or so. Owing to the condition of the meat market, it is a good thing this capital expenditure was not made. Throughout the world the frozen meat trade has been gravely handicapped during recent years. Five months ago there were only two meat works operating in Australia, with the exception of the Wyndham Freezing Works. The people of Geraldton have subscribed the money, and as soon as opportunity offers the freezing works will be commenced. They will mean a great deal in the development of the district. When freezing works are established the capital value of the land, the stock from which is serving those works, almost immediately appreciates to the extent of not less than £1 an acre.

Mr. Teesdale: I wish that was so at Wyndham.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Surely the hon. member will admit that the Wyndham works have increased the value of the land there.

Mr. Teesdale: Look at the prices of cattle to-day.

Mr. WILLCOCK: If the hon. member wanted to buy a cattle station in the North-West he would find the price much higher since the works were established than it was before. Wherever freezing works have been established on sound and economical lines, the result has been an appreciation in land values and a benefit to the finances of the State concerned. In regard to the Geraldton port, which is the natural outlet for this class of trade, we have not anything there worthy of the name of a harbour. There is only 20 feet of water there, and it cannot take a decent size ship.

Mr. Teesdale: Is it not 26 feet?

Mr. WILLCOCK: If we had 26 feet we would not bother. The vessels that come in there are compelled to go away half loaded, and to complete the loading at Fremantle. Everyone knows the additional expense that that involves, and naturally it all comes out of the pockets of the people. If we get so much less from the aggregate result, people of the State collectively are so much the poorer. Only 18 months ago a sandalwood boat came to Geraldton but could not load for four or five days. When a similar charter in the future is sought for Geraldton, the freight will naturally be higher. The obvious result of that will be that the sandalwood trade which belongs to Geraldton will be diverted to Fremantle. That is a position which should not exist at the natural port of a very important district. A little while ago the “Charon” came in to take 540 bales of wool, and the “Bambra” came in on the same day to take between 300 and 400 tons of cargo. The vessels, however, were unable to

load fully. They broke the springs and the cost to the "Bambra" was between £300 and £400.

Mr. A. Thomson: There must be something wrong with the port.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That is what I am pointing out. On another occasion the "Bambra" came in to take 28 tons of cargo and she took only three tons of that lot because of the rough weather and the absence of protection. A port cannot be expected to stand up to that sort of thing and maintain its reputation. The companies will be bound to dodge the port of Geraldton and the trade will disappear. It is not fair that such a position should be permitted to exist. On one trip the "Bambra" had 44 tons of cargo to discharge at Geraldton but she was compelled to take it to Fremantle, and the extra charges were heaped on to the people to whom the goods were consigned. The Commonwealth steamers have agreed to call at Geraldton if we can guarantee them 500 tons of cargo, and if they cannot take it on the way home owing to being heavily laden, they will take it on the outward journey. But if they are to have the experience of the "Bambra" and the "Charon," one such will be sufficient to drive the trade away. Geraldton has a natural advantage in that it is over 200 miles from Fremantle, but we find that the trade which should belong to it is being slowly strangled until eventually it will disappear altogether. There will be a port, but there will be no business. But for the shipping of wheat, we would have found our trade almost negligible. The position is of sufficient importance to justify the Government getting on with the job. I do not say "Get on, or get out;" there is no alternative with me; I say "Get on with the work."

The Premier: The water supply is about completed.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The pipes used in connection with the water supply have not been altogether successful inasmuch as the joints have not been satisfactory. I have reason to believe, however, that during the approaching winter, or within a few months, the difficulty will be overcome. I do not know, though, what the financial arrangements will be in connection with the water supply. It should not be necessary for me to bring up these matters in the House because every Minister who goes to Geraldton, or who passes through Geraldton, and even every member of Parliament, is informed of the necessity for harbour accommodation. Every Minister is approached by way of deputation. As a matter of fact, a deputation on this subject is looked upon as the important function whenever a Minister visits Geraldton.

Mr. Teesdale: And the second subject is the water supply.

Mr. WILLCOCK: The water difficulty, I think, has been successfully overcome.

Mr. Teesdale: After 30 years!

Mr. WILLCOCK: So far as the public can judge, there seems to be no desire on the part of the Government to proceed with the pro-

vision of harbour accommodation. There is no sincerity about the Government policy in this regard. I repeat, because the Premier does not appear to be listening, that the Government are not sincere in this respect. I ask the Government to prove that they are sincere.

The Premier: We are making investigations.

Mr. WILLCOCK: There is enough data to enable the Government to go on with the work and the cost of collecting that data would have been sufficient to carry out half the actual work. There is abundant evidence that the work is urgently necessary, and in fact the facilities which have been provided will deteriorate unless further work is carried out. I do not think Geraldton has been treated fairly and it is up to the Premier to make a commencement with this undertaking. Everybody knows that the work is necessary, but they also require to know when it is to be done. I proceed to Geraldton almost every week, and as soon as I get there somebody buttonholes me and asks, "What about the harbour?"

Mr. Money interjected.

Mr. WILLCOCK: At any rate, out of the £40,000 allocated to Bunbury there has been spent £23,000. In regard to Geraldton, if somebody would only say that the work was not necessary, steps could be taken immediately to demonstrate that the work was necessary and should be carried out without delay. I can only conclude that the attitude of the Government is to delude the people into believing that the sum of money appearing on the Estimates is to be spent. That has been our experience in the past, and I do not think it is fair for any Government administering the affairs of the State to follow such a course.

The Premier: Strike it off altogether, then.

Mr. WILLCOCK: That would be a more straightforward course to adopt, because the people have no proof of the sincerity of the Government when an amount like this is put on the Estimates. How are we to know that the money is going to be spent? I hope the Premier, when he replies, will make a definite announcement on the subject.

The Premier: If the tonnage is there, you will get the accommodation.

Mr. WILLCOCK: Up to now, the harbour has been destroyed through lack of facilities. It is easy to strangle a port, but nobody should want to do that. Everyone should have the interests of the State at heart, make up his mind as to the policy to be adopted, then tell the people what was to be done, and then get on with the job.

Mr. MONEY (Bunbury) [4.45]: Every endeavour is being made to gather in taxation, more taxation and yet more taxation. The limit undoubtedly will soon be reached. We are heavily taxed through the Customs. We have Federal and State income taxation, Federal and State land tax, municipal rates and other taxes for drainage, etc. If we can look after those who have to pay and repay these loans, we shall be working in the in-

terests of the State. Instead of reaching out too far in an unfinished way and creating more problems, it would be better to more thoroughly develop the land near our markets and already served by railways. We have the development of the Peel estate; I am informed that this will be payable and will return quickly the expenditure incurred. The indebtedness per head of the population is about £137 and these loan proposals will add another £11 per head of population. We in Western Australia have a record in two particulars—we have the greatest mileage of railway and the biggest debt per head of population.

Hon. P. Collier: Our capital expenditure on railways alone per head of population is much higher than that of any State except Queensland.

Mr. MONEY: And probably many miles of our railways were constructed more cheaply than those of other States.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Undoubtedly.

Mr. MONEY: The member for Geraldton (Mr. Wilcock) has urged the necessity for providing facilities so that producers can ship from the nearest port, but the Government, beyond acknowledging the justice of the proposition and giving pledges from time to time, have achieved very little in this respect. No port in Western Australia, save Fremantle, is fit to discharge the work associated with importing and exporting goods. The railways are being used to haul produce 300 or 400 miles to the port of Fremantle, instead of taking it to the nearest port. If the producers are to create wealth, they must be given facilities at the nearest ports. The handicap of haulage over long distances to the central part is killing industry. The handicap of 12,000 miles to reach the chief markets of the world is quite sufficient, in fact almost too much, to enable us to compete with other producers in other parts of the world. We have recently experienced a glut as regards meat. When I realise the advances that the Argentine has made and the perfection to which stock is there bred for the markets of the world, it makes me almost despair of our ability to compete with that country in the world's markets.

The Premier: Their stock is no better than ours.

Mr. Teesdale: Are you not aware of the commendation given to the Wyndham Meat Works for their product?

Mr. MONEY: But the herds in the Argentine have been brought up to the requirements of the market. We have not reached the same standard, but I hope the facilities afforded stock breeders in the way of providing stud stock and the encouragement given by the Department of Agriculture, may enable us to work up to that pitch of excellence. In the meantime every possible assistance is given to encourage development and every handicap possible to be removed is removed. I cannot allow this occasion to pass without instancing the producers of wealth in the Bridgetown area and referring to the handicaps under which they are labouring. Last year many

members inspected the orchards in that district and expressed delight and wonder at their excellence. Yet despite the bright prospects, the results of last season's exportations were disastrous. Realising what an asset we have in the orchards in the Nelson district, the time should be past for discussing the question of giving the people their natural port rights. The old evils still continue. The Premier was in Bunbury some two months since, and admitted the necessity for providing these facilities. He went so far as to say that if we were going to develop the South-West, we must at the same time develop our ports. It is useless to develop the country without providing the natural port facilities. I hope the Government will make some declaration as to what is to be done. If the money spent on the port of Bunbury had been properly spent, it would have provided ample facilities for the next 50 years. We are confronted with many difficulties, but no real effort seems to be made to overcome them. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) on a previous occasion when referring to the Bunbury harbour works, said, "You will soon be silted up." Our trouble has been largely due to the silting, and there has been no one to insist that the works be constructed outside the silt area. The latest expenditure of £100,000 has been expended on works in the silt area.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is what you told me when I was there.

Mr. MONEY: And this work was done after the difficulty had been pointed out both orally and by written communications. There was no excuse for that huge blunder. That money has gone, and it means endless trouble for the future.

Mr. A. Thomson: You mean that we have not got value for the money.

Mr. MONEY: There is no doubt we have not got value for it.

Mr. A. Thomson: Who is responsible for that?

Hon. P. Collier: The professional men, of course.

Mr. MONEY: Without dealing with individual or departmental responsibilities, we have not received value for that money. If we had received value for it, we would have had facilities sufficient for the next 50 years. I am satisfied there are no engineering difficulties to prevent the construction of a first-class port at Bunbury.

The Premier: You have said that before.

Mr. MONEY: And I shall repeat it a hundred times if nothing is done. It is tedious to have to reiterate.

Mr. A. Thomson: And it is a tedious waste of money.

Mr. MONEY: No one knows better than the Premier that what we require at Bunbury could be provided without incurring undue expenditure. It is time we knew whether the Government intend to treat this matter seriously.

The Premier: I cannot do it in a few days.

Mr. MONEY: Frequent reference has been made to it since 1911. In that year every party promised proper harbour facilities for Bunbury, and what has been done? There are facilities for the export of timber, but unfortunately there is a slump in the timber trade. I am speaking on behalf of the taxpayers, the people who have to provide the money to repay these loans. They are the people who should be considered. In view of the rate at which our indebtedness has been piling up, we must call a halt. We must not create too many troubles to be dealt with in the future. Surely there is something wrong with our small population of 340,000 when the individual indebtedness rises year by year and the individual ability to pay does not increase, or even seems to decrease. The remedy is to have in future not huge illustrative schemes, but consideration for the people who are already settled on our lands.

Mr. HICKMOTT (Pingelly) [5.3]: I agree with the Leader of the Opposition, whose speech was one of which every member should take notice. Ever since I have been a member of this House, I have heard that our interest bill is a cause of great anxiety. Since the Labour Government went out of office, our indebtedness has increased by about 34 millions, irrespective of sinking fund. We heard a great deal about the borrowing and spending of the Labour Government, but the process has become worse since they went out of office. The four millions involved in these Loan Estimates represent a huge expenditure, and every reasonable inquiry should be made before the money is disbursed. A railway representing a very considerable sum has already been authorised here, but has not yet been passed by another place.

Mr. A. Thomson: There is only £10,000 for that railway on these Loan Estimates.

Mr. HICKMOTT: Objection may be taken to the passing of that Railway Bill in another place. The member for Williams-Narrogin (Mr. Johnston) referred to the action of the Premier in stopping the construction of the Dwarda-Narrogin railway. That railway was authorised, and as I think, unfortunately authorised, by the Labour Government. It was authorised without due inquiry. Only one speech was made on the second reading here, and there was only one speech on the Bill in another place, and this latter speech was not very much in favour of the expenditure. There is no means of obtaining traffic for the Dwarda-Narrogin line except it be taken from the Great Southern railway. The line would be a white elephant.

Mr. Johnston: You have never seen the route.

Mr. HICKMOTT: I know all about the route.

Mr. Johnston: You know you have never seen it.

Mr. HICKMOTT: It is a pity the line was ever authorised.

Mr. Johnston: It is a pity you stand for repudiation.

Mr. HICKMOTT: There should be the fullest inquiry before the construction of that line is proceeded with. Every possible caution is necessary, seeing that our interest bill now absorbs the greater part of our revenue. I say nothing about stopping the Jarnadup-Denmark railway, which is for the development of the South-West. A great deal of that railway will run through excellent country, though the country will take longer to become reproductive than land in the wheat belt, for instance. I was somewhat surprised at the remarks of the deputy Leader of the Opposition in criticism of the Country Party. He said the Government had sold themselves body and soul to the Country Party. In my opinion, no Opposition have ever had a fairer deal from a Government than the present Opposition have had from the present Government. Moreover, the Country Party have always supported anything in the interests of the country and tending towards its development. For example, the Esperance Northwards railway was wholeheartedly supported by this party. It is unfortunate that that line was not built 20 years ago. Had that been done, the railway would now be a paying proposition. Never having visited the Esperance district, I do not personally know whether the land is all that it is said to be. But from what I have heard from men who have visited the district, it has large tracts of good land, more particularly along the route of the railway. Had the line been constructed 20 years ago, probably many of the men who sacrificed their lives by working underground in the mines, would now be living. I consider that we should help the goldfields to a cheaper water supply. Men who know the subject tell us that if the price of water was reduced on the goldfields, many low-grade mines now closed down could be worked. That would mean considerable employment, and would be a good thing for the State generally. Probably it would also lead to the development of new fields. Much has been said regarding the expenditure of Government money in the metropolitan area. I have said here previously that I am prepared to see the people of the metropolitan area get the conveniences which are necessary to them. Personally I do not grudge them anything that is necessary to their well-being. According to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, large sums of money have been spent through the influence of any particular Party. We cannot grumble at money being spent through the influence of any particular party, seeing that the expenditure is authorised by the whole House. However, we can complain of the expenditure of large sums of money without the sanction of the House. I trust that before the Jarnadup-Denmark railway is built right through, we shall be more conversant with the conditions and prospects there. I think we might well begin by constructing 20 miles at each end.

Indeed, I do not know that it is absolutely necessary to start at the Denmark end, for I am told that that portion of the railway will run to the coast for a considerable distance; and so there would be other means of getting produce to market. Members should have an opportunity of seeing the country, so that they may know what they are voting for before there is a larger expenditure of loan money on the line. The interest bill is swamping not only the Government, but the State.

Mr. A. Thomson: The Government are all right; they are not swamped.

Mr. HICKMOTT: If our population increases so that our indebtedness per head is materially reduced, that would be a way out of the difficulty. But, as the Leader of the Opposition has said, as our population comes along, so it goes away again, and for the last ten or twelve years we do not seem to have made much progress in point of population.

Hon. M. F. TROY (Mt. Magnet) [5.14]: Like other members, I am concerned about the fact that the Government, apparently in order to put a good complexion on the annual receipts and expenditure, the expenditure particularly, have resorted to the device of spending from loan funds large sums which should properly be a charge against revenue. The people, so far as I can see, are unaware of what is happening. So are members of the House, until they have an opportunity of discovering how money is being expended from loan funds. We may depend upon this, that from now until the general election of next year, the Government will resort to every possible means of spending loan moneys on works where loan moneys should not justly be expended; and this with a view to placating the electors and inducing them to believe that the finances are in a better position than is actually the case.

Mr. A. Thomson: That is a wrong thing to say, surely.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I will prove it as I go along. The monthly accounts prove it. Prior to the last Federal elections the Commonwealth Government borrowed money to make up the expenditure, and robbed the note issue of four millions in order to meet their liabilities.

Mr. Corboy: The people must have been wise to them.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, but not until towards the end of the elections. Had the elections been held in March next, the Nationalist party would have gone down to a greater extent even than they did. Only on the hustings do these things come out, for in the Press there is given but one view. What I am concerned about is that the State Government have expended from loan, money which should have been provided out of revenue. Here we have an item, "Harbours and rivers, improvements to Swan River, reconstruction of pleasure boat houses"—a remarkable work of development!

Mr. Clydesdale: They are those which were burned down.

Hon. M. F. TROY: What a magnificent reproductive work to be built from loan!

Mr. Teesdale: They are let at good rentals.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The hon. member stands for a policy under which money is borrowed to build pleasure boat houses.

Mr. Mann: They are not exclusively pleasure boat houses, for they are used by the ferry boats.

Hon. M. F. TROY: We build pleasure boat houses from loan, while in the country hundreds of pounds worth of stock are destroyed for want of water supply. People are carting water nine and 10 miles, yet the Government can find money for the reconstruction of pleasure boat houses. If the Treasury were over-flowing, this sort of thing might be justified, but when the Treasury is six million pounds to the bad, and when the country is merely entering upon production, and the people are struggling under most adverse conditions, we should not be spending money in this way.

Mr. Mann: We must have ferry boats.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Again, last year loan money was spent on the Bunbury High School. There was a time when this sort of work was built from revenue, but now it all comes out of loan. I have no objection to the building of these works from revenue, but money should not be provided out of loan except for reproductive works. Then we have the Hospital for the Insane.

Mr. Marshall: I hope there will be no reproduction there.

Hon. M. F. TROY: And for the Government Printing Office a new diningroom is to be built from loan money. Is there any necessity for a new diningroom at the Government Printing Office?

Hon. P. Collier: If so, why not build it out of revenue?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Exactly. Plenty of good men are eating their dinners 2,000 feet down mines, in the dirty surroundings where they have been working. Yet the Government can build diningrooms out of loan money.

Mr. Mann: Do you suggest that the men at the Government Printing Office should continue to eat their dinners in the street?

The Minister for Mines: Sitting on the window sills?

Hon. M. F. TROY: Where did the Minister eat his dinner when he was working on the Golden Mile?

The Minister for Mines: Anywhere, but that is no reason why these men should not eat under decent conditions.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The purpose of the Minister's interjection is to suggest to those men that in my opinion they should not have decent diningroom accommodation. I am prepared to give it, but not from loan money while so many others are living under most uncomfortable conditions. Why should the men at the printing office have to eat their

dinners in the street? Employees of private firms are not required to do that.

Mr. McCallum: When at the Government Printing Office I had to eat my dinner on the bench where I had been working. Frequently I ate more glue than bread.

Mr. Marshall: That is what makes you such a stickler.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Apparently it did the hon. member a lot of good. If the men at the Government Printing Office do not enjoy good conditions, I am very much surprised.

Mr. McCallum: I worked there for 13 years, and I know the conditions. The diningroom is long overdue.

Hon. M. F. TROY: So are many other things in this State. In one locality in my electorate the people had to wait 12 months for a water supply.

Mr. McCallum: In Fremantle I have waited for 13 years without getting one.

Hon. M. F. TROY: But the people I refer to have to cart water for 10 miles.

Mr. McCallum: And I have to go down the street to get a bath. I am worse off for water in Fremantle than are any of the people in your electorate.

Hon. M. F. TROY: People in the constituency of the Minister for Agriculture have to cart water 10 miles. I do not object to the provision of these facilities in the city.

Mr. Clydesdale: Then you have a queer way of showing that you do not object.

Hon. M. F. TROY: But I object to it when the country cannot afford it, and when people elsewhere have to make great sacrifices. I notice an amount of money provided for the building of halls for my agricultural friends. I understood it was the policy of the Government to make people build their own halls. Certainly an agricultural hall cannot be called a reproductive work. Any money expended on such a purpose should come from revenue. Moreover, why should the provision of this money be restricted to the building of agricultural halls? Why should not people in other industries be afforded the same facility? I take strong exception to the Government singling out any section of the people for advantages denied to others. I regret to find that the amount provided on the Estimates for mining development is only £45,000, with an additional £10,000 for State batteries. That makes a total of £55,000. When we compare that with the millions provided for agricultural development, we must see that people connected with the mining industry generally have good cause for complaint. Last year £45,000 was provided and only £38,000 spent. For the erection of State batteries £12,000 was provided and only £4,000 spent. There is evidence that we are on the eve of important mining developments in Western Australia. Greater attention has been given to mining development than of recent years, and there are more inquiries for mining properties than has been the case for four or five years. Any good proposition can readily

be floated to-day, for the investor will take more risk than has latterly been the case. If the Government want to give a flip to the industry they must spend more than is provided on the Loan Estimates.

Mr. A. Thomson: They can always excess the vote.

Hon. M. F. TROY: But it is not excessed. The Premier: No reasonable request is refused.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I admit that any requests I have preferred have generally been acceded to. The Government must pursue a definite and active policy, and must be prepared to help those who are spending their own money by contributing funds from those belonging to the State. Water supplies for mining districts come under the control of another Minister, not the Minister for Mines, but one who has no knowledge of mining conditions and rarely comes into contact with mining associations. It is a pity the Mines Water Supply Department is not under the control of the Minister for Mines, as was the case years ago. One Minister should control everything connected with the mining industry. He may be in sympathy with the granting of water supplies to assist the mining industry, but the other Minister I speak of is not concerned in the matter. If one does receive any consideration from the latter Minister it is only obtained after a hard struggle and the lapse of many months. (It is time the Mines Department had charge of all the work connected with the industry. It has officers on the goldfields, and has complete jurisdiction over it in all other directions. The member for North-East Fremantle, with whom I occasionally come into conflict, referred to the poverty of the vote as affecting metropolitan matters. He was not quite fair in his statement that a sum of only \$91,000 is provided.)

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I said £322,000.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The hon. member has not fared badly on these Estimates. The metropolitan districts may have complaints to make, but their disadvantages are not as bad as is the case in the country. People in the back country have built up the metropolitan area, which depends upon them for their prosperity. Unless these people also advance and prosper, the metropolitan areas cannot go ahead. I do not doubt the hon. member's sympathy for people in the country, but he must remember that we who represent country areas know both conditions well. When I hear complaints about the condition of the water supply in Perth, I smile.

Mr. A. Thomson: People in my district already have to cart water.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I have had to get rid of a great deal of my stock because of the lack of water.

The Premier: I have seen people in England carting water.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The people of Perth say they are ready to pay for their own

water supply. The same thing can be said of people in the country. We may spend thousands of pounds on water supplies but the water disappears and the money is gone.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You have no water there.

Hon. M. F. TROY: We are willing to pay the Government to put it there.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Government do not put the water there.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If the Government will lay out a water scheme, and give us the conditions that apply in the metropolitan area, and establish water catchments, we are prepared to pay the cost. If this cost is no greater to us than is the cost of the water supply for Perth, we shall not complain. There was a time in the history of the State when the metropolitan districts received more than all the rest of the State put together.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Not since you have been here.

Hon. M. F. TROY: There was the purchase of the trams.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They have been beneficial to the State.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Then there was the sewerage system and the electric light system.

Mr. Clydesdale: We paid for that.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Millions of pounds were spent on these enterprises. The Government created fish and meat shops and gave the metropolitan area the advantage of them. I have pointed out to Ministers that people in my district have been deprived of certain advantages, and have been told that money cannot be spent down here and up there as well. Metropolitan districts have had a great many advantages.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That applies everywhere.

Hon. M. F. TROY: If the hon. member will go to the larger cities of the Commonwealth, he will not find a sewerage system such as we have here.

Mr. Clydesdale: That is not to say we should not progress.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The metropolitan area has no grievance as far as this Parliament is concerned, because it has had advantages which communities in the older cities do not possess.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: This is the worst Parliament the metropolitan area ever had.

The Premier: We are not near an election.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I do not wait for election time to speak my mind.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I support the remarks of the member for Geraldton concerning the Geraldton harbour. A sum of money has been provided for commencing harbour works, and for further work in locating a quarry for the necessary stone. These words have appeared in the Loan Estimates so often that I do not wonder the hon. member feels that hope deferred maketh the heart sick. Last year the Government were engaged in

locating stone; now they are again investigating this problem.

The Minister for Mines: It is not an easy problem.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I should imagine it was in a country which contains so many ranges of stone.

The Minister for Mines: I am speaking of the harbour scheme.

Hon. M. F. TROY: A few years ago a sum of money was spent in erecting a mole at the harbour.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: "Angwin's folly."

Hon. M. F. TROY: It seems that it will be destroyed in a few years.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It was only a temporary affair.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I think it was intended to provide means for taking stone out to form a breakwater. The money might well have been thrown into the sea. The Government have done something for Bunbury and Albany, but nothing for Geraldton. The people of Geraldton and the Murchison are justified in complaining. Geraldton badly needs a harbour. Parliament should be just as much interested in the development of that part of the State as in the development of the south. One of the greatest disabilities we suffer from in the North is the heavy freight over the railway. This affects both agriculturists and people engaged in mining. The cheapest freight is sea freight. If we had a port at Geraldton and could ship from there, the surrounding districts would receive a great fillip, and we should have advantages we have never yet enjoyed. The one thing that would make for the development of that part of the State is facilities for cheaper transport to the market.

The Minister for Mines: There is no definite sea trade at Geraldton.

Hon. M. F. TROY: A boat calls there occasionally, but what people require is definite means of communication by sea. An occasional visit by a boat is of no use to people in the back country. They want to be sure of being able to get their goods and to despatch them at regular intervals. When that position is brought about, Geraldton will come into its own.

Mr. Money: If possible the imports should go through Geraldton.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Wheat boats go to Geraldton but do not go there voluntarily. They cannot get a full cargo and have to return to Fremantle to top up.

The Minister for Mines: The shipping owners of Australia refused to take any cargo at Albany. When they got the Navigation Act they used it for their own pockets.

Hon. M. F. TROY: A vessel will go to Geraldton to load wheat only because of the policy, not because the owners want to send it there.

Mr. A. THOMSON (Katanning) [5.45]: I approach these Estimates with a considerable amount of diffidence. The sum involved is

about the largest submitted to Parliament since I have been a member. In consequence of this, one finds himself in a very difficult position. It is recognised of course that the migration scheme to which the Premier has pledged the State, is largely bound up in these Estimates, and it is difficult for a private member to approach any particular section of the Estimates and suggest which should be cut out. I have no doubt if I were to suggest that a particular item should be reduced, the Government would reply by attempting to eliminate something affecting my district. Members of this House, therefore, occupy a very peculiar position. The member for North-East Fremantle (Hon. W. C. Angwin) said he could show the way to do it. This was in reply to an interjection by the Premier to the effect that there was not a general election pending, though he was not going to wait for it.

The Premier: No, I said just the reverse.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Then I misunderstood the hon. member.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: I said I would not wait for a general election.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Then I may add, that the hon. member is getting in early. What I take strong exception to is the statement that the Government had to do what the Country Party told them to do.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That is true.

Mr. A. THOMSON: If we analyse the actions of the Government this session we find that it is the Opposition, and not the Country Party, who have had more to do with the policy of the Government.

Mr. McCallum: Oh, for Heaven's sake—

Mr. A. THOMSON: It is time the Government did their part.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Is it not your Government?

Mr. A. THOMSON: I take strong exception to the remarks of the Opposition. There is not a tittle of truth in them. They are made merely for electioneering purposes. I congratulate the Premier to a certain extent on the success of his mission to England, but in my opinion a great deal of it that success was due to the splendid propaganda work effected by the Agent-General, Sir James Connolly.

The Premier: Of course! It was all his.

Mr. A. THOMSON: If hon. members will turn to the various reports which have been submitted by the Agent-General, they will find that he has been advocating a bold system of immigration for some time past. When he was a member of this Chamber, I heard him repeatedly speak in support of an immigration policy, and if I may be permitted I would like to read one or two extracts from his report for the year ended July, 1921. These will show that whilst Western Australia is taking a great deal of credit for being the only State to offer opportunities to our kinsmen overseas who are turning longing eyes towards these Dominions, Sir James Connolly, on page 16 of the printed report, dealt extensively with the subject long before the Premier went to England. The Premier should

not display any tenderness about matters which are public property.

The Premier: I am not.

Mr. A. THOMSON: He should not decline to give the gentleman occupying the position of Agent-General a certain amount of credit for the success of the migration scheme.

The Premier: I do.

Mr. A. THOMSON: It would be absurd for the Premier to say that he went Home and saw and conquered London. Why, the whole of Western Australia does not contain more people than can be found in a decent sized town in England.

Mr. Teesdale: You were there to help.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I will give the hon. member some information regarding the opportunity I was afforded of giving help.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You know that a Premier carries more weight than an Agent general.

Mr. A. THOMSON: No doubt. But the gentleman occupying the position of Agent-General should be given credit for having done something to establish the success of the Premier's visit.

The CHAIRMAN: These Estimates have nothing to do with the Agent-General.

Mr. A. THOMSON: We are dealing with the migration policy, and we find that the bulk of the money is provided on the Loan Estimates. However, I will quote from the Agent-General's report to show the part that he took. He wrote:—

It was practically on my initiation and my suggestion to Lord Milner and the assurances I gave him that Western Australia was capable of undertaking this work of selection and settlement, that the overseas settlement scheme was started. Then again, the ex-officer scheme referred to in this report, which I am now dealing with and from which I anticipate good results, was not only my own idea, but is directly identified with Western Australia as the only State or Dominion which has a special scheme of this kind financed by the Imperial Government. I venture the opinion that it would be highly improbable that Western Australia would get this special consideration if her requirements were put before the Imperial Government through a third party.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Is that the overseas settlement scheme?

Mr. A. THOMSON: This is dealing with Commonwealth immigration and is dated 21st July, 1921.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The agreement was not signed then.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Of course it was not. I merely wish to show that in my opinion we might have done better, and seeing that we are placing before Parliament Loan Estimates to cover an expenditure of over four millions, it might be possible to get better financial results than we have had in the past. The Agent-General goes on to say:—

To my mind nothing matters so much to the Empire as the settlement of the surplus

population of Great Britain on the lands of her Dominions.

I have an object in quoting this, because I propose directly to refer to articles published locally to show the trend of opinion at Home, and that we, as a State, are justified in endeavouring to do our best to get the right material and to take the fullest advantage of the facilities being offered to people our vacant spaces.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: Do you know that the settlement scheme of that time and the settlement scheme of to-day are entirely different?

The Premier: There was no scheme then.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The Agent General goes on to say:—

It was simply the failure during the past half century of the people of Britain to take an Empire view of the distribution of the population. In other words to encourage those who desired to emigrate to go to the Dominions instead of the United States.

The Minister for Mines: That has been said by every Agent General who has represented this State.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Surely the Minister will admit that the gentleman who wrote that paragraph is entitled to his opinion as well as to a certain amount of credit.

The Minister for Mines: To say that that is his own suggestion is utterly absurd.

The CHAIRMAN: What is all this leading up to?

Mr. A. THOMSON: I propose to show later on how we might have got better results. Unfortunately the Premier regards my remarks as personal.

The Premier: I do not object to them in the slightest.

Mr. A. THOMSON: When Sir James Connolly was a member of this House he was very keen on an immigration policy. I refer the Premier to the speeches made by that gentleman.

The Premier: I was here and listened to them.

The Minister for Mines: Do you imagine he was the first to suggest such schemes?

Mr. A. THOMSON: No, nor the last.

The Minister for Mines: Then what is the point you are trying to make?

Mr. A. THOMSON: In an earlier report the Agent General wrote:—

It seemed quite clear to me on my arrival in England that whilst the eyes of both the investor and the land settler were undoubtedly turned to Australia by the huge advertisement obtained by the actions of our brave soldiers, Western Australia on account of her small population could hardly hope to compete with her more populous sister States as a manufacturer and trader, and that her opportunity lay in the great possibility of peopling the vast area of fertile Crown lands she luckily possesses.

He then goes on to deal with migration. He was opposed to this business being handed over to Australia House. That agreement, however, was made in Australia. It might

be interesting to members to learn that, when I was in London, there were officers in the Agent General's department who had no knowledge of Australia. The answer invariably given to inquirers was "Go over to Australia House." We in Western Australia require men with capital as well as men with muscle. Under the system in vogue when I was in London, the officials at Australia House could not recommend Western Australia in preference to the other States, and we seemed to be getting men without capital, while those with capital were going to the Eastern States. If our efforts are to be effective, we must endeavour to get people with capital to come here. We should have in the Agent General's office men au fait with the affairs of the State, so that anyone anxious to migrate might be able to make up his mind regarding Western Australia before going to Australia House. It has been said at Home that as many migrants as are required can be obtained for Australia. Yet in the smaller towns in the north of Scotland, the people have no knowledge of Western Australia. While in the north of Scotland I called at the office of an emigration agent for Australia and Canada. He could give me ample information about Canada, but he had no information about Australia, except that contained in an old pamphlet issued by the Orient Company, which stated that there was plenty of work for house servants and farm labourers. In most parts of Great Britain, Canada is well advertised and has plenty of exhibits. If we are going to advertise this State effectively, the Government should send Home adequate exhibits so that intending migrants may know what we can produce.

Mr. Richardson: What was the Agent General doing to allow that?

Mr. A. THOMSON: If the hon. member refers to the Agent General's report, he will find that that officer has been asking for exhibits to be sent Home in order that he might be able to make a decent display.

Mr. Richardson: But he would not require exhibits in order to be able to give information regarding Australia.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The agency referred to belongs to the shipping company.

The Premier: Yes, and has been dispensed with.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Yes, but these agencies were appointed by the Commonwealth to represent us, and to get migrants for the Commonwealth. I asked the Agent General if he had a list of the agents appointed by Australia House, and he admitted that he had not. It might be said that this matter is entirely out of the hands of the State, but I think Western Australia should make better use of people who go home from Western Australia. Many of them would be prepared to take the platform in the interests of this State.

Hon. P. Collier: We should send more of them Home.

Mr. Pickering: At their own expense?

Mr. A. THOMSON: While the Premier was in London, I wrote to him from Scotland and told him that there were 90 applicants for one vacancy as a ploughman. I suggested that this offered scope for an emigration agent, and proffered my services free, but I did not receive a reply from him.

Hon. P. Collier: The member for Claremont was with him at that time.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I had left Scotland 41 years before, and could speak with a certain amount of authority.

The Premier: I sent a reply.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I did not receive it. I also wrote to the Agent General.

Hon. P. Collier: We were told that you were rendering wonderful assistance.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That was the member for Claremont. I was not in the band. I also offered my services to the Agent General, but received no reply.

The Colonial Secretary: The postal service must have been very bad!

Mr. A. THOMSON: Yes. In order to give credit where credit is due, I was invited to go through the whole of the working of the Migration Department at Australia House, and I concluded that so far as was humanely possible, everything was being done to see that none but the right class of people came to this State. I mentioned that I was a Western Australian first and an Australian afterwards, but Mr. Barnes, who was in charge of the department, considered that we should be Australian first. I considered that we had more to offer than had any other State. It has been said that migration is an Empire policy, and the point I wish to deal with is embodied in the report of the Agent General, who in 1919 wrote—

Wherever our soldiers and sailors may go under the flag, they will not be lost to the Mother Country. In the hour of danger, as the war has amply proved, they will be there to answer the call. Colonel Amery went on to say that the policy of the Overseas Settlement Committee aimed at avoiding the pitfall of indiscriminate. "The last thing we want to do," he said, "is to dump on the dominions settlers who they do not want, or when they do not want them. That is why we are only prepared to find free passages for those of our ex-soldiers and sailors who have been approved by the Dominion authorities, under one of the settlement schemes, or who have definite employment to go to and are otherwise acceptable to the dominions. In any case, there is no necessity for hurry."

Yet Colonel Amery was responsible for the passing of that Bill. In view of the promise made by the Prime Minister, I do not know why we should be paying the fares of immigrants coming to this State. At the Premier's Conference held in Melbourne in May, 1920, the Prime Minister said:—

Now I come to the second paragraph of this proposal. I have said that preference should be given to British ex-service men,

and that the Commonwealth should seek the co-operation of the British Government. Every assistance we can get from the British Government, financial and otherwise, will be most material. Although you are here in behalf of your several States, and my colleagues are here on behalf of the Commonwealth, after all the money has to come out of the pockets of the citizens of Australia. Whether it comes through the channels of the States or of the Commonwealth is not material. The Commonwealth is to assume financial responsibility for overseas transport to Australia. We take full responsibility for that and we pay for it; and I have stated in the last paragraph of the outline of the suggested scheme of immigration:—States to enter into an agreement with the Commonwealth setting out in definite terms what they bind themselves to do in regard to providing (a) land; (b) other forms of assistance, such as depots, sustenance, general care of immigrants, employment on public works.

It would be interesting to know why the promise then made by the Prime Minister has been deviated from. In my opinion the Commonwealth Government have repudiated the agreement made with the State authorities. The Commonwealth and the British Governments are each paying only one-third of the passenger rates. The Home Government should be paying more, and I believe would willingly have paid more.

Sitting suspended from 6.15 to 7.30 p.m.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Before the tea adjournment I was dealing with the Premier's Conference held in Melbourne during May of 1920, and I quoted from the agreement entered into at that conference as to immigration. I referred to the Prime Minister's promise that the Commonwealth would assume responsibility for overseas transport to Australia. I regret that that agreement has not been carried out. The breach is detrimental to Western Australia. I will quote a case in point. On the steamer by which I returned to Western Australia there was an Englishman who had worked in certain British works for 20 years. He had his wife and five children with him. He told me that he had been anxious to come out to Western Australia as it offered him special inducements. Like many people in England, he was in the unfortunate position of seeing his small capital rapidly depleted because of unemployment. He went to Australia House and stated his desire to come out here as an assisted immigrant. Being a married man, he was turned down. He realised that if he stayed long enough in England he would not have the wherewithal to come out to Australia, and so he sold up his home, which brought him about £210 cash. It cost him £150 to come out here; so he landed with £30. I may say he is a very worthy settler in one of our South-Western groups, and I

have no doubt that he and his family will make good. But the £180 which he had to spend in order to get out here would have been of much greater value to this State if it were in our Savings Bank to-day, available to him when assistance from the Government ceases. In this connection there has been repudiation on the part of the Commonwealth Government, and I am almost inclined to add, on the part of the Home Government as well. The Home Government are now paying one-third of the cost of passages, and the Commonwealth a similar proportion. The Premier, when replying, might be good enough to explain to the Chamber why the promise of the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth was not accepted, or, if accepted, why it has not been kept. In my opinion, better advertising results should be achieved by this State. During my visit to the Home land I went through Australia House, where I saw Mr. Shepherd, the secretary, who asked me what I thought of the exhibit in the hall. I told him I thought it was very fine in some respects, but not truly Australian, because Western Australia was not represented in it. He stated that the fault lay not with Australia House but with our people, because we had not sent exhibits. Travelling through Scotland and England one finds that Canada has extensive exhibits in the principal towns. As we have some fine exhibits in our showrooms here, it would be wise for the Government to purchase some of them and send them to Australia House, to be shown there and also in the chief cities of the United Kingdom. That course should educate English migrants to aim at making Western Australia their destination. I must confess to being somewhat disappointed to know that immigration is controlled by the Colonial Secretary. I cast no reflection whatever upon that hon. gentleman, but I hold that land policy and immigration should go hand in hand, and should be administered by one set of officers. I wish to pay a tribute to Mr. Crawcour, our head immigration officer. On the boat by which I returned, there was a considerable number of immigrants. I saw Mr. Crawcour handle them. He was courteous and kind, and gave the immigrants all possible information. His tactfulness, and his years of experience in the work, enable him to give our newcomers much beneficial advice. Still, the departments concerned in immigration should be better co-ordinated than they are to-day. Next I turn to the subject of viticulture. In introducing the Loan Estimates the Premier said that 169,000 tons of raisins were imported into Great Britain every year. He also stated some considerable time ago that it was his intention to settle 10,000 acres for viticulture on the group system. Up to the present moment, however, no viticultural group has materialised.

The Premier: The experts have been engaged on the matter ever since.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I introduced to the Premier a deputation of some fellow pas-

sengers of mine, possessed of a certain amount of capital. The Premier told them that he could put them on a group settlement "to-morrow," which would be the 14th June last. But so far nothing has been done, except that the Government have purchased the Bucklands estate for viticultural purposes. If it takes the Premier's officers five months to decide upon a block of land, how much longer will it take them to decide that the block is ready for viticulture? Before I went to England, a member of this House supplied me with the information that the Government intended to establish group settlements for viticulture, and in entire good faith I passed that information on to others. In my opinion better results would accrue if Western Australia gave more attention to viticulture, and less to agricultural development in the South-West, though I have no wish to decry the latter in any way whatever. There are possibilities, too, in cotton growing. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) may be termed the pioneer of cotton growing in Western Australia. In my opinion the Government should evince some intention to assist in establishing cotton growing here. The following figures have been supplied me with regard to the cost of setting up in the business of viticulture:—

For your information, I submit herewith an estimate of the cost of settling a married immigrant with family on 100-acre holding of virgin land, without capital, viz.:—Cottage (four rooms unlined), £200; water supply, 50; stable, cart-shed, etc., £50; 30 acres clearing, £45; 30 acres ploughing, £15; 20 acres vines, £50; 20 acres trellising, £30; fencing, £50; two horses, £30; two cows, £30; one pig, £5; poultry, £3; harness, £20; spring cart, £25; small plough, £7; small cultivator, £5; tools, £10; fodder, seed and super., £50; six months' sustenance for settler and family, £50; gross total, £745. After deducting clearing £45, and ploughing £15, a similar amount would be required to settle the same immigrant on 100 acres of cleared land. To this as in the other case, would have to be added the cost of the land plus the clearing.

Why has not the Premier done something to get viticultural groups established? The fact that it has taken his experts five months to find a block of land suitable for viticulture says very little for them, when we know that in your district, Mr. Stubbs, and in my district, and also along the Midland railway there are hundreds of acres of land eminently adapted for viticulture. We could put settlers on the land more cheaply than we are doing. In reviewing the Loan Estimates we have to realise that the Government have practically asked Parliament to sanction an expenditure of 10 millions of loan money. I am not aware that the six millions which the Premier has borrowed—

The Premier: We have not borrowed it.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Well, the six millions that have been presented to us with the quali-

feation that after a certain period we have to pay interest on it.

The Premier: We do not take it until we want it.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is so. I do not know whether it is the intention of the Government to ask authorisation for the raising of six millions on top of these Estimates.

The Premier: The Estimates are the authorisation for the year. They include any part of the six millions which may be spent.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Then it is safe to assume that we have accepted the agreement entered into by the Premier, that on the settling of 75,000 immigrants we are to get six millions of money. On top of that we have four millions asked for here. So practically we are being asked to authorise a loan expenditure of 10 millions. When I was at Home I said that, having regard to the fact that the Imperial Government were paying approximately £1,000,000 per week in unemployment doles, I thought the Premier might possibly have made a better bargain than he did.

The Premier: You did not say that when in England.

Mr. A. Thomson: Yes, I did. As a matter of fact it is the Commonwealth, not the Imperial Government, who are advancing us this money. All that the Imperial Government are doing is to pay one-third of the interest for five years and provide passage money for certain ex-service men. We could reasonably have asked the Imperial Government to advance us what money we required. Even members of the Imperial Government are thinking the same to-day. Colonel Amery said they were not attacking vast problems from the viewpoint of settling the unemployment question, but with a view to building up the future strength of the Empire. I maintain that the peopling of Western Australia is just as much a Dominion matter as it is a Western Australian matter. We are only a handful of people occupying a vast continent, and we have the Home land unable to employ its teeming millions. The Government of this State could safely pass legislation which would give private companies authority to open up and develop the North. Colonel Amery, introducing the Overseas Settlement Bill in the House of Commons, said—

The important consideration was not the number of people, but the quantity of goods bought. In 1913 the Dominions had bought goods to the extent of £5 per head, as compared with 5s. per head bought by the rest of Europe. Britain's net export to Europe in 1913 was £32,000,000, and to the rest of the world £98,000,000. He wanted to emphasise the need for the Imperial preference. They had passed the stage when that phase formed part of a keen political issue. A Ministry representing all parties had agreed in 1917 to extend preference to Britain's customers. That shows the trend of feeling at Home. In London in December, 1922, Sir Godfrey

Lagden, Chairman of the Council of the Royal Colonial Institute, said—

The Department of Overseas trade had been conspired against by economy committees, and in the end altogether crushed by the Geddes "axe." From that condition it has been rescued by the vigorous protests of chambers of commerce in Britain and overseas. The cultivation of an overseas trade had always been a neglected science in Britain, but they might rejoice to-day that their statesman recognised that Britain had a very great asset in Empire trade, and the Dominions would give to her preference.

Sir William Joynson Hicks said:—

The Department of Overseas Trade had no high place in the hierarchy of the Government, but it was the one department which might enable the country to recover from unemployment and bad trade. The only possible means of removing unemployment was to foster trade between Britain and the Overseas Dominions. Most of the foreign nations either could not or would not trade. If Britain could recover £300,000,000 worth of her export which she had lost since 1912-13 she could absorb over 90 per cent. of the unemployed. An examination of the figures relating to the Dominions' trade did not always reveal pleasing facts. New Zealand imported thirty years ago 67 per cent. of British goods. The percentage declined steadily until 1900, when it was only 46. In the first half of 1920 it rose to 52. On the other hand, the United States provided thirteen years ago only 5½ per cent. of New Zealand's imports. At the present time the percentage was 16½. The year 1920 was the most fatal year to the Dominions' trade because France and Italy became enormous customers of Britain, which was unable to supply the Dominions. Consequently the United States took advantage of her position. Australia imported thirty years ago 68 per cent. of British goods. In 1920 she imported only 46 per cent. In the present year the percentages had risen to 50. On the other hand, the American proportion had risen from 6 to 22 per cent. in 1920, and at present it was 18 per cent.

He goes on to say—

Canada and Australia were becoming great industrial countries. Twenty years ago only 198,000 persons were employed in industries in Australia. At the present time about 400,000 persons were so employed. Britain must realise that it was useless to ask the Dominions to do what was opposed to their own interests. The greatest possibility of developing Britain's overseas trade lay in the Dominions' lack of population. Britain must relieve herself of her surplus population, and she must offer to the Dominions men, and not refuge. It was useless to ask the Dominions to accept "scum." The Dominions would take the best men, with enough money to

establish themselves. It would be better for Britain if, instead of paying £100,000,000 in unemployment "doles," she devoted £50,000,000 to placing men so that they might become desirable citizens of the Dominions. Everyone who was so placed was a potential consumer of British exports. Britain would thus create her own markets.

That is from a member of the Imperial Cabinet. Under that policy, what an enormous territory we would be able to develop! I commend those words to the consideration of the Premier.

The Premier: Do you think I could turn them into cash?

Mr. A. THOMSON: The British authorities realise that they cannot go on paying an enormous amount of money in unemployment doles. If the Premier were to say to them, "You advance us 10 or 20 millions free of interest, and we will undertake to repay it within a given period. In the meantime we will accept a certain number of your unemployed"—I believe that such a proposal would be agreed to by those in authority at Home. That would lead to the opening up and development of the State.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: They would not do it for their own unemployed people at home.

Mr. A. THOMSON: They would not get any return out of that. If they advanced money to Western Australia free of interest, and the State guaranteed to commence repaying it in a certain period, the Imperial Government would be sure of having their money refunded. At the same time we would be able to take from them large numbers of unemployed who would make desirable citizens here.

Mr. McCallum: Did not the Premier make inquiries along those lines in London?

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Agent General did in 1919.

Mr. McCallum: Did you not suggest this to the Premier when you met him in London?

Mr. A. THOMSON: I met him there, but did not discuss the matter with him. I was only a private member of Parliament, while he was the Premier.

Mr. McCallum: Very modest. You are one of those who are keeping the Government in office.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Members opposite have saved the life of the Government as often as we have. The development of Western Australia is an Empire matter, and one of vital importance to the Home Government. The policy of the present administration is to establish people on the land and encourage primary production. When we see utterances of men like Colonel Amery, who was responsible for the passing of the Overseas Settlement Act, and Sir W. J. Hicks, it is time to ask for preferential treatment along the lines I suggest. A vast quantity of the produce that goes into Great Britain emanates from other coun-

tries, some of them recently enemy countries. We should fall in with the suggestions made by statesmen at Home, and do our best to make this land settlement scheme a Dominions scheme and not one for the responsibility of the State alone. The Government should make some effort to procure men with capital in addition to those who have to be assisted, and enable them to take part in the group settlement scheme.

The Premier: They may do so.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The Premier told some people with capital to put their money in the Savings Bank, and that the Government would supply everything.

The Premier: Don't talk rubbish.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That is happening every day. I heard the Premier make that remark.

The Premier: Not at all.

Mr. A. THOMSON: We should encourage men with capital to take part in the group settlement scheme and pay their own way. This would save the State considerable expenditure. I hope the Premier in his reply—

The Premier: I will not reply to the rubbish you are talking.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Other members are just as capable as the Premier of viewing the financial position and the outlook of the State, and have just as much confidence in Western Australia as he has. I am not responsible to the Premier, but to my electors, and when I consider it my duty to criticise the Government I will do so. I should like to know what has been done about viticulture group settlements. Relying upon the promise made by the Premier five months ago—

The Premier: A statement.

Mr. A. THOMSON: The Premier said "If you bring your wife and children off the boat I will put you on a viticulture group settlement to-morrow." That statement was made in his office. I, therefore, concluded that side by side with the progressive land policy in the South-West we should also have viticulture group settlement schemes.

The Premier: The man you refer to did not apply for viticulture group settlement.

Mr. A. THOMSON: When he went to your office he was told that there was no land available for viticulture. Will the Premier say that he is establishing viticulture group settlements?

The Premier: We have soldier settlements in that direction.

Mr. A. THOMSON: Soldiers!

The Premier: They are good men whatever you may think of them.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I am not as soft as the Premier thinks. I made no reflection upon soldiers.

Mr. McCallum: Why are you criticising the Government?

Mr. A. THOMSON: Because they are vice it.

Mr. McCallum: It is very unkind of you.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I should like to see groups established along the lines of the groups in Victoria. I have here a pamphlet called "Australian Farms Limited."

The Premier: That is a private company.

Mr. A. THOMSON: There is no reason why the Government should not follow its example.

The Premier: We are doing more.

Mr. Mann: Do you not think you would do better by an interview than by such criticisms here? You will not accomplish anything.

Mr. A. THOMSON: I have discussed these things with the Premier and his officers.

Mr. McCallum: You should have saved all this for caucus.

Mr. A. THOMSON: That does not meet. The private company has secured the recognition of the Overseas Settlement Scheme. Men with capital are being sent out to Victoria. They are prepared to work under certain conditions and put their money into the venture. Why cannot we do something on the same lines in Western Australia? Why should the State have to find money with which to finance all these people? We should, if possible, secure the advantage of inducing people with capital to settle on our lands. I trust the Premier will do me the honour of replying to one or two of the questions I have asked. We give the Government a blank cheque to spend about four millions of money. For agricultural group settlement alone there was a sum of £452,000 set down on the Estimates, and there are other amounts which run into huge figures. The information given to us is, generally speaking, of a meagre nature. I hope the money will be well spent.

The Minister for Works: Have you any doubt about it?

Mr. A. THOMSON: I have very grave doubts concerning portion of the expenditure. A large sum has been spent under our group settlement scheme that will not be returned. Large sums have also been wasted in the settlement of our soldiers. The land has cost more than it should have done. I regret we have not the report of the select committee dealing with the Soldier Settlement Scheme, more particularly as that appertains to the south-west. To oppose the Estimates would be useless, and if I move for a reduction I would probably be the one to suffer.

Mr. McCALLUM (South Fremantle) [8.12]: It is surprising to find how parochial we all become when discussing the expenditure of public funds. Notwithstanding the fact that for many years this State has put millions of borrowed money into the Wheat Belt, representatives of the agricultural areas are complaining because money is being spent in other parts of the State.

Mr. A. Thomson: I was not one of those.

Mr. McCALLUM: The previous speakers have complained because the expenditure is

now being concentrated in one portion of Western Australia. Last year more public money was advanced for the wheat areas than for the South-West. Because the South-West is now securing some assistance, and the wheat belt is not getting the whole of the money, complaints are being made. The wheat belt has had such a monopoly of public expenditure for a number of years that people interested in that area seem to think that no other part of the State requires attention. I believe that the expenditure in the South-West will show a good return, and will repay the outlay by the benefits that will accrue to the State.

Mr. Harrison: If you get the same results as from the Wheat Belt, you will do very well.

Mr. McCALLUM: I have seen the finest dairying country in Australia, and the swamp lands on the Peel estate are better than anything except Warrnambool and Mount Gambier. Beyond the Folley there are many thousands of acres which are very similar to the Darling Downs country. Some of the swamp land on the Peel estate, which recently had as much as four feet of water on it, is now just as good as Mandogelup. The other swamps on the estate are all of very similar soil. There is nothing superior to that land in the Commonwealth. The high lands on the Peel estate are not equal to the swamp lands, but the latter, I repeat, are equal to anything that can be found in the Commonwealth. I saw some swamp land there which, after being drained, produced nine tons of potatoes to the acre in the year in which the draining was done. The estate contains about 35,000 or 40,000 acres of swamp land. Seeing the summer crops now being grown on land which up to February of last year carried four feet of water, one is astounded at the splendid productiveness of the soil.

Mr. A. Thomson: Is there a market for the produce when it is grown?

Mr. McCALLUM: I hope the settlers on the Peel estate do not intend to go in for market gardening. I trust that they intend to turn their lands into dairying propositions. Unquestionably for a good many years to come Western Australia will afford an ample market for all the dairy products that can be produced here. We know that this State is annually sending East about £2,000,000 for dairy produce. Therefore it will be a long time before the Peel estate and other similar lands overtake our local requirements in the way of dairy products, and have to look for a market overseas. Market gardening is already overdone. In my opinion the work on the Peel estate has been carried out fairly cheaply. Certainly it has been carried out on a scale never before attempted in Western Australia. There is now a stretch of about five miles on the estate which is just a moving mass of horses and scoops—teams and men making outlets to conduct the water to Peel Inlet. It is really a sight to see the hundreds of horses and scores of men—a moving mass

of horse flesh and humanity. The estate is well worth a visit. Everything is being done in a very systematic manner.

The Minister for Agriculture: It would be better if done mechanically.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes. I understand that the mechanical appliances will arrive in a couple of months. It has been stated that a proposition has been put up for the draining of an area on the Fremantle side of the Peel estate at 1s. 9d. or 1s. 10d. The highest cost on the Peel estate has been 1s. 6d., and the steam navy has reduced that cost to about 8d. With drag excavators, it is estimated, the cost will be reduced to 5d. or 6d. There is a tremendous saving. The sooner the machinery is on the estate, the better it will be for Western Australia.

The Minister for Agriculture: That will make the whole of the south-western lands practicable.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes; and the drag on the settler will be lessened. I trust that those hon. members who have not seen the operations on the Peel estate will take an early opportunity of doing so. They will see that the money has been well laid out, and that the men are most enthusiastic on the job they have undertaken. I regret very much that these Loan Estimates do not show a larger amount for water supply. Actually, about £10,000 less is provided for this year than was spent last year. Therefore we shall be in a worse position this year than we were in last year. One member has complained of having had to truck his stock away from his station, because he could not provide water for them there. He contends that the metropolitan area should not ask for additional expenditure on water supply because he cannot get water for his stock in the country. I do not know what he would do with his stock if he had them in Fremantle. At my home during many hours of the day one cannot give a canary a drink. No one living where I live could possibly keep any stock.

The Minister for Works: You had better get some new pipes put down.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is for the Water Supply Department to attend to.

The Minister for Works: No.

Mr. McCALLUM: The pipes at my place are quite all right. If there is any fault with the pipes, it is in the department's pipes.

The Minister for Works: That is not the advice we have.

Mr. McCALLUM: The Minister must be advised wrongly, seeing that the department have never looked at the pipes at my place. A Fremantle hospital which, as I previously stated, had been for a day without water, has since been without water for a period of 4½ days. A school close by my house, I am advised, is without any water at all for several hours a day.

The Minister for Works: Those statements are mostly exaggerated.

Mr. McCALLUM: I speak with authority as far as my own home is concerned. The

mayor of Fremantle will tell the House how often he has been worried about the water supply. My own house is being rung up at all hours of the day and night with complaints about the water supply. There is not a meeting of the Fremantle Municipal Council at which some ratepayer does not complain about the water. Apart from the aspect of quantity, the quality is far below what human beings should be expected to use. Why cannot we get an adequate and good supply of water? We are prepared to pay for it. We do pay for it. Cannot the Government obtain the money to give us a proper supply? I hope that the matter of water supply will not be allowed to pass at the very much reduced sum shown on these Loan Estimates. I trust that a better effort will be made to get a decent supply for the metropolitan area. It is a very poor advertisement for this State when people coming here find themselves restricted as regards the use of water in the metropolitan area.

The Minister for Works: Where are they restricted in the use of water? There is no restriction by the department at all. The people receive all the water they can get through their pipes.

Mr. McCALLUM: But the water is not in the pipes.

The Minister for Works: It is easy to make assertions.

Mr. McCALLUM: I have to go down the street in the morning to get a bath. I might as well dwell in a Siberian desert.

The Minister for Works: We go to expense in order to supply you with water, but your pipes are choked up.

Mr. McCALLUM: That is not the case at my home. If the complaints were isolated, there might be some force in the Minister's assertion; but the whole district is complaining. Every sort of excuse and explanation is given by the department. Once we were told that a shortage was due to a very much larger quantity of water than usual having been used on a particular day. Later, the explanation given was that a six-inch main had burst. There were two conflicting explanations.

The Minister for Works: Put your own house in order, and you will be all right.

Mr. McCALLUM: My house is in order. If the Minister would put his scheme in order, there would be no complaints.

The Minister for Works: Your pipes are corroded.

Mr. McCALLUM: The pipes in the public thoroughfares are corroded. The departmental officers have not examined the pipes in my home.

The Minister for Works: That is all you know. They may have done so.

Mr. McCALLUM: They could not come round and do that without somebody seeing them. But what explanation has the Minister with regard to leaving a hospital without water for over four days, and for leaving a school without water for hours on end daily?

The Minister for Works: If I am correctly advised, those statements are not accurate.

Mr. McCALLUM: I say they are accurate. The Minister for Works: All right; that is your assertion.

Mr. McCALLUM: If the Minister is informed that statements made are not correct, he is content to accept that information. However, the departmental officers give all sorts of explanations. There are scores of houses in the Fremantle district, right through White Gum Valley and to the top of Beaconsfield, where for hours on end the people cannot get any water at all. It is only when the demand in the flat portion of the district is very small, that those people can get a supply.

Mr. Harrison: In the country districts the people are carting water.

Hon. P. Collier: What an argument that is for claiming that people should have no water anywhere!

Mr. McCALLUM: Every district in the country areas has its own water supply.

Hon. P. Collier: No water at Doodlakine, and therefore no water anywhere!

Mr. McCALLUM: When Country members want all the money expended in the rural districts, it is time to put up an argument why the metropolitan area should be furnished with a better water supply than it has to-day. If we allow the present position to go unchallenged, the Government will assume that we are satisfied and there will be no improvement whatever.

The Minister for Works: If the money were provided the department could supply the water.

Mr. McCALLUM: Well these Estimates are the place where the money ought to be provided; instead of which the item has been cut down by £10,000 since last year.

The Minister for Agriculture: You don't know what is going to be done for Fremantle.

Mr. McCALLUM: I have not much faith in what will be done for Fremantle while the present Government remain in power.

The Minister for Works: A good deal has been done for you already.

Mr. McCALLUM: I am not aware of it.

The Minister for Works: Come down to my office and see the plans of what was done a few years ago.

Mr. McCALLUM: Yes, one pipe was laid down! We have in course of construction in Fremantle to-day buildings worth approximately £200,000. Surely that alone is sufficient justification for the provision of a decent water supply, not only for domestic purposes, but for fire fighting. We on this side should issue to the Minister for Works the advice issued by some departmental officers to one of his colleagues on a memorable occasion, namely that he should keep a stiff upper lip when demanding money for the department.

The Minister for Works: I thought I had too stiff an upper lip.

Mr. McCALLUM: You have not fared very well in these Estimates. However, I hope you will continue battling until the Premier increases the vote.

Mr. RICHARDSON (Subiaco) [3.32]: I am disappointed with some of the utterances from the cross benches. The member for North-East Fremantle has dissected the figures before us, with the result that we find that of something over four millions on the Estimates all the provision made for the metropolitan area is £340,000.

Mr. Money: But you will profit from some of the others.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The hon. member should realise that the people living in the metropolitan area are assisting to build up the State just as much as are those in Bunbury, and therefore we are entitled to the same facilities as are given to other sections of the community.

Mr. Johnston: You have them all.

Mr. RICHARDSON: We have not. In comparison with the population, we have not in the metropolitan area one-tenth of the facilities provided in country districts.

Mr. Clydesdale: We should keep going till we get them.

Mr. RICHARDSON: I agree with that. Year after year metropolitan members are told that there is under consideration a comprehensive scheme of water supply, sewerage and drainage for the metropolitan area. The Loan Estimates contain not one word respecting that comprehensive scheme. There are on the Estimates certain figures relating to those particular activities but, as the member for South Fremantle has pointed out, nothing adequate is provided. My electorate, perhaps, is just as well off in point of water supply as any other metropolitan electorate, yet this year we are short of water. I sympathise with those other electorates who have been short for the past three or four years.

Mr. Money: Why do you not agitate that the people of the metropolitan area should control their own water supply?

Mr. RICHARDSON: I advocated it year in and year out, even before I came into Parliament. I hope that some day it will be brought about. In the meantime the Government are not prepared to hand over the obligation. They prefer to keep the power, and until we can get behind that power apparently we are not to expect an adequate water supply. Whenever we agitate for something, Country Party members demand that we should take the whole risk.

Mr. Harrison: Some of them.

Mr. RICHARDSON: In this instance we are prepared to take that risk.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: We are taking it now.

Mr. RICHARDSON: That is so. There is nothing provided for the metropolitan area which is not of a reproductive nature. It is nearly time metropolitan members formed a party of their own in this House. The Country Party members would not then exercise the power they do to-day.

Mr. Latham: It would increase our power.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Apart from what has been spent already, I understand there are

loan funds of £45,000 or £50,000 to be spent on tramway extensions. For many years little or no extension has been made to our tramway system, notwithstanding that the population of the metropolitan area has practically doubled within the last few years. It is the function of the Government to give those people proper facilities for going to and coming from their work.

Mr. Money: People will insist upon living where the best facilities are provided.

Mr. RICHARDSON: That is correct. It explains the congestion in Perth and the suburbs.

The Minister for Agriculture: Although there is no work for them to do here.

Mr. RICHARDSON: But there is, although of course there is also unemployment. If the Government would put in hand some of these water supplies, sewerage and tramway works, there would be no unemployment.

The Minister for Agriculture: There is none to-day.

Mr. RICHARDSON: If the hon. member were a city member, he would know that there is.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Ten men came to Parliament House kitchen to-day for meals.

Mr. RICHARDSON: Every day 10 or 12 men come to me seeking employment, or at least asking for references which may help them to obtain employment.

Mr. Latham: Yet they will not go outback. They are too tired.

Mr. RICHARDSON: The hon. member says they are too tired to go outback, but it must be realised that the hon. member is too tired to stay outback. On the subject of tramway extensions, it would be easy for me to bring before the Committee the requirements of my own district. I do not intend to do that. Let us consider rather the whole of the metropolitan area. Whichever way one travels, there is a demand for tramway extensions. I am disappointed that a larger sum has not been placed on the Estimates for those extensions. Deputation after deputation has waited on the Minister and been promised extensions. Also a Royal Commission has recommended certain extensions, notwithstanding which nothing has been done. Certainly £50,000 is now provided; perhaps sufficient to build 4½ miles of tramway extensions. Already there is necessity for at least 30 or 35 miles of extensions in the metropolitan area. I hope the Premier and the Minister for Railways will see the necessity for putting in hand those extensions at a very early date.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON (Moore) [8.43]: In these Estimates I see for surveys nothing but some small amounts.

The Premier: They are provided for in general items.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: I do not want any general items, nor do I want generosity.

All that I want is justice for those I represent. Much has been said about the settlement of various parts of the State, but no provision is made for the district I represent.

The Minister for Agriculture: Blessed is he who expects nothing.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: There is work for immigrants in my part of the State. We cannot get the requisite labour there. Let me quote an instance of the treatment meted out to some immigrants which members will agree is disgraceful. Three men were sent up to a two-man job at Watheroo. Two of them were single men and they were chosen. It is regrettable that the employer did not take the humane view of giving employment to the man who had a wife and child to support. The man and woman travelled from Watheroo to Coomerdale and as far as Moora, whence the branch of the Returned Soldiers League had to pay their fares to Perth. There is something wrong with a system which permits of this sort of thing occurring. We have heard much about developing the country. We want development, but one portion of the State should not be developed at the expense of another. The people in the North require as much consideration as those in the South. In the North we have to travel considerable distances for water. At Moora yesterday the temperature was 108.6 and teams, after covering 22 miles with their loads, were unable to get a drink of water. I cannot for the life of me understand why people in the metropolitan area should grudge us water supplies for the country.

Hon. P. Collier: They do not say you should not have water supplies. They merely say they should have one, and they leave you to say that you should have one. There should be an adequate supply in every part of the State.

The Minister for Works: Do you want free water for them?

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: No, but we do want assistance. The country is useless unless water supplies are provided. Let members imagine the sufferings of horses unable to obtain a drink after having hauled their loads for 22 miles. Members have referred to the need for introducing only suitable immigrants. As one who travelled over a large portion of England, Scotland, and Wales, I know the class of immigrant we want out here. Immigrants should be medically examined for fitness to go on the land. We do not want men from the cities. There is plenty of work for them in England to build up the industries there. We want rural men, and I think rural men could be obtained for this State. If we could get a large number of such men, we could reasonably hope to make this State what it should be. Some time ago we read a good deal in the Press about ex-army officers settling in Victoria. Not many of them have come here: Why not? Is Western Australia not sufficiently attractive for them? I have had my

share of war and am not a militarist; I am a man of peace, but I desire to see the right class of men brought here to populate this country. Things are developing very rapidly. If we could get some of the men to become citizens here, our chance of building up a nation in this portion of the Commonwealth would be greatly enhanced. The member for Roebourne (Mr. Teesdale) was good enough to give me some cotton seed which has been distributed throughout my district. Some of it will be supplied to every school in the district in order to develop in the children an appreciation of the possibilities of this industry. Some day it might be necessary for us to make our own gun-cotton. Some months ago I asked the Premier a question regarding the Piawaning railway, and the reply was that rails were not then available. I suppose if I repeated the question to-day, a similar reply would be given. I think the Premier now has a supply of rails, and I hope it will not be necessary to again question him regarding this line. During this session I brought before the House a motion expressing the opinion that the Government should purchase the Midland railway concession. This motion has been on the paper for quite a long time.

Mr. O'Loughlen: I do not think it will get off the Notice Paper.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: Neither do I.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The blue pencil will be put through it in three weeks' time.

The Premier: In less than that.

Mr. O'Loughlen: It will be a slaughtered innocent.

Mr. Pickering: Bring it up again next session.

Mr. O'Loughlen: Like Billy Hughes, I would lay you five to one.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: I must again refer to the disabilities under which my constituents labour. They are cut off from every convenience. In very few instances do they receive any assistance whatever from the Government.

Mr. Pickering: You are in alien territory.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: We are simply not on the map.

Mr. Pickering: You are worse off than the North-West.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: We are like the navy's dog—we are on our own.

Mr. O'Loughlen: You are looking pretty well on it.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: I enter an emphatic protest against the treatment meted out to the struggling farmer in my district, who is not getting the privileges that a farmer in any other portion of the State enjoys. We are not parochial.

Mr. O'Loughlen: The world is your country and humanity your religion.

Lieut.-Colonel DENTON: But we do want justice. We do not get the aid of the Agricultural Bank. We must be placed on an equal footing with those in other

parts of the State, so that they may enjoy the advantages offered by an institution towards which they pay their quota of rates and taxes. Much has been said this session regarding the need for developing the dairy industry. Along the lakes from Wanneroo to Gingin Brook and from Gingin to Moora is a second Bacchus Marsh. Money is required to develop it, and when developed it could supply all the dairy produce required in the State. We have nothing to say in opposition to the development of the South-West, but the Government should give some attention to developing other parts of the State. The land there can be cleared very cheaply. The Government should not treat us as aliens, but make us part of the State. We do not ask for things we do not want, but seldom indeed are any of our requests granted. If we could get some assistance, we should be better able to produce those things which our portion of the country is so capable of producing.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam—in reply) [9.0]: Few members indeed have questioned the wisdom of spending four millions of money.

Mr. Latham: We ought to have more than that.

The PREMIER: If I could introduce Loan Estimates that would satisfy the needs of every member, I should have to provide a sum a great deal in excess of that. When speaking of arrivals and departures we talk as though we were losing population. That is not the case. We are gaining to the extent of all that we have taken in. The census of 1911 disclosed a shortage of 13,000 people, but they had not left the State. We know of all the people who went out. They could only have gone by land or sea, and could not get away without our having a record of them. In the taking of the census in 1921 another 5,000 people were missed. They were in the State. They were not written off in either 1911 or 1921, but the census authorities write them off at intervals. We will say that 900 people came into the State. The Commonwealth authorities would write off 1,000, and it would therefore appear that we had lost population. In a word, the census disclosed a shortage of 18,000 people during the last 11 years, but that was not the case. The shortage should never have been written off against us. It frequently happens that people are missed when the census is taken. During the last three years we also deported 1,500 people. This would make some difference to our population.

Mr. Willecock: Deported them?

The PREMIER: Yes, after the war.

Mr. Willecock: It was kept very quiet.

The PREMIER: They were probably sent away from the Eastern States, although they were still on our lists. If people have gone from Western Australia, whence have they gone? Of course there are no vacant houses in the North-East Fremantle electorate. There

are no empty houses anywhere in the metropolitan area, and we have built thousands of new ones. We have put nearly 1,000 married men on to group settlements. Every one of these families has left a house either here or on the goldfields. Last year we put more than 1,000 people on to Crown lands. We have built many houses in country towns, and these are all occupied. There are more people in the country towns than before and also more in Perth. There are more people on the land than before. We have put thousands of people on the land during the last three years. In group settlements alone we have placed 3,500 people. Every time there has been a stoppage of work on the goldfields we have brought people down to the coast, and I have sent officers up there in an endeavour to keep them in the State.

Mr. Chesson: Some of them went to the Eastern States.

The PREMIER: No doubt. There has been a considerable increase of population in the metropolitan area. Apart from the men who are at work about the country there are thousands who have become farmers. Everyone is at work. Many people have been transferred from the timber industry into employment on road construction. Men have also come from the goldfields to work on farms and on roads. Of course we are not losing population. I do not think there are many people leaving the goldfields to-day. It is very difficult to prove that people are not leaving the State, when the census discloses a shortage. It is unreasonable to suppose that in 10 years 5,000 people could book their passages from Western Australia without any record of the fact being kept. It is said in the "Australian" that a million people have left Canada. Possibly some of them have gone to America, for Canada is getting people all the time. It is disturbing for the public to hear that, although we are bringing in large numbers of people, we are still losing population.

Mr. Willcock: We are not accounting for the natural increase.

The PREMIER: We are not losing people. Something was said about the public debt per head of the population. If we compared our indebtedness with that of Victoria the comparison would not be worth the paper it was written on. In this State we borrow money for all purposes. It all becomes part of the public debt. In Victoria all the services of the metropolitan area are paid for by boards or municipalities. This can also be said of most of the other States. In Western Australia we borrow money for the construction of water schemes, the purchase of trams and other works in the metropolitan area. We also borrow large sums which we lend to other people for the development of the State. Of our public debt close on 13 million pounds must have been borrowed and lent to others.

Mr. Willcock: We have assets for most of that.

The PREMIER: Yes. People who have borrowed the money are paying interest upon it.

Mr. Willcock: We have assets for most than a third of our indebtedness.

The PREMIER: Yes, nearly half of our net indebtedness. We cannot make comparisons in that way. Of the 10 million pounds which have been borrowed in recent years, six millions have been loaned to other people who are paying interest upon it and using it for the work of development. It is not a charge against the taxpayer. The Peel estate will not be a charge against the people of the State. They will have nothing to pay upon that. The land is very valuable, and will represent exceedingly cheap land to those who are fortunate enough to get it. They will not be charged more than two-thirds of its value, which will include the cost of developing the estate. The people of Western Australia will get all the advantage of the settlement of 700 or 800 people there without having to contribute anything towards it. The same thing will apply in the case of other estates that are drained and opened up. We shall have to write up against our public debt the cost of doing this work, but it will not represent a charge upon the State. Everyone who has seen the Peel estate recognises that we have done the right thing there. We will do the same thing elsewhere.

Mr. Mann: Are you going to readjust the prices of the soldiers' land?

The PREMIER: Some portion of it has already been readjusted. Between the Peel estate and Bunbury there are opportunities for settlements of the same kind. Between those two places there is a long strip of country upon which thousands of people can be settled to the advantage of the taxpayers but without any cost to them. The costs will be charged to those who take it up.

Mr. Willcock: Will the land rents be paid into revenue or into loan funds?

The PREMIER: Any recoup of expenditure from loan goes back into loan. There is a great deal that must be done. Our financial position is due to the fact that we have not enough trade for our railways and harbours. We can only overcome this difficulty by increasing our population, and developing our land and industries generally. If we could only arrange for the settlement and development of all the vacant land in the Kimberleys, and the further development of those already held, there would be enough stock to keep the Wyndham Meat Works going and to give them a chance of paying their way. It would be the wise and proper thing to do. The country there must be developed. We shall lose the best part of £100,000 on the Wyndham Meat Works unless we can provide them with sufficient stock to keep them going full time. Money is not so easily obtained for the development of new pastoral holdings or new cattle holdings as one would think. There is always a

difficulty in financing a new territory. We can only get over that by inducing people with money to take up land there. The only alternative is to settle the country ourselves and spend a large sum of money there. There is no danger in spending money for the development of the country, especially when this means further revenue for our public utilities such as our railways, harbours, etc. The member for Katanning had a good deal to say. How easy it is to say we should have done better. Only an exceedingly simple man, or one who is something worse, ever says that sort of thing. It is so easy and so deadly stupid to say such things that one wonders that men can descend to that kind of criticism. Of course, better might have been done, but I can do no better. No man ever suggested as much to me before I went to the old land. It was not suggested I should do even as well. The member for Katanning met me in London, but did not suggest I should do something more; not he. I could do no better. I did my best for this country when I was at Home. I had considerable trouble in getting so much. The Old Country is heavily taxed now, and is not inclined to tax itself for the development of the Dominions. There may come a time when Britain will have to get more of her people away, when she would find it much more economical to take her people to the food than continually to take the food to the people. I do not know that the criticism of the member for Katanning is worthy of much consideration. Obviously, the criticism was not made because of any conviction that the arguments were sound, or that the criticism was necessary for the purpose of setting things straight here. It was made simply from a desire to criticise the settlement scheme. I do not know exactly what the hon. member did in London, and I do not know why he has waited so long to say so much about the work that was done while I was at Home. I believe there were one or two things he asked me to reply to, but he said so much that I have not the salient points present to my mind. Perhaps he will mention them again at some subsequent period, and then I can give them my consideration. I do remember his saying something about vine growing. I have told the House that the viticultural industry is suited for Western Australia, and that when we get the people to go in for viticulture we will set that industry going too. Some of the money on these Loan Estimates can be devoted to that purpose. It has been said that the amount of money proposed to be expended in the metropolitan area is altogether too small. Let me remind hon. members that we said long ago in this House that there should be no further growth of Perth until the country districts had been more fully developed. Of course a building boom has started here, and Perth is growing; but that growth is quite natural. I suppose there is no city of 150,000 inhabitants in the British

Empire that has so few people as Perth has making things to sell.

Mr. Clydesdale: Eastern States opposition has a great deal to do with that.

The PREMIER: The growth of Perth is a natural growth. The people of Western Australia are prosperous, and the requirements of the people of Western Australia have built up the city of Perth. But there are big stores in Perth which have never stocked a thing or sold a thing made in Western Australia. That is because the things are not made here for them to stock and sell. If Perth, not being a manufacturing centre, is to be maintained, it must be maintained by the farmer, the pastoralist, the miner, and the timber worker. If there is a penny on these Estimates that is not calculated to do something for Perth eventually, I should be very surprised indeed. Most of the money on these Loan Estimates is destined to encourage the development of agriculture. Even if there is not much directly for Perth on the Estimates, members representing the metropolitan area will understand that that will prove all the better for Perth in the long run. I hope members will not set up demands for roads and churches and halls and—

Mr. Hughes: Did you ever spend any money in East Perth since you became Premier?

[Mr. Munsie took the Chair.]

The PREMIER: I think I have killed a few mosquitoes there. The Government have done a good deal for East Perth. We have made East Perth possible.

Mr. Teesdale: There is such a thing as a power house at East Perth.

The PREMIER: We realise our responsibilities. If we have a tramway system, we must extend it bit by bit. I do not know whether ours is the best tramway system in the world, because I never travel in the trams.

Mr. Hughes: You ought to have a ride in the trams; it would be an education for you.

The PREMIER: No doubt if I lived in a suburb of Perth, I would ride in the trams. We are facing our responsibilities with regard to the city. I know that the water trouble in Perth is a real one. There ought to be a trust dealing with the water question in Perth. The people of Perth are quite able to manage their own affairs, and probably they would deal with the water problem much more effectually through a water trust. I am very pleased with the reception which these Estimates have had at the hands of hon. members. It is very nice to know that members approve of the Government's proposals and also to know that members want some expenditure. It is only when people do want expenditure that progress is made. We can square the finances only by increased production and active development. The other day the mayor of Perth told the Premier of Victoria that Victoria is a very

fortunate place. No doubt it is. Victoria levies toll on the whole of the people of Australia. Years ago, under high protection and with low wages Victoria established its industries.

Hon. M. F. Troy: And with cheap money.

The PREMIER: The people of Victoria are very enterprising. I am not jealous of Victoria at all. I am very proud of Victoria. I can quite understand that the mayor of Perth, finding himself a Victorian surrounded by Victorians, was a little carried away. The strength of Victoria's position is due to the fact of her having levied and now levying toll on the other States, and particularly this State, by the supply of dairy products and manufactured goods generally for the last 30 years.

Hon. P. Collier: Look what the outbreak of the Western Australian goldfields meant for Victoria!

The PREMIER: Yes. In 1892 there were a great many men out of work in Victoria, and that State very cleverly sent them over to Western Australia to work our gold mines.

Mr. Chesson: That was a very good thing for Western Australia.

The PREMIER: A very good thing indeed.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Those men made Western Australia.

The Minister for Agriculture: Western Australia has been a good country to them.

The PREMIER: If Victoria has any more men to send, we will take them. However, upon the outbreak of our goldfields those men came over here, and everything they needed in the shape of food came to them from their own country and the money went back, and similarly with manufactured goods. Victoria has levied toll on Western Australia to a very considerable extent during all these years.

Mr. Pickering: Still, Victoria gave us some good settlers.

The PREMIER: It was not Victoria that was at fault in the matter. The fault lay with this country in allowing the thing to happen. We should have developed our lands sooner. If Western Australia had supplied all the food that was consumed on her goldfields, we should now be a very wealthy community.

Hon. M. F. Troy: Let us open up the goldfields again.

The PREMIER: Yes. Victoria has always been particularly enterprising. When Victoria started on butter production its annual output of butter was worth about £60,000. In three years the production had increased to £570,000. There are people in this State who would faint if they were told that because Victoria had increased her butter production nine-fold in three years, we should do the same here. They would not sleep for a month. Victoria did the work and reaped the reward, and more power to her! We are going to do the work now, and we shall reap the reward. "Too late" is an awful cry. Owing to the war Victoria at present has an unfunded deficit of £1,200,000.

Last year Victoria had a small deficit, though the mayor of Perth did not know of it.

Hon. P. Collier: Neither does the mayor of Perth know that Victoria has no sinking fund.

The PREMIER: I am glad the hon. member reminded me of that, because of our £5,500,000 deficit £3,155,000 represents actual payments into sinking fund. During the last 11 years we have accumulated a deficit of £2,363,000 more than we have contributed to our sinking fund. Victoria now has an unfunded deficit of £1,200,000, according to the latest statement, and, in addition, there is some deficit funded. So that the position in Victoria is not so much better than the position here.

Hon. P. Collier: Victoria has a large population and a small territory, while we have a large territory and a small population.

The PREMIER: Victoria and every other State of the Commonwealth has had financial trouble owing to the war. I mention these things just now because I do not wish it to go out to the people of this country that our position is so bad. There are persons who like to make the position look worse than it is. I hope those persons will be agreeably surprised if, when this financial year ends, our deficit turns out to be a great deal less than it was last year.

Hon. M. F. Troy: You have provided revenue expenditure from loan.

The PREMIER: No we have not. If the hon. member will look into the investment of loan money in this State he will find that the position here is sounder than in any other State. The other States have found it necessary to borrow very large amounts. During the last nine years we have been, of all the States except Tasmania, the lowest borrower. We have not borrowed half the amounts raised by the larger States. I can quite believe that people are anxious about the expenditure of this borrowed money. I want to impress on hon. members that this money is being invested in developmental work. Last year we spent about 2½ millions. A large proportion of that money was loaned to the Agricultural Bank and the Soldier Settlement Board. When this year's expenditure is recorded it will be found that but a very small proportion of the four millions has been written up against the taxpayers. I appreciate the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition respecting the Peel estate. The development there will result in adding to the cultivable area of the State land worth at least three times the amount expended on it. So long as we achieve that result, we can keep on till the cows come home. I wish with all my heart that the member for Geraldton (Mr. Willcock) had got his harbour works provided 30 years ago. We can never expect peace from the hon. member until the work is completed. The Geraldton harbour serves an enormous territory, but its development will mean a very large expenditure. Still, it has to be faced, for they must have a harbour capable of accommodating big vessels. It is impos-

sible to ask the people of Geraldton to pay freight to Perth 300 miles over the railways.

Hon. P. Collier: This is an attempt at pacification.

The PREMIER: No, I do not wish to pacify the hon. member. I rather like him when he is cross.

Hon. P. Collier: Then that is why you keep him in that state.

The PREMIER: The Leader of the Opposition kept him in that state for many years.

Mr. Willcock: At all events he and his Government spent the money they put on the Estimates.

The PREMIER: Everybody knows that a harbour has to be provided at Geraldton.

Hon. P. Collier: Well, there could not be anything more definite than that.

The PREMIER: At least, it is as definite as my friend's answer to the Geraldton deputation which waited upon him. I can remember every deputation from Geraldton to a Minister, and the reply given. Sometimes I thought they were going to get their harbour works. The Leader of the Opposition was very skilful in handling deputations. Let me say I am delighted at the reception given to these Estimates.

Hon. P. Collier: There is nothing more to be said.

Vote, Departmental, £81,624—agreed to.

Vote—Railways and Tramways, £750,515:

Item, Busselton-Margaret River area, £52,000:

Mr. PICKERING: Portion of this line was built by Millars' and has been lying idle for many years. Many of the group settlements must have a railway before the winter. I should like an assurance that efforts will be made to put this railway in good condition before that time.

The PREMIER: The line will be put into effective condition for the carrying of passengers and traffic.

Item, Land resumption, new lines, £6,000:

Mr. PICKERING: A considerable area of country will be resumed for the new line, Busselton-Margaret River. Notice was given to settlers along the route a considerable time ago of the intention of the Government to resume the lands. However, no resumption has taken place. I should like to know from the Premier when the resumptions will be made and compensation paid.

The PREMIER: Resumptions will have to be made in the usual way, and the land will be taken as soon as wanted. Of course compensation will follow.

Mr. O'Loughlen: How much compensation do they get?

The PREMIER: Very little.

Item, Waroona-Lake Clifton purchase, £5,000:

Hon. P. COLLIER: Last year the Minister for Works said the amount then set out on the Estimates, £61,000, would cover the whole purchase price. I see that another £5,000 is

required. I heard that the amount to be paid to the railway was in dispute. I should like to know whether it has been submitted to arbitration, or whether the Government have decided to increase the amount paid. I hope the Minister will give us full particulars regarding this additional £5,000.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The amount already paid was all the money due to the company. This £5,000 is provision made in respect of lands resumption, and also some outstanding accounts. The Committee can be satisfied that not an unnecessary penny will be paid.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Last year many statements were made as to the liability for the purchase of this line. I understood that the Government were led into the purchase by an ex-Attorney General, then member for Canning. A Royal Commission was appointed, but the matter has never been satisfactorily cleared up. The report of the Royal Commission was so involved that one could make nothing definite of it. The Royal Commissioner, while exempting the then Attorney General from any responsibility for misleading the Government, found that his firm were acting for the company at the same time as he was acting for the Government. I do not wish to refer to ancient history beyond saying that the whole business was most unsavoury. I would like to know what business is being done on this railway.

Mr. Johnston: I think £36 was received for freight in the first month.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I notice that a considerable quantity of stuff is being brought over the Midland line from Ginigin and Bullsbrook to the Portland Cement Company's works, stuff which we were told would be brought over the Lake Clifton line. What revenue is received from this line, and must we expect it for all time to be a dead loss? Parliament was not consulted regarding the expenditure; in fact the whole thing was carried out in such a manner that Parliament would never have agreed to it. Had this occurred when the Labour Government were in office, we would never have heard the last of it. We did not need to do this sort of thing to evoke opposition from the Press. Every act of administration by the Labour Government was so misrepresented and exaggerated as to lead people to believe that we were guilty of numbers of scandals, whereas no act of ours could compare with this transaction. The Press say nothing about this; yet they profess to be fair and square and above-board—

Hon. P. Collier: And the guardian of public liberty.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, and of public rights. They close down and refuse to give information regarding the scandals that occur here and in the Commonwealth. There have been numerous Commonwealth transactions involving the people in enormous losses, and nothing has been said about them.

The Premier: This railway was bought before the present Government came into power.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Yes, but the present Government are responsible for not having informed the country of the circumstances until they had to approach Parliament for the funds.

The Premier: Nothing happened until the money was required.

Hon. M. F. TROY: When a question was asked as to whether the Government were building the line, we were told they were not. Yet they were building the line all the time. The Government, at the elections, had the support of a gentleman who was said to have been responsible for the transaction. We should know definitely how the proposition stands. The company were to carry certain stuff over the line. They were to supply agriculturists with lime at a certain price, but they have not kept their contract. What do the Government intend to do? They have fulfilled their part of the contract.

The Premier: I heard a couple of days ago that the company were bringing limestone from Gingin. If that is so it is quite wrong. I had meant to tell the Minister to inquire into it. They have no right to do that; they should use the lime from Lake Clifton. They get a very low freight over our line.

Mr. Pickering: Are they using the line at all?

The Premier: I do not know. It was not fair of them to ask the Government to buy the line if they did not intend to get their lime from Lake Clifton. The provision regarding the carriage was so loosely drawn that I doubt whether it really binds them.

The Minister for Mines: They get no freight concession unless they carry a minimum of 25,000 tons.

The Premier: The Minister will inquire into the matter.

Mr. Wilson: They are not using the line at all.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I am very much disappointed at the explanation of the Minister for Works. He has not attempted to give any explanation.

The Minister for Works: I have told you all I know.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Surely the Minister knows more than he has told us! When the matter was under discussion 12 months ago, we learnt that the amount to be paid by the Government for the railway was in dispute. The company were claiming a greater sum than the Minister considered they were entitled to under the terms of the agreement to purchase.

The Minister for Works: They went to arbitration.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is what I want to know. I know the company claimed a certain amount and it was disputed. Was it referred to arbitration; did the Government concede the demands of the company, or did the company withdraw from their attitude?

This was one of the most unsavoury political scandals in the history of the State and I can easily understand the desire of everyone associated with it, even the Press supporting the Government, to allow the matter to silently slip into oblivion. It is not an agreeable subject to discuss, but we are entitled to have an explanation before we are asked to pass an additional vote of £5,000. The file was built up largely by correspondence by the Minister for Works, and surely he is au fait with the subject. Why should we pay this extra £5,000? Have the Government yielded to the demands of the company. Last year it was evident that the company were standing firm on their demand and were contemplating an action at law.

The Minister for Works: There was an arbitration over it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This is the first I have heard of it.

The Minister for Works: It was mentioned in the Press.

Hon. P. COLLIER: There was nothing in the Press about it. I have never known of a transaction receiving so little publicity as this one. I am a pretty diligent student of the Press and very little appears which escapes my notice, but I have seen no reference to any arbitration. Who was the arbitrator? The Minister for Works: The Engineer-in-Chief.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not want information by way of interjection. The Minister will have an opportunity to give it presently. He stood up just now to make an explanation and sat down without having made it. We ought to know what has been the amount of traffic over this line. The only reference to the work of the railway that I saw in the Press was that the first three or four weeks' operations involved the State in an expenditure of £9 per day for interest alone on the capital cost of the line, and the receipts amounted to about 17s. 9d.

Mr. Johnston: They run one train a fortnight for the busy summer traffic.

Hon. P. COLLIER: So far as one can gather the deposits at Lake Clifton are not being utilised to the extent the company thought they would be required when the railway was built, and it appears that the State has purchased a white elephant. We are paying £66,000 for a white elephant plus £9 a day in interest, and apparently the whole thing is going to be of no use, unless something happens in future which will enable the company to utilise the Lake Clifton lime rather than that from the Midland line. The whole thing apparently has been a failure. The State has been sold a pup. One of the main reasons why the concession was granted in the first place was that lime would be supplied to the farmers at a reasonable price. Has any lime been supplied to the farmers?

Mr. Money: I had 50 tons.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I suppose that is where they collected the 17s. 9d.

The Minister for Mines: He bought it to get rid of the stick-fast flea in Bunbury.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The result of the labours of the Royal Commissioner was a whitewashing of the whole affair. The inquiry reflects no credit upon him.

Mr. Money: Is that fair?

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes. If a lawyer undertakes a public duty and does not discharge it faithfully, according to the facts placed before him, I shall certainly not refrain from making such a remark as this.

Mr. Money: Because you think so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Of course. I do not say what others think. The inquiry reflects no credit at all upon him. It was a balancing report and was an endeavour to let everyone out without finding anyone guilty. Much more evidence could have been called if the Commissioner had desired to sift the question, which would have enabled him to place the responsibility upon the shoulders on which it should rest.

Mr. Johnston: There is too much professional etiquette about it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: We had one K.C. sitting in judgment on another. They were friends in court day after day, and we could only expect such a result.

Mr. Pickering: That aspect of the matter has not been gone into before.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The report of the Royal Commissioner was made during the recess and has not yet been discussed in Parliament. There was an extraordinary lapse of memory on the part of Ministers who appeared before the Commission, and there was a most extraordinary contradiction in the evidence of statements made in the House when the matter first came up. Before I am prepared to vote a penny of this money, I want to know that the company is entitled to it, and that the State is getting value for what it has given. The freight contract was a scandalous thing. It committed the State for 40 years to carry 25,000 tons of lime per annum, which would involve a loss to the country of anything up to 1½d. per ton per mile.

The Minister for Mines: I do not think it committed the country; I think we got out of it.

The Minister for Works: I think the contract has been cancelled. That is my advice from the Crown Law department.

Hon. P. COLLIER: This contract was made at a time when other people were paying increased charges. If it has been cancelled, I should like to know. I understand that the first claim of the company was for £70,000.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: That was the sum set down on the Estimates.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The files show that the Minister stoutly disputed the claim and would not pay. What compromise has been effected? The whole business should serve as a warning to Parliament and to Ministers against atrocious contracts of this kind.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I regret I have not the fullest information to place before members to-night, but I will obtain the

fullest particulars I can to-morrow and bring them before members, during the afternoon or evening. I believe the £5,000 set down on the Estimates is largely for land resumption. I do not think one penny of it goes to the company. The claim of the company was for something approaching £70,000. I declined to consider it, and instructed my officers to be very careful in their dealings with the company. We were up against people who knew the game from A to Z.

Hon. P. Collier: Did the matter go to arbitration?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: Yes, the Engineer-in-Chief was, I think, the sole arbitrator. The company claimed amongst other things for a bonus given to Mr. Anketell, who was loaned by the department to build the line for them. It was an impudent claim. They asked me for permission to recognise that officer's services by giving him a bonus. My reply was that they could do so if they pleased, but could not get it out of the Government afterwards.

Hon. P. Collier: It was a most impudent claim.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am glad to have the hon. member's endorsement of my statement. I think, according to the evidence of Mr. Sayer, there is no doubt about the contract having been cancelled. It was made whilst Sir Henry Lefroy, Mr. Gardiner and I were out of the State. It did not come before Ministers, and the proposal for freight as we knew it was an entirely different thing.

Mr. Money: The Act provided what the freight should be.

Hon. P. Collier: Not for that freight.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The report of the Royal Commissioner shows that the Deputy Commissioner of Railways, Mr. Hume, made the contract. It was not known, I believe, either to Sir Henry Lefroy or Mr. Gardiner, and it was certainly not known to me.

Hon. M. F. Troy: To whom was it known?

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was made after we left the State, and was altogether different from the impression I had of what it was going to be.

Hon. M. F. Troy: That is a remarkable statement.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is all I can say to-night. If the Committee desire it, this vote can be postponed. I do not think there is a penny of the amount of this item due to the company. If there is any outstanding account of the company, it will not be paid until the House knows all about it.

The PREMIER: If members would like to have the full information to which they are entitled—I am sorry it is not here—they shall have it. I move—

That the further consideration of the item be postponed.

Motion put and passed.

Vote—Harbours and Rivers, £171,000:

Item, Geraldton harbour works, £10,000:

Mr. WILLCOCK: I think the Premier has told us as much as he wants to tell us about this item. When speaking generally on these Loan Estimates I asked him to explain what the Government intend to do in the matter. The final word, of course, remains with the Treasurer, who has to find the money. It is not right that the Geraldton people should be deluded into believing that an amount of money will be spent on the harbour, and that month after month and year after year should go by without anything being done. I want to be placed in a position enabling me to speak quite frankly with my electors. If the details of the work are available, the Premier should say definitely whether the money is to be spent. There are only five months of the year to go now.

The PREMIER: To-night I can only say absolutely and definitely "No." I am as anxious as the hon. member is for the harbour to be constructed. However, we have not the right scheme yet. Before spending 1¼ millions of money we must be satisfied that the last recommendation is the right one to proceed on.

Hon. M. F. TROY: What steps are you taking to be satisfied?

The PREMIER: All the steps that we take in connection with such matters. Of course the member for Geraldton has been at this thing for a very long time. It is possible at the moment we have not anything like the right scheme.

Mr. Willcock: The scheme has been under consideration for 20 years.

The PREMIER: There is another scheme now. Some alterations have been recommended. The jetty for the carriage of material has, of course, been constructed.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: It will be eaten away presently; It was merely put up temporarily.

The PREMIER: So soon as we are satisfied that the scheme proposed is the best for Geraldton, we will proceed with it.

Mr. CHESSON: I support the remarks of the member for Geraldton. When an amount is placed on the Estimates, it should be expended. Year after year the Loan Estimates have shown amounts for giving better facilities at the port of Geraldton, but very little indeed has been done. If there is no intention to expend the amounts, they should not appear. The Murchison goldfield is linked up with Geraldton, and my electors want decent harbour facilities there. An adequate harbour at Geraldton would mean that the whole of the goods required by the Murchison people would come by water to that port, and then the Murchison people would have only rail freight from Geraldton to pay. Either the engineers are not fit for their position, or else their recommendations should be carried out. There has been too much procrastination in this matter. The excuse now is that the engineers are trying to locate

a quarry. There is no difficulty in getting stone around Geraldton.

The Minister for Works: There has been a difficulty, anyhow.

Mr. CHESSON: There is something wrong with an engineer who will open up a quarry on one stone, as actually happened in connection with this work.

The Minister for Works: The engineers must be allowed some say as to whether the stone is suitable. There is difficulty in locating suitable stone.

Mr. CHESSON: When a work is recommended by responsible officers and money is placed for it on the Estimates, the money should be expended.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The worst feature about this item is that it appears every year and nothing is done. The member for Geraldton must feel indignant when every year it goes forth to his constituents that the Government propose to expend certain moneys on the Geraldton harbour and yet nothing is done. The object of the item must be to fool the people at Geraldton. The excuse is always some disagreement amongst the engineers. Every time the Minister submits the scheme to the engineers, they will propose something different. In that way the matter could be hung up interminably. As regards the question of the quarry, a great deal of the stone used at Fremantle was brought from Kellerberrin.

The Minister for Works: The engineers have a quarry now, and the stone is suitable.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Then the only trouble is as regards the scheme. Will there ever be a scheme decided on? If the Government will frankly say that the amount required is too large and that they cannot afford it, the member for the district will know where he stands. But to mislead the constituency year after year by a promise is to treat the people with contempt. One cannot fool all the people all the time. The position of the member for Geraldton in this matter is most unfortunate. He is to be commended for objecting to the reluctance of the Government to carry out the policy which they proclaim on the Loan Estimates. I trust the Government will declare their intentions one way or the other.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I was surprised to hear the Premier say that the scheme is not suitable. That scheme was decided on by the Engineer-in-Chief, his assistant, and by another engineer, Mr. Ramsbotham. The scheme follows almost the lines of that recommended in the early days by Sir John Coode. Another scheme was proposed out from the Lighthouse, but the engineers, after putting down tests and floats, decided that that scheme would involve silting up, and consequently the annual expenditure of a large sum to keep the harbour clear. They were unanimous that the present scheme was the best one for the harbour. The Engineer-in-Chief and myself visited Geraldton and met the public men of the town, including the mayor, who had had experience sail-

ing into and out of the port of Geraldton. Before the Engineer-in-Chief explained his scheme, the mayor, a man of practical experience, produced an almost similar scheme which he himself had drawn up. The only difference of opinion was as regards the length of the breakwater. Eventually it was agreed that the breakwater might have to be made a little longer than had been first proposed, another 25 or 50 feet, but that could only be determined by practical experience. The scheme was unanimously adopted. In the opinion of the engineers, no other scheme was practicable. The scheme selected was that of the officers themselves, backed up by the Mayor of Geraldton, Mr. Fallowfield, who was himself a practical man, accustomed to passing in and out of Geraldton harbour. It is surprising that at this late date the question of alternative schemes should be re-opened. The scheme adopted would have cost at the time between £600,000 and £700,000, while the doubtful scheme, that which it was feared would silt up, would have cost over a million.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: No doubt the member for Geraldton does not feel quite happy over the delay which has taken place. There was trouble in respect of the quarry, and I have already explained the steps which were taken. Since then a satisfactory deposit of stone has been found, so on that point, at least, we have made a step forward. The scheme adopted by the engineers and by the Government was the one upon which a start was made. However, problems arose which necessitated a review by the engineers themselves. As hon. members know, the present session has extended over the best part for six months, and we are still here, meeting at half past two o'clock each day. No Minister, not even the Premier, can keep his work up to date in those circumstances. In my opinion there should be more Ministers.

Hon. P. Collier: Barkis is willin'!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The whole of my Christmas holidays were spent in making up for the time wasted by meeting here at half past two o'clock each day. It gives a Minister no chance to attend to his work. This half past two o'clock business has been tried, Parliament after Parliament, but every time it has proved a failure.

Hon. P. Collier: Hear, hear!

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: However, when the session closes we shall have time to look into this scheme.

Hon. P. Collier: But we are not likely to finish until June.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: If that be so, it will not be possible to finalise the scheme this financial year. However, I will put it before the Premier as soon as possible. If what is put before the Premier is not satisfactory, we ought to call in outside experts' advice in dealing with a big question like this, for we do not want to make any mistakes in respect of it.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Water Supply and Sewerage, £273,200:

Item, Other goldfields, £1,000:

Mr. CHESSON: It is nearly time the out-back goldfields water supply was resumed by the Mines Department. Whenever there is a bit of a find, water is required and it becomes necessary to deal with two departments, namely, the Mines Department and the Water Supply Department. It means exasperating delay before one can get a bore put down. The Mines Department should control the water supply for mines, especially those on outback goldfields. In 1913 the water supply was under the Mines Department, and it should be handed back to that department.

The Minister for Works: The Mines Department control it now.

Mr. CHESSON: When we go to the Water Supply Department for a bore, they say the cost ought to be borne by the Mines Department. I say the same. Under that system the provision of the bore would be in the hands of the mining inspector.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member would not speak as he has done if he were aware of the facts. The Mines Department control their vote. The Water Supply Department, who have officers on the different goldfields, do the work when asked by the Mines Department at the expense of the Mines Department. They do not dispute any request which the Mines Department ask them to carry out.

Mr. Chesson: There is always delay between the two departments.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is not.

Mr. Chesson: I have seen men go off the fields in consequence.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member is wrong. If the Mines Department want a bore at a certain place and provide the money, the Water Supply Department do the work at once.

Mr. Chesson: There is delay between the two departments.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: There is no delay whatever. The Water Supply Department do the work, because they have men and plant on the different goldfields.

Mr. Chesson: I still say there is delay.

The MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member is wrong.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am glad to hear the explanation of the Minister, because I was not aware of the facts he has just stated. I understood the water supply vote was controlled by the Works Department.

The Minister for Works: That has been altered in the last 12 months.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The work has been unsatisfactorily performed by the Works Department.

The Minister for Mines: We do not do the work.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Works Department have no intimate association with the goldfields.

The Minister for Works: All this work is done by Mr. O'Brien, who has been associated with the goldfields for 27 years.

Hon. M. F. TROY: In the old days one very satisfactory feature was the promptitude with which the Mines Department attended to water supplies. A new field was hardly discovered when a boring plant appeared on the heels of the prospectors and put down bores. As a result the fields were developed. During the last year or two it has been necessary to wait months and months for these supplies. We have been told that there are only a dozen or 20 men on the field. Of course there are only a few men in the beginning.

Hon. P. Collier: They would not get any more unless water was provided.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Supplies have to be found by boring and well sinking, and the Mines Department have a lasting monument in the numbers of fields dotted throughout the back country.

Hon. P. Collier: And they will be useful in years to come.

Hon. M. F. TROY: Of course they will. They are a reproductive work. They are the best and in fact the only means of opening up this dry country. The Mines Department appreciate the value of water supplies. When the work was placed under the Works Department, I complained because the people who should be responsible were the Mines Department. I am glad the change has been made.

Mr. CORBOY: I also was surprised and pleased at the information given regarding the recent change. If even more control were given to the Mines Department, it would redound to the benefit of the goldfields. A good deal of delay occurred because a Works Department official, after going out to a mining settlement, often reported unfavourably and the Works Department turned down the proposition. Then a Mines official would have to go out. That duplication of effort could well be done away with. It would be much better if the Mines Department, who understand the conditions under which mining properties, and particularly low-grade shows, are being operated, had sole control of all things necessary to assist the mining districts. It would certainly give more satisfaction.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: For many years the Mines Water Supply Department was a definite sub-department of the Mines Department, and had its engineers and staff organised and controlled by the Mines Department. During the Labour regime we changed that policy, and placed them all under the Water Supply Department. The theory was correct; it seemed foolish to have engineers under the control of the Mines Department seeking water supplies for mining purposes, while another department often had to send engineers over the same country in connection with town supplies. The engineers were put under one department and the whole control, in-

cluding that of expenditure, was transferred to the Water Supply Department. Recently the Premier issued a direction that the mines supplies should be controlled by the Mines Department. The officers attached to the Water Supply Department are to remain attached to that department to advise how best to provide supplies where the Mines Department consider them necessary. If we get a request or have any knowledge of the need for a water supply in a new mining area, we ask the Water Supply Department to report on the best means of making such provision. A report is then made under Mr. O'Brien's directions, and an estimate of the cost given. If we are satisfied with the mining possibilities of the district and the distance from any other water supply, instructions are given to proceed along the lines of the report. This year we have provided £10,000 for such work.

Mr. Chesson: You should act on the report of the inspector of mines in the district.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: He reports on the need for water supplies. If we are satisfied with all the circumstances, we make a request for the money. The Premier says he believes it is money well spent to incur expenditure in, wherever possible, providing permanent catchments for water, even if the mining prospects in the immediate vicinity are not as promising as we would like. We cannot have too many catchments in country like this.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Development of goldfields and mineral resources, £55,000:

Mr. CHESSON: The sum of £45,000 is too small to set aside for the development of our mining industry. There are very extensive auriferous areas which have yet to be prospected, and, owing to the expense of carrying on development in parts of the country beyond our railways, it is necessary to assist prospectors upon whom we rely to prove the value of these auriferous areas. One or two good finds have recently been made on the Murchison. I would refer particularly to Carter and Hamilton's find, which was afterwards Brown's find and subsequently was formed into a company. If we could find another Golden Mile in Western Australia, we could expect to receive many millions of money and a greatly increased population. We can well afford to spend much more than we are doing under the heading of Development of Goldfields. I hope next year the vote will be considerably increased.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: There have been occasions when a larger amount than this has been provided, but I usually spend nearly all that I get. Last year we provided £45,000 and spent £38,000. In addition to that there is a good deal in the way of sustenance given in cash. We make advances against ore from this vote. As they are recouped to us, we make the money available again for further advances. This year

the producers of base metals have been able to conduct operations only through being able to use this vote as a banking institution. Probably some of this money has been advanced three times in the year.

Mr. Wilson: You also spent the £38,000. The MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes. During the last two or three years we have tried to appreciate the difficulties under which our gold and base metal producers are labouring. It has not been easy to get money invested in the industry. Although it may be said we are taking greater risks in the policy we are pursuing, our methods serve to call attention to the opportunities presented in this State. I believe we are on the eve of a revival in both gold and base metal industries in Western Australia. I am afraid to mention in the presence of the Treasurer that the amount provided will probably have to be exceeded this year, because of the assistance which we are rendering, assistance which will, and I believe in the very near future, prove of very material advantage to the State as a whole. Of course I shall endeavour to keep within the vote, but the department are taking more risk than one is generally anxious to take.

Mr. Chesson: We give the department credit for that.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: Still, the Government ought not to shout it from the house-tops that they are ready to advance money. If an applicant is not prepared to show faith in his own proposition, the Government should not assist him. The hope of the department is that others interested in mining will come along and back the Government's assistance. In one or two cases where advances have been made we have been influenced mostly by a desire to induce investors to provide additional capital, so that a show will not go by the board for the want of a little more money. Criticism has come our way for assisting the Ives Reward. However, we have faith in the St. Ives district, and we ask investors to accept our faith as a reason for backing their own.

Hon. M. F. TROY: The Minister has intimated, in effect, that the Mines Department are prepared to gamble on a district. That is the policy which the department must pursue, because there is nothing very definite in regard to any mining proposition. That is the view members must take of the Mines Department. I am satisfied that at present there is greater interest and activity in mining than for many years past. A number of persons have asked me latterly whether I know of any show in my district which I can recommend. I do not remember a time when there was such a tendency to speculate in mining as there is to-day. Therefore this is the department's opportunity. The department must give a lead. If people are prepared to gamble in this business of mining, the Minister for Mines must show that his department are not unwilling to come forward and take an active interest. I admit that credit is due to the Minister in

that connection. I have brought propositions to him myself, and have not found him wanting in sympathy. Unhappily, there is a view now prevalent that the Mines Department, at one time the most progressive of all departments, and the Lands Department, at one time the most unprogressive, are changing places.

The Minister for Mines: That cannot be said at present.

Hon. M. F. TROY: I am telling the Minister what is passing through men's minds. At one period we had in the Mines Department here men from the goldfields, who were of progressive ideas. But the majority of the officers in the department now are city men. The Minister ought to continue the old policy of bringing in goldfields men and of training his men on the goldfields.

The Minister for Mines: That is the policy now.

Hon. M. F. TROY: All Mines Department officials of any importance should have goldfields training and goldfields knowledge. There is an officer now in the Mines Department here, who has been a warden; and whenever a goldfields name is mentioned to him, he knows it. Such personal knowledge is invaluable in the Mines Department. The Minister should send the young men in the Perth office of the Mines Department to the goldfields for experience. The department should not be recruited from men with city associations. What made the department such a success in the past was the fact that the men with whom one had to deal had knowledge of goldfields conditions and goldfields men, knowledge of prospectors and their individual peculiarities.

Mr. MARSHALL: I have had occasion during the past 12 months to apply to the department for assistance in connection with an asbestos find at Lina. Numerous prospectors are interested in the find, and they have requested the department to furnish them with a treatment plant. At that time I received from the departmental officer the information that the Government were seeking an efficient plant with a view to installing it in the Pilbara district. No statement has since been made on the matter. Possibly the Minister has overlooked it. Do the department intend to give any material assistance to those prospectors? In quality the asbestos is second to none in the world, and the prospectors are hanging on in the hope that ultimately the Government will come to their aid. I should like to know whether the department have been successful in their search for a plant.

The MINISTER FOR MINES: I had a special inspection of the field made by an officers, who considered also the provision of a treatment plant. The treatment of asbestos is by no means easy, and any muddling would cost the State a good deal of money. One company are operating in a small way, and we have arranged with them to treat ore from the district, with a view to proving whether it would be wise to establish a larger plant.

Asbestos is scattered over a tremendous area and we do not know of any one district where there is sufficient ore to warrant the establishment of a plant. The only way we can help is by establishing a plant at some point where it will be accessible to all. We have not yet been able to determine that point.

Vote put and passed.

Vote, Development of Agriculture, £2,520,-672:

Item, Assistance to settlers, industries, etc., £167,944:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: On turning to page 27 I find this explanatory note: "Final payment to W.A. Meat Export Company, Ltd., also any assistance recommended by the board of the Council of Industrial Development from time to time." What is meant by that?

The PREMIER: This is not for the Council of Industrial Development at all. The explanatory note is wrong. This money is used for the assistance of settlers under the Industries Assistance Act. Then there is £100,000 for the Agricultural Bank, making a total of £267,944. This sum does not cover amount recommended by the Council of Industrial Development.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: What amount have you already paid to the W.A. Meat Export Company.

The PREMIER: Whatever it was, it is completed. There are no further payments to be provided.

Hon. P. Collier: But they have an application pending for more money.

The PREMIER: That work is not being gone on with.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You paid them over £11,000 last September.

The PREMIER: All the money we are going to pay has been paid. The company had paid out the cash for machinery and, in making the advance, we deducted the interest.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Fremantle freezing works and the meat export company are the one concern?

The PREMIER: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: It is described by both terms in the file.

The PREMIER: It is the same concern.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I could not quite follow the Premier's explanation. We must be voting on these Estimates some portion of the money which has been advanced by the Government to the company. Some of the £90,000 has been paid during the present financial year. I do not suppose it matters much under which item it is provided. The fact is we are voting the additional amount advanced by the Government, making the total £91,000 or £92,000.

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The undertaking, before the works were commenced, was for an advance of £60,000, and the amount has been increased until about £92,000 has been advanced. Does that complete entirely the advances to be made to the company?

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The files show that the company are still asking for a considerable increase on that amount. Was not the chairman of directors badgering the Premier for an additional advance?

The Premier: That was for additional storage, but that is not being gone on with.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The £90,000 completes the Government's liability to the company, if I may so express it.

The Premier: Yes.

Hon. P. COLLIER: It is well for the people to know that at a time when the company had received £32,000 more than was originally intended, they were in desperate straits to secure additional capital and were harassing the Premier with correspondence, in fact with "stand and deliver" messages, and all this time were in arrears with their interest, so that the Government had to deduct the interest from the cash advanced.

The Premier: But they had paid cash for the goods.

Mr. Mann: Fortune came their way and they operated successfully this year.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But before fortune came their way, this badgering company took good care that their directors drew full fees all the time. If I am correctly informed, the directors have drawn something over £3,000.

Mr. Mann: They put a lot of money into it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But not nearly so much as the Government did.

[Mr. Angelo took the Chair.]

Mr. Hughes: They will take a lot of money out, too.

Mr. Mann: There is not much chance of that.

Hon. P. COLLIER: These men, who were ranting from the housetops about interference by the State with private enterprise, were mighty persistent in demanding the major portion of the capital requisite for the establishment of their works from Government funds. "Do not let the State control such works, but let the State provide the funds and, if any profit accrues, we will take it." That is their attitude.

Mr. Mann: They are paying the interest.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, the Government advanced them the money. The Government advanced them £11,000 but deducted £1,000 for interest owing.

Mr. Mann: They still have to pay the interest.

Mr. Hughes: If a business man did that he would get two years.

Mr. Mann: Good finance.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no pretention to being a business man, but I would be willing to invest a few pounds in business if for every pound I put in I obtained 30s. from the Government. If all failed, I could tell the Government to take over the security, but if the business proved successful, so long

as I paid the interest, the profit would be mine.

Mr. Hughes: The directors are drawing their fees before the business is established.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Yes, while they are drawing public funds and are camped on the doorstep of the Treasury worrying the Minister day after day for money.

Mr. Mann: That was only when the Government desired them to make greater provision for meat coming from Wyndham.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No; the hon. member has not studied the files thoroughly. The Government had exceeded the original amount by something like £20,000 before the stage was reached when it was desired that additional provision should be made for meat coming from Wyndham. Instead of £60,000 the Government have advanced £80,000, plus a further £11,000.

Mr. Mann: You will admit it makes it possible to export a lot of lambs and mutton which would not otherwise be exported.

Hon. P. COLLIER: That is not my argument. I do not argue that the works are not of assistance to the people of the State, because they are. The very section of the community which the works were designed to benefit, is that which has refused to put its own capital into them. The directors of the company have complained about the sheep growers.

Mr. Broun: They had good reason to do so.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They declined to put their capital into the company, and let the directors down. They anticipated getting sufficient capital to go on with the works without calling upon the Government for a subsidy.

Mr. Hughes: Why should these enormous directors' fees be paid?

Mr. Mann: I like the term "enormous."

Mr. Broun: There was not the response the directors expected, but not all the agriculturists or pastoralists turned them down.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They received some money, but most of the stock owners refused to put capital into the venture. The State had to go to their assistance to the extent of £90,000 to establish a purely private business.

Mr. Mann: It is developing a new industry.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: You are very good at advocating the use of State money by private people.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The general policy of private enterprise is to look askance at Government interference in their undertakings, and to say that they will establish all the industries that are needed. In this case, however, they asked the Government to advance 150 per cent. above the money they have themselves put in.

The Premier: They have put in £67,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Call it 125 per cent.

Mr. Broun: It shows their bona fides. They stand to lose £67,000.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Is not this the foundation of private enterprise? If a man starts out in a business he stands to lose all he puts into it. He usually takes the risk, and has not the handling of 125 per cent. more representing the taxpayers' money.

Mr. Mann: In Victoria assistance was rendered under the bonus system.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not argue that those who profess their faith in private enterprise will not accept Government assistance. They will take it in any form.

Mr. Pickering: Are they not responsible to the Government for the sum advanced?

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the venture is a success they are supposed to pay interest. If it fails the Government can take it over.

Mr. Mann: They lose the lot.

Hon. P. COLLIER: But the taxpayers lose more.

The Premier: They lose theirs' first.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If the business is a failure everybody loses. We find that this struggling venture, which the chairman of directors threatens to throw up, has enabled the directors to pocket by way of fees the sum of £3,400.

Mr. Broun: You would not expect them to work for nothing.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I do not suspect them of being over-weighted with philanthropic feeling, but men who profess to have so profound a regard for struggling farmers might have been expected to give a little of their time in an honorary capacity until the work had reached the profit-earning stage. They might have allowed their fees to stand over until that time, but they were not taking any risks in that regard. That is the business training about which we hear so much. They look after No. 1 every time. "If there is anybody to suffer, let it be the other fellow."

Mr. Broun: The directors will suffer alright.

Hon. P. COLLIER: The enterprise is no likely to fail financially while the executive are able to call upon cross-bench members to put the pressure on the Government. It will never fail for want of money, though it may fail for want of management. I judge the executive by the very interesting report of their last meeting. That meeting must have been of a prolonged character, because there was much correspondence between the member for Toodyay, as whip of the Country Party, and the executive. The hon. member tells the executive they can rest assured the Government have promised this and that. If says he has the assurance of the Minister for Agriculture that this or the other matter will be proceeded with as soon as Parliament goes into recess. But the executive reply, "We know that past promises to do this and that in recess have failed, and so we request that the party get all these things done before the session closes." That is with regard to not one matter, but half a dozen matters. The Country Party are told to go back to Ministers and see that these things are done at once. The executive have expelled, in the

person of Mr. Hedges, the biggest farmer in the State. The St. George's-terrace farmers expel the biggest wheatgrower in Western Australia, and this without reference to his branch. The much-discussed executive in Beaufort-street did invite a certain culprit to come along and make an explanation. Not so in the case of that other executive and Mr. Hedges. It was simply "Out!" without any opportunity for Mr. Hedges to explain his conduct. He was expelled on the 5th of this month.

The Minister for Agriculture: That is the first I have heard of it.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then the Minister is out of touch with his executive. He will have to be more careful. At the same time as Mr. Hedges was expelled, the Deputy Leader of the Country Party, the member for York was carpeted by the executive for having appeared on the platform with that gentleman. I understand the hon. member has pleaded guilty and is asking for mercy. He said to the executive: "What would you have done in my case? Mr. Hedges is the most influential man in my constituency, and a possible opponent of mine for the York seat. If I had refused his request to appear on the platform with him, I would have been between the devil and the deep sea." I frankly sympathise with the Deputy Leader of the Country Party.

Mr. Pickering: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman—

Opposition Members: Take your gruel!

The CHAIRMAN: The item is "Assistance to settlers," and I think Mr. Hedges is a settler.

Hon. P. COLLIER: I have no desire to pursue a subject so distasteful to members on the cross benches. I mentioned the matter merely in order to give it publicity. The Press does not appear to have noticed it, which is strange, because expulsions by executives usually arouse keen interest on the part of the Press. If, for instance, Mr. Dooley should be expelled by the Sydney executive, the fact would be blazoned in headlines not only throughout Australia but also in Great Britain. Meeting Mr. Hedges the other day, I tendered him my sympathy. Those of us who know Mr. Hedges will not require me to repeat his comments on the St. George's-terrace executive. I leave his observations to the imagination of hon. members. I may mention he said that he was not sorry for himself but was sorry for the Deputy Leader of the Country Party in this Chamber. However, I feel sure that in view of his youth and political inexperience the hon. member will be forgiven on a promise not to offend again.

Hon. M. F. Troy: The Colonial Secretary has already given such a promise.

Hon. P. COLLIER: He has stated that nothing of the sort will appear again. He gave that promise before, but some editor forgot it, and so the executive called up the Colonial Secretary and he then declared it would not happen again. This is the executive whom

we are asked to believe will not interview members of the Country Party; will not suggest to them that they should put a little pressure on the Government in order to obtain further capital for these works.

Mr. Pickering: The directors of this company have nothing to do with the executive.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No, except of course, that the president of the executive is also chairman of directors of the company. At all events, I commend the business acumen of those directors who have collected their £3,400 in directors' fees from a struggling infant industry which has been up against post war conditions, ruined markets, and all the disabilities associated with the meat trade during the past year or two. I hope the Premier can give us a definite assurance that he will not be worried by this company for more money.

Mr. Pickering: He could bring in a Bill to postpone the payment of interest.

Hon. P. COLLIER: If they cannot pay interest, they will borrow it from the Government. This is the company so pronounced in their determination to get rid of the State trading concerns.

The Premier: Not all of them.

Hon. P. COLLIER: No; still if the Government refrained from spending public money on State trading concerns, there would be all the more available for the assistance of enterprises such as that carried on by this company. Under this item a little Government patronage has been extended to another struggling industry. Busselton has had £5,480 of loan moneys to establish a butter factory, and last year they had also £686. The member for Sussex, who never wavers in his hostility to the State's interference with private enterprise, eloquently champions the claims of Busselton to a State butter factory.

The Minister for Agriculture: And they have not enough enterprise to take it over as a going concern.

Hon. P. COLLIER: They have not enough energy to shoo the cows off the verandahs. I wonder if the Premier is going to give any more money to the Busselton butter factory? The Government are meeting the maintenance of the Narrogin farm school from loan moneys. Last year £3,564 was thus expended. Was it expended on permanent and reproductive works, such as buildings at the farm, or was ordinary maintenance included in that?

The Minister for Agriculture: It was for buildings and improvements.

Hon. P. COLLIER: Then they must have been very extensive to run into such expenditure. I agree with the member for Mt. Magnet that, year after year, we are transferring from revenue expenditure to loan expenditure items which properly belong to revenue expenditure. There was paid last year from loan funds £181 for the entertainment of certain eastern journalists visiting the State, and it was debited under the heading of "Agriculture." I do not complain

of the entertainment of Eastern or any other journalists, but it ought not to be made a charge against loan funds. I protest against the attitude of the company in pressing the Government for money and still more money, and against the "stand and deliver" manner in which the directors of the company demanded it. I want an assurance from the Premier that any expenditure under the heading of agricultural development will not be referred for advice or recommendation to the Council of Industrial Development. From the file we learn that the council dealt with the matter of the advance of £11,000 and made a recommendation. It appears to be the height of absurdity to refer to the council any expenditure under the heading of agricultural development. If the Government have not technical officers in the departments to make recommendations regarding expenditure on agriculture, it is time we made a radical overhaul of the departments. I repeat the statement I made on the Revenue Estimates that I consider it nothing short of a scandal that a member of the council of Industrial Development should have requested an advance to the company of which he was chairman and had it referred to his colleagues for consideration. I have lost all faith in the present members of the Council of Industrial Development. If they had had a proper appreciation of their functions and responsibilities, they would have declined to adjudicate on a matter which affected one of their colleagues. Instead of that they inquired into it and made a recommendation. The secretary of the council was careful to intimate in a minute to the Premier that Mr. Monger was not present at the meeting when this matter was decided. It is extraordinary that he should have thought it necessary to assure the Premier on that point. I hope that this body will cease to function until it is properly established. I hope it will have no say in the disposal of any of these loan funds until it has been endorsed and approved of by Parliament. It is entirely wrong to have a body, appointed by a Minister and responsible to no one but the Minister, possessing more power than do members of this House, able to determine the expenditure of public funds. If it is necessary to have such a body, Parliament should be asked to give it statutory authority and lay down the terms and conditions under which it shall function. Until this is done, the Council of Industrial Development should be disbanded.

Mr. MARSHALL: I move—

That progress be reported.

Motion put and negatived.

The PREMIER: At Fremantle the company put in £67,000 which must be the first loss. It is most important to have freezing works operating there. Without them there cannot be much development in the sheep industry. The company have received more than was anticipated by way of Government

advances. It was thought that the farmers would support this co-operative scheme, but the farmers did not go into it to any extent. This is a co-operative company, and as such we should encourage it. Owing to the high cost of material, the works cost more than was expected. The expenditure to provide for private storage was undertaken at my suggestion. We should have private storage for meat and fruit; otherwise these commodities cannot be satisfactorily exported. I suppose £50,000 was lost last year, because the apples could not be satisfactorily exported without being pre-cooled.

Hon. P. Collier: Are the works absolutely completed now.

The PREMIER: Yes, for export, so far as I know. The only other money to be spent will be on cattle works for local consumption. I have now no request for any additional advance. I told members I would ask the House to vote any further money required and that will be done. I should be very glad to be spared the duty of making all these advances to help our industries. They are a source of trouble. Many people object to State enterprise, contending that co-operation is better.

Hon. P. Collier: Co-operation with Government money.

The PREMIER: Yes, but the works at Fremantle have been assisted with Government money just as the Busselton butter factory has been assisted.

Mr. PICKERING: I emphatically deny the statement of the Leader of the Opposition that undue influence is brought to bear with the Country Party to obtain funds for the Fremantle Freezing Works. That position has never arisen. The mere fact of Mr. Monger being chairman of directors of the company has no influence with the Country Party or the executive of the Country Party, or the association of farmers and settlers.

Mr. Wilson: It is a case of tweedledum and tweedledee.

Mr. PICKERING: That may be so in the case of the hon. member's organisation.

Item—Land settlement for soldiers, £750,000:

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: I want an explanation of the words "land settlement for soldiers: advances to settlers to be recouped by the Commonwealth." Does this mean that the Commonwealth are finding the money, not by way of a loan, but that they stand the risk themselves? If the Government spend £750,000 this year, will the Commonwealth recoup them?

The Premier: No.

Hon. W. C. ANGWIN: Then it is merely a loan?

The Premier: Of course it is. They do not give us a penny except by way of rebate of interest. This is stupidly worded; it is our money.

Item—Agricultural group settlement, £452,000:

Mr. PICKERING: When the Premier visited the groups during the holidays several matters were brought under his notice for attention. I should like to know if he has arrived at any decision regarding them. The question of drainage there is very urgent.

The Premier: It is not going to rain there for three or four months.

Mr. PICKERING: The question must be dealt with speedily, if the settlers around Busselton are to be afforded relief during the coming winter.

Hon. P. Collier: Was not the matter brought under the notice of the Premier?

Mr. PICKERING: Yes.

Hon. P. Collier: Do you not trust him to deal with it?

Mr. PICKERING: I am taking this opportunity of pressing the matter, just as the Leader of the Opposition has done on other occasions.

Hon. P. Collier: You have not heard me press any parochial matters in connection with my own constituency.

Mr. PICKERING: If there is any point that requires to be impressed upon the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition usually takes the opportunity of urging it.

Hon. P. Collier: I generally bring such matters before departmental officers, or Ministers, without worrying the House about them.

Mr. PICKERING: According to the Press, departmental officers are being unduly interfered with by members of Parliament. The question I have raised is not a parochial one. Everything that can be done should be done at the proper season of the year to ensure the comfort and safety of the people concerned.

Hon. P. Collier: It saves a great deal of the time of Parliament to discuss matters like this with Ministers in their own offices. Here we are in January, and the cost of the session is mounting up.

Mr. PICKERING: The question of fences is important.

Hon. W. C. Angwin: The Premier said he was going into that matter.

Hon. P. Collier: But private advice is no good to the hon. member.

Mr. PICKERING: The best assurance of good relations between farmers upon adjacent properties is good fencing. The Premier should fence the boundaries of the different blocks in the group system.

Hon. P. Collier: Was that matter, too, brought before you?

Mr. PICKERING: It was. The fencing of properties is a matter that must be taken into consideration.

The PREMIER: I have given those matters serious consideration for twelve months. If I were in need of being reminded now as to drainage, the drainage could not be started for a year. I knew that the drainage would have to be done, and accordingly I sent along the engineers. The officials do their utmost for the settlers. It will be a pretty serious thing for me if the settlers do not succeed,

and the House can rely upon it that I, too, will do my very best for them.

Vote put and passed.

Vote—Roads and Bridges, Public Buildings, etc., £72,145—agreed to.

Vote—Other State Undertakings, £6,638:

Mr. BROWN: On this vote I may inquire whether the Government intend to make the necessary additions to the Corrigin State hotel. Extra accommodation is badly needed there. I know the matter was under consideration at the same time as the additions which have been carried out at the Dwellingup and Bruce Rock State hotels. The Corrigin settlers are suffering great inconvenience, and the State hotel at that centre has an absolute monopoly. I see no provision on these Estimates for what is needed.

The PREMIER: I do not know how it is that the Corrigin State hotel has become so popular that its accommodation is overtaxed. The hon. member can rest assured that whatever is necessary at Corrigin will be done.

Mr. Brown: Will it be done within twelve months?

The PREMIER: We must know what is wanted.

Mr. Latham: The Corrigin hotel has not sufficient accommodation now, and the Bruce Rock hotel is full every night.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported.

BILL—INDUSTRIAL ARBITRATION ACT AMENDMENT.

Message.

Message received from the Governor, recommending the Bill.

Second Reading.

The PREMIER (Hon. Sir James Mitchell—Northam) [12.28] in moving the second reading said: The amendments proposed by this Bill are very simple and very easily understood. At present a Supreme Court judge acts as president of the Arbitration Court. What the Government ask the House to agree to is the appointment of a permanent president, who may or may not be a lawyer. The salary will be that of a Supreme Court judge, £1,750 per annum. The question of appointing a permanent president has been discussed for some time. It is desired by all parties who go to the Arbitration Court that a president, apart from the judges, should be appointed. I agree with that. Then there will be no need to wait for the president of the court. The court will then sit continuously. At present the court is adjourned, because of the long vacation, which the judges take. With a permanent president who is not a member of the judiciary, this will not be the case. It is necessary that the court should sit when men are working. It is not expected, of course, that the proposed president can always attend at the court, without any break or rest or holiday; and therefore the Bill pro-

vides that a deputy may take the president's place on certain occasions. Under the proposed new system, however, there will be no long vacation for the president, who will not be a judge of the Supreme Court. His appointment will be permanent, and his salary will be voted under the principal Act. The president will be removable only by a resolution of both Houses of Parliament.

Mr. Mann: With the condition that the Governor can remove him.

The PREMIER: It will be by a resolution of both Houses of Parliament. The president of the court should devote his whole time to the court. If the right man can be obtained I think we shall have a more satisfactory state of affairs than has been possible in the past, when a judge of the Supreme Court occupied the position of president for a few months, after which a change was made. That is not desirable. There must be continuity. It is necessary that the parties before the court should feel that the president of the court has made the business of the court his continuous study. The method I now propose will give us a material step forward. None of the judges like the work of the court, because it is not in keeping with their experience and training. We want the employers and the employees to feel that the Arbitration Court is there to give them that consideration which is necessary to industrial peace. I think the Bill will contribute to that end.

Mr. McCallum: Other amendments were asked for.

The PREMIER: I do not propose to put those other amendments before the House just now. Among them was the question of the variation of awards. If awards are to be varied, the court must be able to act without undue delay.

Mr. McCallum: What about giving the court power to order the terms on which work should be resumed pending the settlement of a dispute?

The PREMIER: I do not know that we could give that power. I know that at times variations of awards ought to be made, but it means getting near to a basic wage, and it means also miles of evidence. I hope the House will pass the Bill, giving effect to this one amendment now; others which I have discussed with union representatives and with employers we may get later.

Mr. Hughes: You do not want to put a political supporter on the bench.

The PREMIER: I do not think that remark ought to have been made.

Members: Hear, hear!

The PREMIER: In considering such an appointment as this, one takes a very serious responsibility. When the hon. member shall have lived in public life for a few years he will realise that in making an appointment of this sort one faces the position with a feeling of responsibility that ought to be appreciated by everybody. It would be criminal folly if one were to appoint any but the most capable man available. No Premier

would do other than appoint the man whom he believed to be the best for the job. I do not think I can be charged with having ever made an appointment which I ought not to have made. I hope the Bill will go through without undue delay. If the amendment be approved by Parliament, the appointment can be made very soon. The Bill will certainly make for industrial peace. It ought to be possible to avoid, if not all industrial trouble, at all events all strikes. I move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. P. Collier, debate adjourned.

House adjourned at 12.40 a.m. (Wednesday).

Legislative Council.

Wednesday, 17th January, 1928.

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

QUESTIONS (2)—RAILWAYS.

Track Crossings.

Hon. R. D. ARDAGH asked the Minister for Education: 1, What is the life of the spring frog crossing—(a) in a busy yard like Perth or Midland; (b) at a country station? 2, What is the life of the rigid type under the same conditions? 3, Could not the latter be converted and thus advantage taken of the longer life and lower maintenance cost of the former?

The MINISTER FOR EDUCATION replied: 1, (a) Spring crossings are not used in yards, but only on turnouts on main running roads; (b) The life varies according to the amount and weight of traffic passing over it. 2, It is impossible to state definitely the exact difference between the life of the rigid and the spring crossing, but the spring crossing would last longer than the rigid one. 3, The rigid crossings could be converted, but there would be no advantage in doing so as the department has plenty of use for all the rigid crossings in stock, and