

capable man and has made a first-class Minister.

MR. CONNOR: And therefore you followed him across.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: The member for Menzies (Hon. H. Gregory) has always been regarded as a thoroughly efficient administrator, and I think the same can be said of the Minister for Lands (Hon. A. Jameson).

MR. CONNOR: Do not forget the Colonial Secretary.

MR. DOHERTY: What about the new board for the harbour works?

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: I shall deal with the Colonial Secretary (Hon. W. Kingsmill). That gentleman has been blamed on both sides of the House on the score that he would not do anything or could not do anything—that he could not say yes or no. Then, when the hon. gentleman does take a step, and a step in the right direction, it is mean and paltry on the part of Opposition members to refuse him their support. I do not intend to refuse him mine.

Amendment (Mr. Nanson's) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	14
Noes	29

Majority against ... 15

AYES.
Mr. Atkins
Mr. Butcher
Mr. Connor
Mr. Doherty
Mr. Harper
Mr. Moran
Mr. Nanson
Mr. O'Connor
Mr. Piase
Mr. Pigott
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Thomas
Mr. Yelverton
Mr. Jacoby (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Daughish
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Ewing
Mr. Foulkes
Mr. Gardiner
Mr. Gordon
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Hastie
Mr. Higham
Mr. Holman
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Hopkins
Mr. Hutchinson
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. James
Mr. Johnson
Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. McDonald
Mr. Monger
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Parkiss
Mr. Rason
Mr. Reid
Mr. Reside
Mr. Smith
Mr. Stone
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Wallace (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the main question again stated by MR. SPEAKER.

On motion by MR. MORAN, debate adjourned until the next day.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11.22 o'clock, until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 30th July, 1902.

Papers Removed from Table—Papers presented—
Question: Sleeper Hewers, delay in payment—
Question: Esperance Harbour, Charts—Question:
Federal High Commissioner—Question: Land Act
Amendment (Boulder)—Question: Accidents on
Goldfields, how reported—Leave of Absence—
Supply Bill, Assent—Address-in-Reply, sixth day
—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS REMOVED FROM TABLE.

THE SPEAKER: I wish to mention to hon. members that I should be glad if they would replace any papers they may take from the table. Last night, the agreement with Mr. George was taken off the table, and it cannot now be found. I do not know whether any hon. member has it in his possession; but if so, I shall be glad if he will place it on the table again.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR MINES: Regulations under the Coal Mines Regulation Act.

Order: To lie on the table.

QUESTION—SLEEPER HEWERS, DELAY IN PAYMENT.

MR. G. TAYLOR asked the Minister for Works, without notice, the cause of delay in the payment of wages of sleeper hewers at Collie for the month of June, and until the 26th July.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS replied: The sleeper hewers at Collie are engaged in cutting sleepers for different departments, and for different branches of those departments. The hon. member might repeat his question at the next sitting of the House, and I will, in the meantime, make farther inquiry, and give a better reply than I can at present. I believe the accounts for the month of June did not reach the engineer till the 16th of July; they were made up and passed for payment, and I believe cheques were sent on the 24th. I will make farther inquiries.

QUESTION—ESPERANCE HARBOUR, CHARTS.

MR. A. E. THOMAS asked the Treasurer, without notice, whether, for the information of members, he would cause to be placed on the table the latest charts of the Esperance Harbour.

THE TREASURER replied: I shall be happy to lay them on the table.

QUESTION—FEDERAL HIGH COMMISSIONER.

MR. HOPKINS asked the Premier: Whether any inquiries had been made with a view to ascertaining whether the functions relating to the office of Federal High Commissioner in London would be such as to preclude his performing the duties now devolving on the Agents-General, and more particularly those entrusted to the representative of this State.

THE PREMIER replied: Inquiries have been made, and the Acting Prime Minister of the Commonwealth states that the functions relating to the office of the Federal High Commissioner in London have not yet been exactly defined. Farther inquiries have been instituted in regard to the question in the Eastern States.

QUESTION—LAND ACT AMENDMENT (BOULDER).

MR. HOPKINS asked the Premier: When it was intended to introduce the promised amendment to the Land Act, making permissible the issue of Crown grants to certain lands at Boulder known as the 33 feet frontages in the town extension.

THE PREMIER replied: At an early date.

QUESTION—ACCIDENTS ON GOLD-FIELDS, HOW REPORTED.

MR. REID asked the Minister for Mines: 1, Whether the various accidents, fatal and otherwise, which occur on the Eastern goldfields, are regularly reported by the inspectors of the various districts to the Minister. 2, If so, whether he is fully cognisant of the circumstances under which a man named Watt was severely injured in the Birthday Gift Gold Mine, Burbanks, on or about the 3rd inst. 3, Whether he will lay any correspondence he may have received regarding the injury to Mr. Watt on the table of the House. 4, Whether he will introduce amendments to the Mining Act during the present session, so as to prevent, as far as possible, the recurrence of a similar accident in future.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES replied: 1, 2, 3, Yes. 4, The question will be carefully considered.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On motions by the **PREMIER**, leave of absence for two months was granted to the member for North Perth (Dr. McWilliams), on the ground of military service outside the State; and for one fortnight to the member for Yilgarn (Mr. Oats), on the ground of illness.

SUPPLY BILL, ASSENT.

Message from the **GOVERNOR** read, assenting to Supply Bill.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

SIXTH DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous day.

MR. T. HAYWARD (Bunbury): On account of the attacks made on myself and others by members on the Opposition side of the House, I feel it incumbent on me to make some explanation of the position I now hold. During the last election I made certain pledges, and under those pledges I felt called upon to take my seat on the Opposition side of the House. Since then, through certain circumstances, I have been relieved from those pledges, and am now quite independent, and as I am in accord with the present Government policy, I have taken my seat on this side of the House. [Applause on Government benches.] That, I think, is the only explanation I

have to give, but I would like to make a few remarks on certain Government proposals, the first being in regard to the harbour trusts. As I have been acting for many years as a shipping agent, I have long seen the disadvantages of our present system. We have had divided authority with regard to harbours, jetties, railways, and the Public Works Department. That has led to a great deal of friction, and to much loss and annoyance to all concerned. I am glad indeed to see this proposal to place harbours under harbour trusts. That system succeeded very well in the other States, and I am certain it will also be successful here. I should also like to make a few remarks upon our present system of education, which I am pleased to see it is proposed to improve. I think our present system only supplies, as a general rule, "counter jumpers" and men of that sort. I believe these people are now not greatly in demand, and it is very likely that before long we shall see them swelling the ranks of the unemployed. It is necessary to give every inducement to the rising generation to become producers, whether they live in the town or in the country. In relation to the inhabitants generally, I think that the technical education which it is proposed to establish, and which is to a certain extent in force at the present time, is well calculated to induce many of the young men or boys of these days to turn their attention to trades, and it is desirable to have manufactories established in our midst which will meet our present demands, instead of having to import everything we use. The same applies to agricultural education. Boys in the country districts need to receive a certain amount of agricultural education, and this would be the means very often of giving them greater interest in farming and inducing them to settle on our land, instead of gravitating towards the towns, as they do now to a great extent. I should also like to see the system which is adopted in New Zealand, and which is already in operation here to a certain extent. I allude to the establishment of experimental farms, and also dairy farms, whereby the people in the bush may be taught all scientific means of making butter and cheese. The same applies to a certain extent to girls in our schools. In the old country

big girls in the schools are taught cooking, and also all household work. I was at a school in the north of England where there were upwards of 900 students, boys and girls. The boys were all taught some trade, and I saw as good cabinet-work turned out as is produced in a shop. They teach them all kinds of work, even scrubbing floors. It was a very common thing for a person to go to the superintendent and say, "I do not want to scrub floors. It is *infra dig.*" But the master replied that they must comply with the regulations, or go somewhere else. These children were all taught to make bread, to cook a dinner, and things of that sort. I think that very few girls who leave our schools have been taught to do that sort of work, and I should very much like to see the system carried out. There is one amendment I would very much like to see in the Government programme, and that is a proposal for the commencement of the first section of the Collie-Goldfields railway.—[MR. EWING: Hear, hear.]—I sincerely hope that before the session is closed the Government will be in a position to bring forward a Bill to carry that out. It is not my intention to occupy the time of the House for any greater length this evening. I hope the debate will not be prolonged as we all want to get on with the real business of the session and not to lose much time. I would ask members on both sides of the House to do all that is possible to insure stability of Government and to carry out legislation that will benefit their constituents, the State and the Commonwealth, of which we now form part.

MR. MORAN (West Perth): It is almost a pity that we could not have arranged to have had this debate, the general one, as well as the vote on the question of railway administration, at one and the same time. I want to say at once that in consequence of the intimation of the Speaker, that members would be confined strictly to the amendment in speaking, I find it necessary to address the House again. I should have preferred to have had a general discussion on the politics of the country, as put forward in the Speech. I think, however, it is a pleasure that we have the vote on the amendment over, for anything we now say cannot be looked upon in the

light of special pleading to obtain votes. We can look on matters from a common ground, and with the idea and the determination to place before the House a clear programme, and lay down the course, not only for this session, but as justification for the future. There is nothing to refer to in the speech of the Colonial Secretary in dealing with the railway system, except that he claims some honour and acumen for the discovery of the June expenditure, which had mounted from somewhere in the region of £100,000 to over £200,000. Mr. Rason made a statement to the House that this had not been heard of before, and this Minister challenged me, in an interjection, that if I could point to anything like it or equal to it, he would be very much surprised. I intend to quote the hon. member's own figures and ask him to be surprised then. The hon. member has pointed out that many years before there was a more extraordinary expenditure incurred.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: In the same circumstances?

MR. MORAN: We shall come to the hon. member presently. I do not want to misrepresent any Minister whatever. All we want is a clear basis to argue upon. I do not want to build up the hon. member's case on purpose to knock it down again. In dealing with the remarks of Ministers, I shall endeavour to quote them as exactly as I can from notes taken when members have been speaking, and verified from the speeches as reported in the daily newspapers, which, in the main features, are generally correct. I just wish, in passing, to make one reference to explain that which was given by the State Treasurer in dealing with the stores account. I do say there is no other matter in connection with the finances of the country so difficult to get a clear hang of as the stores account. It appears in the balance-sheet, as has been stated, as cash. We are informed that we have reached a time when the present Government intend to write the stores account down by £48,000. I think that is correct—to write it down for the depreciation of stock. If I am misquoting the Treasurer, I shall only be too pleased if he will correct me. I understand it to be the intention of the Government to apply out of the surplus so much money

to cover depreciation of stock in the Government stores. That is a fair statement of the affair. The Government had paid to them by the people of the State during the last financial year something like, let us say, £3,600,000 cash. That was paid to the Government of the country, and the Government announced that there was a surplus of £170,000 or thereabouts, and afterwards they stated the surplus would be reduced, to cover depreciation of Government stores, by £48,000. That is the intention, is that correct?

THE TREASURER: Hardly so. I have had one attempt to explain, and I will try to have another.

MR. MORAN: No explanation is necessary. Is the depreciation of Government stores £48,000?

THE TREASURER: I do not know until I have gone into the matter fully. I say what I know to be an absolute fact. We had a return prepared, and it appears, I think, that £48,000 was the total depreciation. That will be taken from the surplus, which now amounts to about £170,000.

MR. MORAN: Then I am about correct. This £48,000 means obsolete stock in the Government stores, and that amount it is proposed to deal with out of the present surplus. Where is it? The money has been taken from the surplus to be applied—to what account? The Government have cash, and what are they going to do with it? That is a fair question. They have received the money; where are they going to place the 48,000 sovereigns? Are they going to place them to the credit of the stores account or to the debit of the stores account, whichever they like? Are they going to give the money to the stores department to purchase new goods to replace the obsolete stock? The money must be accounted for somehow. Writing down the stock by £48,000 does not account for it. That money is under the control of the State Treasurer to do something with. In justice to the stores account, that money should be given to the Government Storekeeper with which to buy new stock.

MR. HOPKINS: Perhaps he has already spent it.

MR. MORAN: He could not have spent it, because the Treasurer had the money a few weeks ago. That money

should be applied to the purchase of new stores.

MR. DAGLISH: The money never existed.

MR. MORAN: The member for Subiaco says the money never existed. If the people paid £3,600,000 to the credit of the country in cash, the money must have existed somewhere.

MR. DAGLISH: But this was not part of the balance.

MR. MORAN: The State Treasurer said he was going to apply part of the balance for the purchase of new stock, I suppose to put the stores on a satisfactory basis. If that be so, the question arises in our minds, is this new stock required, or when will it be required; and if new stock is not purchased at once—if the money is not required just now—what is going to be done with the surplus in the meantime? The ordinary expenditure of the State last year covered all the services and statutory debts amounting to £170,000 less than the money received. That money will be in the hands of the Treasurer to do something with. He has to show what he has done with it. The stores may not be required for some time, and that brings us to the question as to what is the meaning of depreciation, covering a number of years, in the Government stores; and is anything allowed for appreciation? Some time ago the State made a large purchase of steel rails and iron, which afterwards went up in value.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hear, hear.

MR. MORAN: In taking out the account for Government stores, in taking stock, will the Government allow the increased value of the rails, above what was paid, £4 per ton?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hear, hear.

MR. MORAN: Would they? I answer, no.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: In the Treasury there is neither profit nor loss.

MR. MORAN: That is so; and why? Simply because they buy, say, rails to do a certain work; that work is done with the rails, which are worth no more and no less to the Government if they are used. So, as regards this question of Government stores and depreciation of stock, the point is that if we put the article to the use for which it was bought, it ought to stand in our books at the value

represented by the full price paid for it; but, on the other hand, if we took these rails, which cost, say theoretically, £4 per ton and sold them for £6 without using them, then we should make a cash profit which would go to the profit of the stores account. The only time when we have depreciation or a case of obsolete stock is when we cannot use Government stores, and place them on the open market to be sold for what they will fetch.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And then we debit the loss.

MR. MORAN: Then we debit the loss; and that is the proper time to do so, not now. I am glad the hon. member agrees with me. I trust we are not endeavouring to score points, but to get these finances on a satisfactory basis; so we may come to the conclusion that there is perhaps too much made at the present moment of depreciation of stores and stock. Only in the future will the difficulty be elucidated. When we deal with stock-in-hand, using it for the purpose for which it was bought, then we must debit it and credit it at the exact value at which it stands in the books.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And in the department to which it belongs.

MR. MORAN: And in the department to which it belongs—quite so. The railways would be debited with the cost of the rails as they were purchased—certainly not debited with the appreciated value of the rails at £6 a ton if sold at that higher price. That would be unfair to the railways. This is the point I wish to make, and I believe this is happening to-day. The railways should not be allowed to take stock out of Government stores, and to debit themselves with only 50 per cent. of its cost, on the plea that it has depreciated in value, and still to use it for original work. I believe that is done to-day. Supposing that several years ago the railways purchased £50,000 worth of stock in ordinary course, I say no man can guarantee when a thing will become obsolete—the rush and roar of trade, the progress of invention, the fluctuation in the cost of iron, may cause great differences in value. But if the railways ordered say £50,000 worth of rails a few years ago, which they did not then use, and which they now wish to use for the identical purpose for which the stock was originally purchased, they say to the

Government Storekeeper, "We refuse to take that stuff unless you give it us at its present market value." That is being done.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: No; hardly.

THE TREASURER: No.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The appreciation is all right, but not the depreciation.

MR. MORAN: If the railways can say that to the Government Storekeeper—

THE TREASURER: They have to take the stock at cost price.

MR. MORAN: But they will not take it, except at its market value.

THE TREASURER: They are not doing that. It is charged to the Railway Department at cost price.

MR. MORAN: If it be charged to the Railway Department at cost price, then the proposition I have previously enunciated stands untouched. If an article be used, it must be debited at the original cost; and as regards utility, there is no appreciation or depreciation, except of course the ordinary wear and tear of stuff in use—an altogether different problem, and covered by an altogether different vote, I mean the provision made on the forthcoming Estimates for maintenance and repair of rolling-stock.

MR. HOPKINS: Suppose they have ordered stock which they do not want?

MR. MORAN: Then the stock must be sold in the open market; and the sooner the better. Credit the account with the amount you get; and, I suppose, debit revenue.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is what the Treasurer proposes to do with the £48,000.

MR. MORAN: Of course; I understand that thoroughly. We know it is problematical whether the amount to be written off is £48,000, £28,000, or £108,000. It would have been impossible for the present State Treasurer carefully to take stock since he has been in office; and I suppose it is probable he is nearer the correct amount than anybody making a rough guess without having the same official facilities for getting the information. If the amount be only £48,000, I shall not be dissatisfied, nor I am sure will any other member. Now we come to the elaborate and carefully-prepared speech of the present Minister for Works and Railways (Hon. C. H. Rason) in defence of his position. And let me say at

once that it bore certain evidences of special pleading. I maintain, when a gentleman rises to defend his party and his views, he must be a special pleader; and so far as I am personally concerned, I listened with great pleasure to and received much information from the well thought out and well-delivered speech of the Minister. And it is a credit to the House and an advantage, too, that Ministers and others making similar statements should prepare them beforehand, and give them in such a lucid and straightforward manner. At the same time, there was in the speech one blemish—unintentional, intentional, or caused by a desire to "put the best leg forward." The Minister was not quite fair in quoting the New South Wales rates, as was clearly evidenced in the letter over the *nom de plume* of "Fishplate" which appeared in the *West Australian*, and was written I do not know by whom. I do not think it fair to ask the proprietor of that paper or the leader of the Opposition (its business manager) to divulge the writer's name.

MR. TAYLOR: It would be useless if you did.

MR. MORAN: We might just as well retort to the Minister that he should give us the purport of conversations in Cabinet. It is sufficient that it was a very able letter, and showed a grasp of the situation which entitles that writer, whenever he writes again, to be treated with the greatest respect—a most instructive letter, and one which completely took the wind out of the Minister's sails; for he had led this House to understand, and had given his word of honour, that there was nothing in the New South Wales rates—

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Pardon me. The rates which I quoted were special rates. I quoted different classes of rates, and said in regard to those classes that all the information I had at my disposal showed they would compare favourably with the New South Wales rates.

MR. NANSON: Per single mile?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; for 400 miles.

MR. MORAN: I do not wish at all to pin down the Minister.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I wish to be pinned down.

MR. MORAN: I do not wish to make the point that the Minister deliberately concealed from the House some information which he knew would be injurious to his case; but he led the House to understand—or we in Opposition understood—that there was no difference between the charges for carriage of agricultural produce and goldfields stuff in New South Wales and the rates in any of the other States.

MEMBER: That was the inference.

MR. MORAN: I think it was. We now have the information; and if the Minister did leave that impression, he has since admitted that what is written by "Fishplate" is correct.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: No, no.

MR. MORAN: Then the Minister still maintains that the rates for the carriage of agricultural produce in New South Wales are as favourable to his argument as those in Victoria and South Australia?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The rates I quoted are absolutely correct.

MR. MORAN: And the rates quoted by "Fishplate" also are absolutely correct?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I am not in a position to say.

MR. HOPKINS: That proves the whole story.

MR. MORAN: It proves that if you take one portion of our rate-book and compare it with the New South Wales book, you may prove your case; and somebody else with another section of the rate-book may prove another case.

MR. HOPKINS: That is right. Each one works it out to suit himself.

MR. MORAN: And therefore it is for the House invariably to look all round the subject, and come to a conclusion whether the rates in Western Australia are on the whole as fair to our big industries as are the rates of New South Wales to the industries of that country. Anyhow, the Minister admits that the A, B, and C rates in New South Wales are about equal to the same rates in Queensland and Victoria. That is quite right. But when we come down to concrete facts, and the haulage of certain materials which largely affect the case of Western Australia, we find, for instance, that the rates for the haulage of ore in New South Wales are infinitely lower than in Western Australia; and that is a

big item, for our railways haul large quantities of coal and all sorts of mineral ores. And considering that we bring back so many empty trucks from the goldfields, may we not, with justice, give the New South Wales rates a trial for the carriage of ores and of coal over similar distances? I will admit, as is only fair, that we must have due regard to the wages paid on the two railway systems. That is always a governing factor. It is not fair to take the rate simply; because we pay higher wages in Western Australia, for the reason that the cost of living is higher.

MR. HOPKINS: And the New South Wales railway stations on the Bourke line are forty miles apart.

MR. MORAN: A very good point. We are smothered up with staff stations on the road from here to the goldfields; whereas in New South Wales the stations are forty miles apart. But I think, taking all things into consideration, we have a lot to learn from New South Wales in reference to the haulage of agricultural produce to our goldfields and the haulage of ores from the fields to Fremantle; and my only desire is to assist the Government in rearranging the rate-book. And if they do that, if they agree to a fair medium, I am prepared to wish them a long life and long continuance in office. That is all. Now, I must put in a plea on behalf of the old Administration, and a word of warning to members of this House—those in Opposition particularly—as to what may happen in June next. The Minister for Works drew special attention to the destruction of 10 or 11 engines, and the total destruction of, I think, 101 trucks, and the very dilapidated state of 1,000 odd trucks which required repairs. The loss of the 11 railway engines was debited against the year just gone, and half the cost of repairing the 1,000 odd trucks was debited against that year also. I am glad I am speaking correctly. The Minister signifies his agreement with me. This is a fair statement of the case.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The losses occurred in the preceding year.

MR. MORAN: Well, I am glad you help me along with my argument. The loss of the engines and the trucks occurred at the same time; but the

depreciation of the 1,000 odd trucks went on for several years. Yet, notwithstanding this, unfortunate 1901-2 had to bear the whole burden; and it should not be absent from our minds in this House that piling up all this liability, while in itself a merit, could not but help to bolster up the cause of the increase of railway rates. I do not accuse the Government of doing this intentionally; but I ask the House, was it not a happy coincidence for Ministers that these things happened, that they had a surplus revenue, that they could debit all these items against the year just gone, in order to help their case for increasing the railway rates?

MR. J. J. HOLMES: Long before the rates were increased, we told the House we proposed to do it.

MR. MORAN: Quite so. It has been done.

MR. DIAMOND: What else could you do? You could not debit those items to the previous years for which accounts were closed.

MR. MORAN: That is just what you could have done; and I will tell you how. Our railways paid into the general revenue of this country some hundreds of thousands of pounds profits in years gone by. It was the boast of the old leader of this House that they did so. It has been argued that we did not take particular care at that time, or as much care as we should have done, of our rolling-stock. I say so, and have always said so. And I say also that, having taken the earnings of these railways and placed them in the general revenue, you had no right to go back now and charge the railways again with depreciation of rolling-stock. That is surely a fair charge that they were robbed of in years gone by, when the amount was called "general revenue." It is not a fair thing now to pile up the liability for the repair of 1,100 railway trucks against one year, 1901-2, nor is it a fair thing to debit the loss of 11 railway engines and 101 trucks against this one year, although it did come to light in this particular year. But whatever shadow of doubt there may be as to debiting railway engines and lost trucks against the financial year 1901, there can be no doubt that those thousand and odd trucks were several years in getting into disrepair, and in those years what they

paid as profits into the revenue in this country they paid wrongly. The railways were robbed of that revenue, and it should have been placed back against their depreciation. I take it that is a fair proposition. The result is this, that as far as 1901-2 is concerned all the old liabilities have been piled against that year, and the earnings made to look bad. Farther than this, I have another point. The ex-Minister for Railways informed us that it was only about the middle of June a tremendous heap of indents came in, amounting to something like £100,000 or £80,000—it does not matter what the sum was for the sake of argument. Early in the month of June the Minister thought the month's expenditure would be £120,000, but before the month passed over his head he discovered himself with an addition to the amount of £100,000 because of more vouchers coming to hand. Here is another point, and I make this remark now to get it on the records of *Hansard*, because I am going to watch what will happen in the Railway Department very closely, for I am afraid the Minister will have a tremendous advantage in the next twelve months which he will never get again—[MINISTER FOR WORKS: Hear, hear]—that is, to wipe out the whole of the liabilities of the past and present, and also, I maintain, some that are to come. He is giving himself the benefit of a lot of new stock which is charged to the year 1901-2, but will only get into use in the next twelve months. This brings me to the point that I am not content that the new Commissioner should have any such advantage, and I am not content to take the challenge of the Ministry to give Mr. George his trial on one year's administration only. I will admit this, that if he, with all these advantages and this wiping up of all liabilities and a fair start and a clean sheet, as his chief calls it, makes a failure in the next twelve months, then he will be doubly condemned. If he makes a success, then I shall say, "You had an unfair start at the beginning: you did not take your fair share of liabilities." I am not wishing to do anything unfair at all. If he has a good year I shall say to him, "I shall know better what you are worth when you have carried on the liabilities of this railway system from

this year to the next year, and have adopted that system for two years." Probably if we looked into the matter in an absolutely impartial way, it might be fairer to blame than to praise him for the next twelve months.

MR. DIAMOND: If he debits losses and depreciations to the current year, how can he go wrong?

MR. MORAN: I hope he will so debit them; but do not forget whether it is fair to charge all this which has come to hand to the past year. The hon. gentleman says he has done so, but he asserts that it only came to hand on the last day of June.

MR. DIAMOND: But it is new stock.

MR. MORAN: That is a problem. New stock is not to replace old stock in all cases. If the business of the country be increasing, it is probably new expenditure altogether, and you will debit it against the year 1902 and have the use of it for 1903.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Not the whole. There is coal. You should not contend it is all rolling-stock.

MR. MORAN: I am not doing so. I am referring to rolling-stock, and surely the public accounts will show how much of the amount is for rolling-stock and how much for coal. I am not prepared to accept it as a fair liability against the new year.

MR. DIAMOND: It is charged as investment in stock. It is not expenses.

MR. MORAN: What are investments in stock, if not expenses?

MR. DIAMOND: Investments in new stock are not expenses; certainly not the same as wages.

MR. MORAN: I asked the Minister the other night, and he said they were not for loan purposes by any means. If they were, why is he paying them out of the June revenue? What makes up the hundred thousand and odd pounds for June? Vouchers to hand. The only thing the Minister has condescended to tell us is that some of this is for coal; some paltry amounts. What were these vouchers? Perhaps we shall learn later on. We must watch carefully that the year 1902 is not unfairly loaded with expenditure, and that it does not give a cover for raising the railway rates in Western Australia. Such cover would be an unjust one. I do not wish to labour the

point farther. I have given my opinions as straightforwardly as I can, and I wish to abide by them, so that if I have the honour and privilege of being here in 12 months time, I may look back and say, "I was right" or "I was wrong," and in order that the Ministry may say, "You were right," or "You were wrong." There is no animus or bias in the matter one way or the other. Coming to the statement of the Minister for Railways that this June expenditure was an extraordinary one and could not have been foreseen, I think I interjected that it was not an extraordinary one, inasmuch as it had occurred every year before to a larger or smaller degree, and something extra was always added in June. I can quote one year when a very much more extraordinary expenditure took place, and under the same circumstances, as far as my memory tells me, and, if it was not, there is a good opportunity for the Minister to point out where they differed. In June, 1897, the ordinary expenditure of the month was £40,000—I am quoting absolutely from memory, and I think I am correct—and the amount was raised by extraordinary payments to £240,000. I think that is about 250 per cent.; so a much more extraordinary June expenditure occurred in the old days in Western Australia than has occurred this year; and what has occurred year after year, and happened to such an extraordinary extent in one year, should not have come with such a surprising shock on the unoffending head of the ex-Minister for Railways, if he had known his business and had been looking through the reports for the last eight or ten years. I will say this, that he was, so to speak, in a whirlwind of fighting and had not a fair chance. I am not going to attack the hon. gentleman or expect any Minister of Railways, untrained or not knowing the circumstances, to go into the office and become a genius of management in six months. Not for a moment do I wish to blame the hon. gentleman. I think he has just as much ability and intelligence as any other member of the Assembly. That is my opinion of him, but I find fault with him for raising the rates. That is an executive act for which his want of experience does not count. His want of experience should have led him probably to leave the matter alone until Parliament

met. His want of experience does not justify the appointment of a Commissioner of Railways to alter the whole system of the Western Australian railways. These are the two faults I raise against that hon. gentleman—his increasing the rates and his entering into that extraordinary agreement with Mr. George for ten years' service.

MR. DIAMOND: The Minister does not know where the agreement is.

MR. MORAN: Mr. George knows where it is. He has not lost his copy, if we have lost ours. Another charge against the Ministry was that the agreement should have been published some time ago, ere Parliament met, so that the public should have an opportunity of discussing it; but that was not done. According to parliamentary etiquette the agreement should have been laid on the table of the House when Parliament first met. Such a horrible act as appointing a man under the circumstances existing has never arisen previously.

MR. HOPKINS: I do not know about horrible acts. We have had some horrible men.

MR. MORAN: Do not let us convert this into a chamber of horrors, anyhow. That is the position, and an extraordinary one it is, that the new Commissioner is appointed and has a fixity of tenure high above our heads for six years. He will have charge of the railways for five years, whether they are managed or mismanaged, good, bad, or indifferent, and if the Government do not like him, they can, at the end of that term, give him 12 months' full pay to go to England.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Is it not like the case of Mr. O'Connor? Mr. O'Connor was appointed on a long engagement during recess.

MR. MORAN: Yes; but the appointment of an Engineer-in-Chief in Western Australia engaged the attention of members of this Assembly. It was part of the policy of Western Australia as agreed to by this Legislative Chamber. The appointment of a Commissioner of Railways above the people and the Parliament was never sanctioned by this House, and was never part of the policy of any party receiving the sanction of the country to do it. What I complain of was done before sanction was obtained, and, as the Premier says, the House has justified it

by the vote last night. It has: It has received the sanction of Parliament now, and the Ministry have been thoroughly justified in their own eyes.

MR. TAYLOR: What about the country?

MR. MORAN: That has never been considered.

MR. HOPKINS: There were a lot of members returned at the last general election to support the Commissioner system.

MR. MORAN: Then we come to this position, that there were a lot of members elected at the last elections to support the Commissioner system.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I was elected to oppose it.

MR. MORAN: Very well. What do we find in the speech of the Premier on this point? Here is a quotation of his own words, taken down by me when he was speaking, and afterwards verified, as I have said, by the morning papers. I want to give a most unqualified and emphatic denial to an unfair statement made by the Premier last night. This is what he said:—

Since the debate had been in progress, there had been a unanimous expression of opinion that Mr. George was a most fit man for the position.

Those are the exact words. Now, is that so?

MINISTERIAL MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. MORAN: Speaking on behalf of the leader of the Opposition, who cannot address the House on the question again, and reaffirming what I myself have said, reuttering what has been uttered by many members on this (Opposition) side of the House, I give that statement a flat and unqualified contradiction.

MR. DIAMOND: Oh, don't be so nasty with the Government.

MR. MORAN: One cannot, as hon. members opposite know, always follow "brute majorities" in seeking common sense. I have heard no member on this side of the House make such a statement, except it be the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor). That hon. member gives Mr. George's appointment his unqualified approval; but he spoke only for himself, and as "one swallow does not make a summer," neither does the utterance of one Opposition member constitute a unanimous expression of opinion

from the Opposition as a body. If there be any unanimity at all on this side of the House—and there is not too much unanimity in regard to railway matters on either side of the House, unanimity on railway matters not being characteristic of any party just now—if there be anything in which this side of the House is unanimous, it is that, so far as the official head and the main body of members of this party are concerned, they are entirely in favour of buying the best railway expert in the world, even at a sum of three, four, or five thousand pounds per annum. Farther, the leader of the Opposition has stated that if he succeeded to power he would immediately dispense with Mr. George's services at whatever cost to the country, making the first loss the best loss, and obtain a better man. There is a risk in making such a statement, even as there is an advantage in making it.

MINISTERIAL MEMBER: Your leader knows he has not the power.

MR. MORAN: If Mr. George's appointment should prove a success—and I do hope it will; Mr. George has my best wishes; I have nothing whatever against him—we members of the Opposition will be proved lacking in our estimate of human character and our judgment of the best man for the position. It will be a fair retort for the Government to say to us, "If you had had your way, the State would not have had this good man for the position of Commissioner of Railways." We shall be in the same position as members now in possession of the Government benches who, having in season and out of season opposed the Coolgardie Water Scheme, have latterly found themselves compelled to admit that they were in the wrong.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I have never yet admitted that.

MR. MORAN: Surely, there is nothing more worthy in a public man than that he should have the courage of forming beliefs and stating them. I do hate a "crawfisher"—a man with no opinions of his own, with no disposition to express an open or candid belief, always leaving himself a loophole to get out on either side, as the cat may happen to jump in the end. So far as I am concerned, I do not consider Mr. George's special capabilities such as to warrant the Government in

picking him out for the position he now holds; and this is quite apart from the political aspect of the appointment. It is my opinion that Mr. George has not the requisite capabilities for the position. I may be right or I may be wrong. At present I desire merely to give a denial to the statement of the Premier, which denial I hope and believe the hon. gentleman will accept. Turning now to consider the case of those members who were elected to support the appointment of a Board of Commissioners, I ask the House to listen to what the Premier said last night:—

Under the old system they had a railway expert as manager, and a Minister. The Opposition now wanted to go back to that position. He pointed out that some Ministers had devoted years of their lives—

Those are the exact words—

years of their lives to a resultless effort to deal with a hopeless position.

That is an absolutely fair statement of the position. I have to point out that such members as are in favour of a Board of Commissioners cannot be supporters of the present Government. Why? Because the very Premier who devoted half an hour to proving that control by a Minister had been an absolute failure for the last 12 years, advances as his latest proposal, and I presume as portion of his railway policy, an intention to leave the Minister in full control, with Mr. George as general manager. The Premier greatly laboured the point, with a desire to prove that what had been done by the Government in order to remove the railways from the Ministerial control—to which control, be it noted, some good men had fruitlessly given their undivided efforts; which control had proved so great a failure for 12 years—was to be nullified! Notwithstanding all the considerations mentioned, the Premier tells this House that it is the intention of the Government to appoint three Commissioners. For, be it observed, last night the hon. gentleman said "one or three Commissioners." He is giving way on the point of three Commissioners. Probably the Premier is wise in yielding. But I have to point out that in the Governor's Speech, as laid before this House, the whole proposition clearly still remains. The latest move of the Government is towards the old condition of affairs. "For," says the

Premier, "the control of railway rates will be left with the Minister as heretofore, and the control of the railway employees will remain with the Minister and this House as heretofore." Take out the public who pay rates, take out the men who work the railways, and what is left?

MR. HOPKINS: That has been the custom wherever the system has obtained.

MR. MORAN: We are dealing with Western Australia just now; and I say all that will remain for the control of the Commissioner will be the steel rails and the sleepers. Mr. George being a bit of an expert in iron—I will admit he is that—is thus provided with full and fitting employment in looking after the rails and bolts and nuts in our railway system; since Parliament will look after the men, look after the public, and look after the rates.

THE PREMIER: You consider Mr. George fully qualified to do the only thing he will have a chance of doing?

MR. MORAN: I do not deny Mr. George a certain measure of ability in the handling of iron, nor do I deny him a knowledge of iron. But here is the position. I wish to show how the Premier last night upset his own case when he spent so much time and devoted so much close argument to prove what a horrible state of affairs we have got into in Western Australia, with the railways under the control of a Minister and a General Manager. For the hon. gentleman comes down to the House and says—and some of his supporters, I may remark, have said the same—"Things will be the same as before. We are still going to have a Minister for Railways and a General Manager of Railways. We are going to call the General Manager 'Commissioner of Railways'; that is all the difference." This, it seems to me, is a fair statement of the position of the Government. That the Premier has used those words is not denied; neither do Ministers repudiate their intention as I have expressed it. Why have the Government come down so mightily from their first proposition of independent Commissioners to the poor proposition of possibly one Commissioner who is to be deprived of the control of rates and the control of employees? If hon. members want to know why—they say that if you

want to know the time you must ask a policeman—why the Government have "crawfished," I advise them to ask the Labour party, and they will speedily learn. (Laughter.)

MR. TAYLOR: Hear, hear, old man!

MR. MORAN: I now propose to touch on a matter of great delicacy to myself and also to the House, and that is the dethronement, or, better, the displacement, of Mr. Pennefather from the position of Judge of the Supreme Court of Western Australia. Let me deal with the matter in as unbiassed a manner as possible, without touching on, or mentioning, or even glancing at what is known as the Spear-Parker case. I wish to deal with this matter simply as a public man. I say now what I have said privately to a certain Minister, who still feels deeply that neither himself nor the Cabinet of which he was a member have been considered competent to select a man for one of the highest judicial positions in the land. That is the standpoint from which I shall treat the matter. I do not think that in the history of Australia there is another instance of an Administration receiving such a slap in the face from its successors as was administered to the Throssell Government, who appointed a Judge of this country, when the succeeding Government asked that Judge to step down again. I know of no parallel instance in Australian history. I resent the affront publicly, as a public man; and I resent it, moreover, as a Minister who had a share in making Mr. Pennefather's appointment. I appeal to hon. members to pay regard to this justification of the action of the Cabinet to which I belonged in selecting Mr. Pennefather for a Judgeship. I shall deal with the episode from beginning to end in the fewest possible words. The man who placed Mr. Pennefather on the Supreme Court Bench of Western Australia was Sir John Forrest, a man honoured in his own land as the first of West Australians—

THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.

MR. MORAN: And honoured in the Commonwealth of Australia at the present day as one of the first Australians ever born, a man of whom Mr. Kingston has said in the Federal House of Representatives, "He is the noblest West Australian of them all, and West Australians are

proud of him." And so we are. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] But, farther, Sir John Forrest is a man who wears the highest honours which his country can give him—the highest honours which, in a human sense, are attainable. Sir John Forrest has been decorated with the highest honours flowing from the fountain of constitutional honour, his Sovereign; he has received the highest honours which can be paid to a statesman. Such is the man who appointed Mr. Pennefather to the Supreme Court Bench of Western Australia. However, Sir John Forrest has not been considered worthy to make such an appointment, for those who came after him have said, in effect, "We are the better judges of who should be on the Supreme Court Bench." I regret this exceedingly. I regret it for two reasons. The first and foremost is that the removal of Mr. Pennefather constitutes the first instance in the history of Australia of the baneful influence of politics being allowed to touch, or rather contaminate, appointments to the Judicial Bench. In advancing these contentions I am saying nothing derogatory to Mr. Parker, whom I consider even better fitted for the position than Mr. Pennefather. At the time of the latter gentleman's appointment, however, I for one clearly understood that Mr. Parker did not want the appointment; that when approached on the matter some time previously he had expressed himself as undesirous of taking the position. I may say, also, there is one lawyer in Western Australia whom I consider head and shoulders above everybody else in point of fitness for a seat on the Supreme Court Bench. I refer to Mr. Septimus Burt, of whom I have said during years gone by in this Assembly—and I say it now and believe it still—that he is one of the brightest ornaments of the Bar, and that when in the fulness of years those gentlemen who have recently lent such grace and honour to the position of Chief Justice have passed away, I should like to see Mr. Burt hold the highest judicial office Western Australia can bestow. I was given clearly to understand that Mr. Burt would not take a puisne Judgeship, and did not want a judicial appointment then in any case. I considered at the time that Mr. Parker's long years in Western Australia, as well as his un-

doubted seniority at the Bar to Mr. Pennefather, gave him a prior claim. But, I repeat, I fully understood that Mr. Parker did not desire just then to take the position. I maintain, therefore, that the way was clear for any honest man to obey the request of the great leader whom he had loved and served for so many years, when that leader pronounced Mr. Pennefather in every way qualified to adorn the Supreme Court Bench of Western Australia. Mr. Pennefather had, at any rate, well and faithfully served that leader, and the State of Western Australia as well, for several years. He had served in this Assembly; and, as time rolled by, after his first entrance into this Chamber, he gained our respect and esteem more and more. Mr. Pennefather won, in particular, the esteem and confidence of his great leader, whose last request—I refuse to be silent on this point, no matter who else may be silent; I speak neither for Mr. Pennefather's sake nor for my own, but for the sake of the status of the Supreme Court Bench—whose last request was that Mr. Pennefather, being in every respect entitled to the position, should receive it. Mr. Pennefather was entitled to a Judgeship not only by reason of holding the Attorney-Generalship. Sir John Forrest clearly said that Mr. Pennefather's judicial abilities, the calm and passionless nature of his mind in dealing with legal matters, his training, the degrees he had gained—which certainly are not attainable without ability; degrees which he had won in Victoria, whence good men do come—that all these qualifications gave Mr. Pennefather a clear title to elevation to the Supreme Court Bench. Once there, it was a serious thing for any Administration succeeding the Government that put him there, to take him down again. That is the stand I take. I am putting the position before the country at the first opportunity afforded me of speaking on this matter, which I feel so deeply. I had the misfortune to lose my seat; but now, at the first opportunity, I put it to the House to consider what a grave and serious thing it was to allow even the shadow of a suspicion that political influence swayed appointments to the Supreme Court Bench to be cast over Western Australia. And what a trail of horrible deeds it has

brought in its track, things we would have given anything to see undone and unsaid. Look at the pages of *Hansard*; look at the columns of the newspapers! Look at the wounded hearts and homes and reputations, and would we not wish all this undone? I think so. Is it not a serious matter when for the first time we can say—I do not say it; I am not going to say it, but has it not been said all over the country lately—that political opinions allowed the Government, who succeeded the Government of which the member for Northam was the head, to interfere; to take off the Bench a prominent political opponent and to appoint another gentlemen. If Mr. Parker had been willing to fill the position—and let me pause and tremble before I say a word on a matter of which I am not competent to judge, save that he served well and honourably at the Bar of Western Australia, as far as I know. But that is not the point at all. If Mr. Burt had come along and said—that is after Mr. Pennefather had been appointed—that he would take the position, he should not have been given the position once Mr. Pennefather had been appointed. Mr. Pennefather should not have been removed. I am going a step farther. I am going to quote to the House what the leader of the Government said last night, for its bearing on this matter is of the greatest importance. I am going to ask, what is going to be done in Mr. Pennefather's case in the light of what was done in Mr. George's case? The Premier said that he might have prevented the agreement with Mr. George from being made, as it had not been signed by the Executive Council, but, added the Premier, "I would not be a party to such repudiation." I do appeal to the leader of the Government, who has had an honourable career in this country hitherto unstained by any blemish or anything that would cause the blush of shame to any man, to say: was not Mr. Pennefather appointed to the position? Had he not been much more firmly fixed than Mr. George had, whose appointment had not been ratified by the Executive Council? The appointment was really made by one whose age and experience and long and honourable career in Western Australia fitted him to decide, in his declining years and with his magnificent services to this country, who

was a fit person to occupy the high and honourable post of a Judge. If he was not prepared to decide who was a proper person to be a Judge, then neither Mr. Leake nor Mr. James was competent to do so. Mr. Pennefather had been appointed by the Executive Council, and the information had been given to the House that when the appointment was made the impression existed that it was to be a permanent position. If that information has not already been given to the House, then I am giving it to members now. I refer hon. gentlemen to the Executive Council papers to bear me out in what I say. The Premier has said that he was bound to ratify an appointment to a minor position; a position not so honourable as that of a Supreme Court Judge. Will the Premier say that the then Government were justified in taking Mr. Pennefather off the Supreme Court Bench? I am placing this matter before the House as temperately and as coolly as I possibly can. I traduce no man's character in the slightest degree. I am standing up on behalf of my own position, I am not authorised to make any statement on this head, nor does a man want authorisation to take an honourable action. If I never again hold the proud position which is given to hon. members to hold in the Australian States, the position of a Cabinet Minister, if I should never hold that position again I would not have it said of me that I was not fit to exercise due care and caution in the greatest work a Cabinet Minister is called on to do. The Supreme Court is the one ornament of the British Constitution which has never had the least suspicion cast against it. The Supreme Court Bench may be compared to the Eddystone lighthouse, or any other lighthouse standing forth as a bright beacon of hope and guidance through all political turmoil and trouble and revolution and party warfare and social upheaval. The light which blazes forth from the topmost part of it gives hope in the same manner as the Supreme Court of Great Britain, above the political turmoil, is the brightest ornament that the British can lay claim to. When warfare is over, even if we have been rebels, we can lay claim to justice at the hands of the Supreme Court Bench. We know that British justice is ours. It has never yet been said that we allowed political

influence to interfere with the Supreme Court Bench. Every writer to-day points to the one blemish in the United States, that in the Supreme Court appointments political influence is allowed to interfere. Have we not seen the disclosures of Tammany Hall? and should we not hold them up in horror to avoid? I do most earnestly hope and trust that this will never occur again. I am not accusing the Government. They probably have thought that Mr. Parker was more suited for the position than Mr. Pennefather; but they had no right to take a man from a position which he held with honour and distinction when there—and no one has yet said it was a position he was not able to fill, having tried him. His judgments will bear criticism by the ablest; his actions as a public and private citizen are without blemish; and in his character and disposition and in his abilities he was a gentleman, a lawyer, and a man fit to uphold the position. Have we not heard of the famous round-robin signed by the legal profession in Perth, aimed against the appointment of one man? and have we not lived to hear the majority of those gentlemen say that they were sorry they signed it? Many of them have said to me that they were sorry, and if ever again they were asked to sign such a document they would be long sorry before they took such a step. In reading lately the life of Sir John Macdonald, of Canada, the greatest statesman outside the British Parliament who ever lived, whose boast was always that in political life he tried to cling as closely as he could to the traditions of the British Constitution, I came upon a case on all-fours with the one which we have now under consideration. It was where the legal profession in a certain district sent a round-robin to interfere with the appointment of a Judge for that district. I came across it in reading his life, and I thought it very *apropos*, and I shall conclude what I have to say on this point by giving the quotation. "Sir John," says the biographer, "resented any unsolicited advice on such matters, even though the suggestion was good in itself. I remember well," says the biographer, "his displeasure on receiving a petition signed by all the barristers of a certain district praying for the appointment of one of their number." "This sort of thing,"

said Sir John, "is most unseemly." Was it not indiscreet for members of any particular profession to seek to interfere with the course of constitutional government, in that we have government by the people, not by a section of the people? Since a Judge has to represent all—not the humblest, not the highest—why, therefore, should one section of the community seek to interfere with the executive of the Government in its highest functions? This is all I have to say on this one topic, and on this very unpleasant matter. Mr. Pennefather has my deepest sympathy in having lost his position. He has held that high and honourable position which stamps him for ever as a Judge, since his judgments remain for ever. I appeal on behalf of that gentleman that he is entitled to the sympathy of every one in the Assembly; and he is entitled to the sympathy of the country. I hope the day is far distant when anyone shall give room for the slightest ground of suspicion that there has been any interference with the appointment of a Supreme Court Judge. I apologise for having kept the House, on this one matter, so long, but I desired to express my opinion, and, having done that, I leave the matter for ever. On matters of general politics we cannot sit here as a deliberative Assembly without viewing with concern the increasing burden in Western Australia. This is not a party matter, and we cannot but look with awe on the fact that this country collected more revenue than Queensland, with its diversified interests, did in 1901.

THE PREMIER: You know that Queensland had a very bad time indeed.

MR. MORAN: The bad time in Queensland made very little difference in the revenues against the years before. Let us say that Queensland last year had a deficit of £500,000, the fact remains that we collected more revenue, and Queensland would require to have just twice the deficit to approach our position. I put it seriously to Ministers that someone has to face the ordeal in grappling with the increased Budget placed on the table of the House. For this reason I touch lightly on the food duties, and speak to my friends, whom I have helped all I could, the farming community of Western Australia. I warn the farming com-

munity of Western Australia that they are keeping the sliding scale on to collect revenue, and they are doing the surest thing on earth to bring about a land tax in a few years. If you accustom a country to a big Budget, the Government will get the money from somewhere. We get accustomed to handling millions, and if we do not grapple with the expenditure and keep down the service, we shall have a land and income tax proposed in this House before long. Nobody will accuse me of ever having said anything against the farming industry of Western Australia. Coming to the food duties, out of which we collect £80,000 or £90,000, I do say, as I said when the federal vote was taken, and as a consistent protectionist, that the food duties are not a pennyworth of advantage to Western Australia. If you take out the wheat and the flour and leave the cheese, the butter, the bacon, and the onions, there is no protection, for the local article brings a better price than the imported one. And what is the use of protection for the few years of the sliding scale? It is not enough to give an industry a start. What is the use of bolstering up an industry for a few years when you know it cannot stand on its feet in that time? Those food duties are an iniquitous tax on the people at the present day. There is one means by which we can safely reduce taxation, even if we come in next year, or for several years, with a deficit equal to the amount of the food duties. Even then, I still say food is absolutely too dear in Western Australia. Of course, we can all labour this hackneyed subject by talking of poor families, and that sort of thing. Well, gentlemen, in this case there is absolute truth in it. Is not meat an extraordinarily high price? Has not the blessed Federation terribly increased the cost of living? That we cannot remedy.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Is not the increase due to the droughts in the other States?

MR. MORAN: The droughts in the other States are largely responsible for the cost of meat; but meat is not just now on the food duty list; and I do not think the drought in the Eastern States has much affected other foodstuffs. And even if the drought in the other States had raised the price of cheese 200 per cent., why raise it higher by an

import duty in Western Australia? No matter how dear nor how cheap cheese is, the burden on the people can be lightened by removing the duty. In Western Australia we have no rich. There is a large number of well-to-do middle-class people; and the man who keeps up appearances in town, struggling perhaps in a Government billet, who is supposed to wear a certain cut of coat and class of hat, has his nose much closer to the grindstone than the man using a pick at Boulder. I do not believe in the distinction made by calling manual labourers exclusively working men. There is much trouble in families living on £150 or on £200—a very common wage—to make ends meet at the close of the month, because the cost of living is so high. In South Africa we have now a new competitor entering the field. Many of our people are going there. Let us, by cheapening the cost of living, try to attract people to Western Australia, even if we do wind up with a deficit. Let us give them their food as cheaply as we can, since in so doing we are not hurting any industry. If it were protection to an industry, the case would be different; but as it is not, let us strike off the food duties, and leave the really protective duties in the sliding-scale for two or three years, for the benefit of the small manufacturer.

MR. HASTIE: Kindly convert your leader.

MR. HOPKINS: Never mind the leader: get on to the rest of them (in Opposition).

MR. MORAN: Happily, in this matter we are speaking as independent men, because it is probably just as hard for me to convert my leader as for the hon. member to convert his.

THE TREASURER: A single conversion is not worth the trouble.

MR. MORAN: Not worth the trouble; and after all I would much rather have four of the rank-and-file than two leaders, any time. I trust, as time goes on, we shall have a compromise over the food duties; that we shall strike off all that are nonprotective. And that tariff can be revised without protest from anyone, when we see what an abortion it will be as soon as the first fifth drops. I am reminded that the advice I gave 12 months ago should have

been followed by this House, when I said, "Let us as an Assembly now take hold of the tariff and deal with it in such a way that even if we have to raise the rates it will fall with a sort of reasonable gradation." Yet nothing was done; because the anti-federalist was down in the dumps on account of his defeat, and the federalist was "cock-of-the-walk." I appealed to the member for Northam (Hon. G. Throssell) to put the tariff on such a basis that it would gradually disappear, by some sort of system, in say three years; because, when the fourth and fifth years come, we might as well throw it up altogether. After about the second year of its decline, the sliding-scale will be practically inoperative. There are duties which we cannot decrease by one-fifth of a penny. But in the meantime, protectionists who wish for some help to their little factories in Perth will find the sliding-scale of great assistance. Remove the food duties, so as to give us cheap food, and protect the little manufactories for the time being. I say to the farmers of Western Australia, it will be a good thing to accustom this country to making less revenue, and it will stave off the evil day. The proper course is to grapple with the expenditure, and not to go seeking for new revenue; rather give some away. It will be good for the goldfields, and good for everybody. I earnestly trust we shall come, during this session, to a happy compromise, and do away with the food duties. [OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] I wish to refer to a matter in which I took deep interest in years gone by, and in which I am still interested—the great Coolgardie Water Scheme. There are two big rocks ahead for Western Australia—our railways and that water scheme. All the assistance, and all the attention, and all the help I can give during this session to the Government will be at their disposal for the purpose of devising some satisfactory means of placing that great work on a financial basis. If there be one problem of the greatest uncertainty ahead of us, it is the financial aspect of the Coolgardie Water Scheme. I am not saying this for the first time to-day, nor did I say it yesterday. I said it three or four years ago. Hon. members will recollect that I always raised that question every time I spoke, and implored Sir John

Forrest to take the matter immediately in hand. Two years ago I asked him in the House to devise a scheme for the collection of water rates on the goldfields—to devise a scheme for reticulation; not to spring a scheme straight away on the goldfields people. I sympathise with the present Government, because they will now have to do that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And they must do it this session.

MR. MORAN: And we earnestly hope and trust that the spirit of fair-play to the rest of the community which is to be found on the goldfields will lead the inhabitants to devise proper regulations for taking advantage of the water scheme.

MR. HOPKINS: They are most anxious to do so, but have never received any encouragement.

MR. MORAN: I am sure of that, having lived among them for many years.

MR. HASTIE: And the bulk of them did not want the scheme.

MR. MORAN: There I differ from the hon. member.

MR. HASTIE: Certainly you do.

MR. MORAN: He knows that, for he represents Coolgardie. He knows that no man there who did not support the Coolgardie Water Scheme had a hope of getting near Parliament.

MR. HASTIE: Oh, nonsense!

MR. MORAN: If ever the goldfields were unanimous, it was in asking for this water scheme. Its successful completion will be a big trouble to the Government. They will have to consider the question of municipalities, the question of areas, the question of the mining belt seven miles long from Kalgoorlie to Lakeside; they will have to consider the problem whether the man shall pay, or the mine shall pay, or the municipality; or whether the man who owns land shall have a land tax, while he who owns a tent only shall have no tax.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And how they will reach the men on the leases, which is a great difficulty to-day.

MR. HOPKINS: The only method is to extend the municipal boundaries.

MR. MORAN: The member for Boulder (Mr. Hopkins) will, when that time comes, be of great assistance to this House. I will do him the credit of saying that on municipal matters he is one

of those on whom we can look as having done great work in Western Australia. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] The House must then consider, shall we throw the burden on the fields through the medium of a strong board? That might be the wisest plan for all parties. Or shall we keep it as a Government concern? All those matters have to be considered, and they form terrible rocks ahead. Last night I listened with pleasure to the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) dealing with the statutory debt of Western Australia, when he pointed out how enormous a capital this water scheme would have to carry. And recollect, the argument for a sinking fund on railways may be problematical; but a much better case can be made out when we consider a water scheme.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: True; the water scheme is wearing out.

MR. MORAN: Quite so. And I say, what will it profit any party in this House to shelve such big considerations for the sake of an all-too-insecure tenure of office? How will that benefit us who have to live in this country, and whose descendants will, I suppose, remain here for ever? Our first and greatest duty is to deal with these problems, and try to get those who have the power of the majority with them to adopt our suggestions, or at least to exhibit a little "give and take." This is a great rock ahead during the session; and the other is in all truth the railway question. If our railway system gets hold of Western Australia, instead of Western Australia getting hold of it, the country will be lauded in very serious trouble. I do not know whether there is anything else I wish to say on this Address-in-reply, except to repeat that I do not like the dangerous defence—what I call the bad constitutional precedent—the member for Cue made last night respecting that secret purchase of land. I do not object to his logic as applied to extraneous circumstances which occur in the history of every Government. It would be foolish to lay down the law that no Government could spend money without parliamentary sanction; for we might have a plague in Perth at a day's notice, and who would stand by and see the people die because Parliament had not authorised the expenditure of money for sanitary purposes? We might have a great fire. We have

had in this country new rushes where men were dying from want of water; and Sir John Forrest never hesitated to spend money to give them that water.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Up to £800,000 in one year.

MR. MORAN: Quite so. Well, were I Brutus, and Brutus Antony—in respect of that expenditure—there were an Antony who would have caused the stones of Perth to rise and mutiny. If the hon. member forgets, I do not, how he thundered against such expenditure when Sir John Forrest was in power. If he doubt that, I will turn up page after page of *Hansard*, showing how he fought for this principle on minor points of £1,000, as did the present Premier (Hon. Walter James). I contend the defence of that secret purchase was dangerous for this reason. I do not object to the purchase of the land, but to the fact that the Government are committing the country to a big railway policy which has not been dreamed of in this House.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not necessarily. There is a profit in the land.

MR. MORAN: Take it from that standpoint, and I admit your defence is on a much better footing.

MR. DIAMOND: But that is very doubtful.

MR. MORAN: I maintain there will be a very big fight before the House will consent at all to that railway scheme. It may be deemed wise by the House, when dealing with the matter, to build the Armadale railway without crossing the river at all; and when that Jandakot line is built, it may not have to pass through Fremantle or through Perth, and the Government should not commit the country to that particular work. I object to any one getting up in his place and saying, "The country is sure to agree to this public work, and that is why we initiated it." If there be one great principle of constitutional government, it is the parliamentary control of expenditure. We have lost control of that £60,000, and have given a strong fillip to a public work which, as I said, we never heard of previously. The country did not hear of it. It was in the brain of the Engineer-in-Chief, and it had not reached maturity. The question of crossing the river at a different point had never been mentioned in this House;

and that is the head and front of Ministers' offending in the purchase of that land—that it commits the country to a line of policy certainly not approved of in the town concerned. Fremantle is not satisfied with the transaction.—[MR. DIAMOND: Hear, hear.]—I think it doubtful whether the country is prepared for the expenditure, and if it is, whether it is prepared for the route. My opinion is, it is certainly too dangerous, for the sake of the profit you make on the land, to embark on such a transaction. It is too dangerous to tamper with the rights of Parliament. You have already an Act which will give sufficient protection to the Government. Just as in the case of a Tariff Bill, the moment a proposition for a public work is laid on the table, that day the Government have the right to resume land.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: On arbitration.

MR. MORAN: And now this is what we should do. I did not like to hear the hon. member question the fairness of arbitration in this State. Are there no arbitrators in Western Australia whom we can trust?

MR. HOPKINS: Stacks of them.

MR. MORAN: If none, heaven help the Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

MR. HASTIE: Has arbitration ever resulted satisfactorily?

MR. HOPKINS: Yes; in hundreds of cases every day.

MR. MORAN: Arbitration seldom results satisfactorily to both parties. Someone goes down every time.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: In land resumption arbitrations the Government go down every time.

MR. MORAN: Let us look at the question. We are questioning whether there can be obtained in Western Australia three honest men to give an award on the value of land. But besides, from general information, it is quite well known what is the value of any particular piece of land. The Government could have received quotations of the value of the land long before, if they wanted to act with regard to buying. I maintain that this principle should not be allowed to remain. I do not think it is right to give the Government power to spend £60,000 in order to buy any man's land.

MR. CONNOR: What about the commission?

MR. MORAN: I am only dealing with the main principle, with the political aspect. Of the commission I do not want to have anything to say at all. I am sure I owe an apology to the House for having had to speak twice in this debate. As I say, I tried my very best to get it made a general debate, but the Speaker, acting strictly in accordance with the rules of debate, informed me that it would be impossible to speak upon this question. As these matters are too grave for me to pass them over in the debate on the Address-in-reply, I thought it my duty to give expression to my views. We may work harmoniously and amicably during the session. In reference to the redistribution of seats, I have just had an election, and I stated that I was not struck at all by its importance. I am opposed to reducing at all the number of members of this Assembly. I am returned for that purpose. I do not believe you can do with less than 50 good men in the people's Chamber in Western Australia, and if these members sit, they have four times as much to do as the whole of the House in Victoria. Victoria is a small place, and the people are practically all together. They have their railways and roads, and one man may do a lot by observation. Western Australia, however, is a mighty place, and the more you travel, the more you are impressed with its possibilities, and with the importance of giving full representation to outlying parts. It would be a splendid thing for this country if every man could represent a constituency he knows about. We want men who know the country districts, men who know their Kimberleys, their North-West, their South-West, and other parts of the country. If people will return the men who know the wants of their constituencies, there is plenty of room for 50 good men in this Chamber. Moreover, the population is increasing rapidly, and instead of decreasing the number of members of the Assembly, let us see if the population will not grow up to it. People are coming here, and we have unbounded confidence in our industries. The finest pastoral country in the world to-day is in Western Australia, equal in soil to other countries and far ahead in climate, which is everything. This is a country where no drought can occur, or

at all events a drought never has occurred. Goldfields are opening up right through from Norseman to Lake Way, and I am sure that by-and-by the Colonial Secretary (Hon. W. Kingsmill) will be able to shake hands with the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie), and when the member for Kanowna wants to see the member for Pilbarra (Hon. W. Kingsmill), he will not be a night out in the cold but will be in a hut. That is not overdrawing the picture. There is a hive of industries extending right throughout the centre of the continent, and we are improving our agricultural country every day. I am pleased to see that the present Minister for Lands (Hon. A. Jameson) is acting up to the best traditions of his predecessor, and the predecessor of all of us, Mr. Throssell. The Minister is doing his work well. Viewing all these things in that light, I determined to fight my election on the score that we do not want a reduction in the number of members of the Lower House. I feel certain you want a redistribution of seats, and of course in a growing country you will always be wanting a redistribution. I hope the time will arrive when the population will be so evenly balanced that we shall have the New South Wales plan; but we cannot have that now, or there would be too many rank politicians. If you neglect outside industries, you are neglecting Perth, and the best way not to neglect outside industries is to give them fair representation. If you say that members from small constituencies are narrow-minded Conservatives, I would point out that here is the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) fighting his best to reduce the rates, and the members of the goldfields are fighting their best to keep them up. I have never known the member for East Kimberley oppose anything for the advancement of the goldfields, and he may be called the epitome of generosity towards the goldfields. He was the first man to advocate artesian boring, and he always stood by Sir John Forrest. It is, I say, wrong to assert that narrow-minded Conservative men come from the smaller electorates. The greatest intellect I ever read of as having been in the British House of Commons was Edmund Burke, and he represented a pocket borough for very

many years. Edmund Burke was a man whose liberalism and enlightened views have been the admiration of every one who has studied politics. It does not follow that you will have a better class of men if you have equal representation. I agree in giving fair representation to every industry, and there should be a fair redistribution, but I oppose cutting down the number of members in this House to 42.

MR. HOPKINS: Tell us something about the Council.

MR. MORAN: We are prohibited from speaking about that august body. (Laughter.) We may discuss the matter when dealing with the Constitutional Act, for we should then be in order in doing so. My policy before the electors was that I was not at all a follower of my distinguished leader (Mr. Nanson) in regard to doing away with the Upper House. I thank the Assembly for their kind attention, and I hope that now we have disposed of the motion of want of confidence, we shall do some very good work. However keen and active a debate may be, it will not be able to deal with every possible issue and for us to arrive at a satisfactory basis in the Legislative Assembly. (General applause.)

At 6-24, the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair resumed.

MR. J. J. HOLMES (East Fremantle): I consider the thanks of the House are due to the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) for the very able speech he delivered this afternoon. The hon. member was definite and explicit, and I think it is the duty of every member of this House to be definite and explicit on all matters of importance, and more particularly on the two principal items referred to by the member for West Perth, namely the administration of the Railway Department and the management of the Coolgardie Water Scheme. Before proceeding to give my views on these subjects, I wish to claim the indulgence of the House while I refer briefly to the untimely death of my late leader, the Hon. George Leake. The deceased gentleman, as hon. members are aware, was my leader for five or six years; I was intimately associated with him, both in and out of the House; and to the best of my

knowledge he was a man in every sense of the word. In Mr. Leake, the country has lost one of its best and ablest public men, and we of this House have lost a friend. On only one occasion did I differ from him; and that difference was due to the fact of his being somewhat more sympathetic than I am accustomed to show myself. If I wanted to hit a man when he was down, as it were, my friend the late Premier insisted on my letting the man up and giving him another chance. The late Mr. Leake is universally admitted to have been possessed of great ability, to have known how things ought to be done, and to have had the necessary qualifications for doing them; but it is said that he lacked application. The difficulty with my friend was that he was too sympathetic to strike the blow when it should be struck, his sympathetic disposition getting the better of him. The failing is one for which we can hardly blame him; indeed it is a weakness we might all be proud to acknowledge. I may refer also to the lamented death of Mr. C. Y. O'Connor, our late respected Engineer-in-Chief. He was a man to whom the country owes a great deal; a man who carried out some of the greatest works perhaps ever undertaken in Australia, and moreover executed those works successfully and honestly. I have no hesitation in saying that the late Mr. C. Y. O'Connor was a monument of honesty, and that it is the duty of every member of the House—towards the due performance of which duty I am prepared to do all in my power—to acknowledge the devotion displayed by the late Engineer-in-Chief by making ample provision for the widow and children he has left behind. I wish to refer, also, to the departure of our esteemed and respected Governor, who, as we know to our great regret and to our loss, is about to leave us. However, the reflection that His Excellency is going elsewhere to farther the advancement of the Empire is a source of great satisfaction. So far as my knowledge and judgment go, I feel convinced there is not in Australia a couple better qualified to establish peace between Briton and Boer than our respected Governor and his equally respected wife, Lady Lawley. [MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] Turning now to the Coolgardie Water Scheme,

I think most of us have been astonished by the disclosures contained in the very able report presented by the Royal Commission which sat for some weeks solving the somewhat difficult questions arising in connection with the work. I should be glad indeed to learn from the Government that it is possible to take action of some kind for the punishment of the offenders, to mark the trouble they have caused and the dishonesty of which they have been guilty. Now, as to the probable financial results of the Coolgardie Water Scheme, I do not think many members have ever had much doubt of the success of the scheme from an engineering point of view. Every member of the House, I believe, has admitted that it is quite possible to execute a scheme for pumping water to the gold-fields. For, after all is said and done, the Coolgardie Water Scheme, though it may represent one of the biggest works of its kind in the world, yet consists really of several distinct schemes, which, from merely the engineering point of view, have always been admitted to be perfectly practicable. But the consideration which has always troubled me, and which is troubling me to-day, is the gravity of the financial aspect of the scheme for a small community such as we are. The State of Western Australia, in embarking on so large a scheme, ran the risk of serious financial trouble; and I am inclined to think the risk has not disappeared even now. Still, it is the duty of one and all of us to do what we can now to make a success of the scheme; and if there is any little assistance I can give towards bringing the matter to a successful issue financially, it is at the disposal of those who choose to avail themselves of it. The Speech mentions the provision of a water supply for Perth, Fremantle, and the surrounding suburbs; and that is a matter I should like to touch on at this stage. The subject is admittedly one of the first importance, and I am pleased to see a reference to it in the Governor's Speech. I hope the Government of the day will take an early opportunity of putting this important work in hand. To the people of Perth, Fremantle, and suburbs, an ample supply of pure water is an absolute necessity; and that necessity should, moreover, be supplied at a reasonable cost. The proposed dock at

Fremantle is likewise a matter of importance. To my mind, a dock ought to have been constructed step by step with the Fremantle Harbour Works. Such, I believe, was the original intention; provision was made for the construction of a dock, so that by the time the harbour works were completed, the dock would also be completed, and the Fremantle harbour thus perfected in every respect. We know, however, that while the harbour works are practically finished, no move has yet been made towards the construction of a dock. The work, I therefore hope, will be taken in hand without delay. I am sure the Government will have the support of the House for their proposal. The purchases of land in connection with the deviation of the Fremantle railway and the erection of a bridge over the Swan higher up the river, I am given to understand, are necessary in order that provision may be made and a suitable site obtained for the proposed dock. If that be so, the Government are quite justified in making arrangements to secure the land required for the deviation and other alterations contemplated, at a fair and reasonable cost. It has been argued that the Government ought to have consulted the House as to what should be done in connection with the purchase of the land required. But I, for my part, compliment the Government on the able manner in which they arranged their land purchases at such satisfactory prices. I am sure I do not exaggerate the facts when I say that the Government could not to-day purchase the same land for £160,000. The land for which £60,000 was paid a few weeks ago could not be purchased to-day for £160,000. The Government obtained good value for their money; and even if the House disapprove of the contemplated deviation, the Government have, in the land secured, fair value for the money expended. Reference has been made to what Fremantle people think of the matter. I move about amongst them and know their opinions pretty well. The only persons I can find objecting to the purchases are those who sold their land not knowing that the Government were the purchasers.

MINISTERIAL MEMBER: Hard luck!

MR. MORAN: I did not touch that aspect of the matter.

MR. HOLMES: I learn from the Governor's Speech that public abattoirs and cold storage accommodation are to be provided somewhere in the vicinity of Claremont. To a practical man who knows something about the business, the erection of abattoirs in the Claremont sands is a proposal which, to say the least of it, is altogether unreasonable. Abattoirs and cold storage rooms at Claremont will be of absolutely no use to the State. If abattoirs are required, let us have them at Fremantle, where the stock is landed; if cold storage is necessary, let us have it at Fremantle, where the frozen meat or chilled meat from our northern districts will be landed, and whence it will be distributed. To have abattoirs and cold storage at Claremont, and the butchers who transact business at Perth and Fremantle and elsewhere trafficking to and fro between Claremont and Perth every time they want to avail themselves of the cold storage, is altogether absurd. Let us have the abattoirs at a place where the bulk of the stock is landed at or near Fremantle, and let us have the cold storage at the same place, where it can be availed of by the ships coming into port.

MR. HASTIE: Is there any land available there?

MR. HOLMES: Any amount of Government land. To my mind the proposal to erect cold storage at Claremont or Fremantle or anywhere else is not the way to get over the difficulty of providing the public with cheap meat. The solution of the difficulty to my mind is to let the public—the people living in the Southern portion of the State—have full and ample advantage of the splendid pastoral country we have in the North-West. The hon. member for East Kimberley (Mr. F. Connor) says there is a change coming over the hon. member.

MR. CONNOR: Coming over the dream, I said.

MR. HOLMES: That proves the hon. member, speaking at all events for myself, has a mind that can change, and perhaps I have an opinion of my own. I did oppose the introduction of ticked cattle into the Southern portion of this country, and I was guided by the expert who was brought from Queensland; but I found subsequent events proved there was nothing to interfere with the cattle or to

bring about trouble which it was said would arise from the introduction of tick into the Southern portion of the State. The quarantine regulations that exist are simply a farce. Cattle are brought down from East Kimberley—and I would like to say at the present time the two Kimberleys for months past have been providing the residents of the State practically with the whole of the beef consumed.

MR. MORAN: Good business.

MR. HOLMES: There has been an average of 800 bullocks a week landed from the Kimberleys.

MR. HOPKINS: You won't get that the whole of the year round; that is the trouble.

MR. HOLMES: There has been an average of 800 bullocks a week landed at Fremantle, the value of which would be about £12,000. That amount of money per week the owners of the stock have been getting, or about £9,000 of it, the ship owners getting the other £3,000. Well, £9,000 paid to the pastoralists in Kimberley for beef shows that this is an industry worthy of our support. These cattle are brought to Fremantle by steamer, they are not landed, but jumped overboard in the open roadstead, and drowned or swum ashore as best they can by a number of boats surrounding them and chasing them and hacking them to get them ashore in the best way possible. The cattle are then herded together in a paddock, surrounded by a wire fence or a galvanised iron fence, and kept there for three weeks at a time. Every day the quality of the beef is deteriorating, the quantity is deteriorating, and the bone is left for the consumption of the public in Perth. Under conditions of this kind, who can expect to provide the public with cheap meat? We hear that the firm of Connor, Doherty & Durack are now arranging to export some 3,000 or 4,000 heifers to South Africa, to land them there for breeding purposes. To my mind what ought to be done is to land the heifers at Fremantle, and distribute them over our land in the Southern portion of the country.

MR. HARPER: Ticked cattle?

MR. HOLMES: We have been landing the same class of cattle at Fremantle for five or six years past.

MR. CONNOR: Eight years.

MR. HOLMES: We have been landing ticked cattle at Fremantle for eight years, and there has been no sign of tick in or about Fremantle or in the vicinity where the cattle have been sent to. I would not for a moment advocate that cattle be brought overland from West Kimberley, through the herds in the Northern portion of the country, and travelled through country suitable for the development of tick; but bringing them by boat to Fremantle, and distributing them over this portion of the country where the climatic conditions are not suitable for tick, is the proper thing to do. We have had eight years' experience, and there has been no tick down South, and if it is possible for tick to have taken hold of the herds in the Southern part of the country—such small herds as they are—there has been ample opportunity in Fremantle for it. Day after day horsemen engaged in herding the cattle in Fremantle, go in among the cattle, round them up, and when they have completed their work, they ride out again and through the herds in Fremantle. That has been going on for some years past, and the member for East Kimberley will bear me out when I say that the milking cows of Fremantle are to be seen putting their heads through the fence of the quarantine ground, and rubbing their heads against the ticked cattle, yet there has been no development of the tick, which amply proves that there is not likely to be. Members are anxious to see the good pastures in the Southern portion of the country availed of, and the public provided with cheap meat. The solution of the difficulty is to lift the quarantine and allow the cattle to be shipped at Kimberley, brought to Fremantle, and distributed on the land available for grazing purposes, and by that means increasing the herds in the vicinity of Perth and Fremantle, where the public are anxious, and justly so, to have an ample supply of good beef.

MR. HARPER: You could not compel the people to buy the cattle.

MR. HOLMES: I thank the member for Boulder for drawing my attention to the fact that only during six months of the year are the cattle brought down from East Kimberley.

MR. CONNOR: They can be brought down all the year round.

MR. HOLMES: I will take the word of the member for Boulder, and say cattle can only be brought down during six months from the commencement of March onwards. Then let us bring all we can down during those six months, sell the best for butchering purposes, and put the rest on the land.

MR. HOPKINS: I think our select committee recommended that.

MR. HOLMES: This is my solution of the difficulty: the House may take it for what it is worth. I have thought the matter out thoroughly. The member for East Kimberley said I had changed my mind; that I admit. I took the experience of the expert from Queensland who was brought here. But I have watched the matter closely since, and I have come to the conclusion that the practical experience we have had at Fremantle is worth far more than all the theory of the expert who was brought here. There is another matter that might also engage the attention of the Government—the opening up of the stock route in the Murchison and other districts through which the route passes, and making ample provision for water supply, by wells, for stock travelling overland, so that they may reach the market in some sort of fair condition.

MR. MORAN: You can cut off 400 miles farther inland.

MR. HOLMES: If you cut off 400 miles in the journey, that will make a vast difference in the quality of the cattle delivered at this end. Coming to the question that has engaged the attention of the House for some days past, and I venture to suggest will, during this session and the sessions to follow, engage the attention of the House for a good many more days—the Railway Department, I think it is the duty of every member to express himself clearly and definitely upon this point. I noticed that amongst the hon. members who have spoken, not many have expressed a definite opinion as to whether they are in favour of political or non-political control; whether they are in favour of Commissioners or not. I think it is the duty of members at this stage to declare whether, in their opinion, the railways should be controlled by Commissioners, or by a general manager with a political

head. I have no hesitation in saying that I am going to declare for Commissioners, and I will tell the House why before I sit down. It is no use hon. members on the Opposition side telling the House that they think this, or they think that, or think the other thing, and not giving a clear and definite expression of opinion whether they are in favour of political or non-political control. The member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) hung on to the constitutional aspect of the question, and never even suggested whether he was in favour of Commissioners or a general manager, whether he was in favour of political or non-political control. I do not think the leader of the Opposition expressed his opinion as to what he was in favour of.

MR. MORAN: He said he was distinctly against Commissioners.

MR. HOLMES: The member for the Williams (Hon. F. H. Piesse) has definitely declared in favour of a political head, with a general manager. He has had more experience than most of us in the Railway Department, but the little experience I had proved that the political control of the railways made the position of Minister absolutely untenable. When I say I declare for the railways to be controlled by Commissioners, I do not want any doubt about the matter at all. I want the Commissioners to have sole control of all. I differ from the Government in the suggestion that Parliament should have the control of the rates and Parliament should have the control of the men. I will not be a party to that, because I see nothing but disaster staring us in the face if we embark on that policy. I have courage enough to think that disaster will fall on us with a commercial head at one end of the train and a political head at the other end, pulling at each other. I think a train going up an incline would not be attended with greater disaster. We have had a trial of political control, I have had a try at it myself, and I found it was somewhat beyond me; and no matter what we do hereafter, for the time being, to my mind, the railways must be absolutely removed from political control. The Commissioners can set about in their own way at reorganising, and putting things on a satisfactory basis.

MR. MORAN: The Labour members cheer that.

MR. HOPKINS: I cheer it.

MR. HOLMES: The suggestion is to have our railways controlled by Commissioners, while Parliament controls the men and the wages. To my mind Parliament should control only the policy of the railways. Parliament should say: "We are prepared to lose £50,000 or £100,000 a year on our railways, and to look for an indirect benefit through the development of the country." Or Parliament should say: "We are prepared to lose £10,000 a year on the carriage of timber, or £25,000 to encourage agriculture or to encourage the pastoralists." But after that, the duty of Parliament should cease. It should then be the duty of the Commissioners to bring about the result desired by Parliament. It is the same with the railway servants. The Commissioners are quite as capable as Parliament of dealing with the men. The men are absolutely dissatisfied with the conditions that exist to-day. They absolutely do not know where they are. They are shunted from pillar to post, from district superintendent to traffic manager, from traffic manager to general manager, from general manager to Commissioner; whereas if we had three Commissioners controlling the railways on a commercial basis, the men would be dealt with promptly, as they are in large commercial institutions. A big commercial concern is capable of dealing with large bodies of men and of treating them fairly and satisfactorily, preventing any such dissatisfaction as we now find in the railways. At a later date, when this matter comes up for discussion, that is the attitude I propose to assume. I declare now, and will subsequently follow it up, that the railways should be under the absolute control of Commissioners. Let us have Commissioners, and do not let us have any "Chief" Commissioner. We have now too many chiefs in the Railway Department. We have a chief traffic manager and no other traffic manager; a chief mechanical engineer; and no second mechanical engineer, we have a chief at every stage, and no other man with a similar title in the same branch.

MR. MORAN: All chiefs, as in the Scottish Highlands.

MR. HOPKINS: Or in a Caledonian society.

MR. HOLMES: Have a chairman of Commissioners, if you like; but let each Commissioner stand on the same footing, and let there be two in favour of a certain line of policy before it can be carried. I agree with the suggestion to have one Commissioner in charge of the traffic and one in charge of the locomotive branch of the service. There should also be a chairman; and those three should run the railways, quite independently of political control. As to whether there are men in the service capable of taking the posts of the other two Commissioners beside the chairman—those in charge of the traffic and the locomotive branches—that I shall leave the Government to decide.

MR. MORAN: What do you think?

MR. HOLMES: The House know pretty well what I should have done had I remained long enough in office. I think we need some new blood in that Railway Department. We have already the appointment of Mr. George from outside the service—a gentleman whom I should not have appointed—[MR. TAYLOR: Hear, hear]—but the appointment having been made, I am prepared to give Mr. George a fair chance and a fair trial, and if he can carry out his duties properly I am prepared to support him. At this stage I do not intend to jump on Mr. George's chest, but shall simply stand by and give him a fair innings. It has been suggested by members sitting in Opposition that I said all manner of things of Mr. George when he was member for the Murray, and made all sorts of charges against him. Turn up *Hansard*, you will find my charges were against the General Manager of Railways, not against Mr. George. Mr. George got the best of the deal; consequently I blamed the officers of the department for allowing that, and I should blame them again if I had to go through the same conflict. I made no attack on Mr. George, and I shall not attack him now. If he be a success, no one will be better pleased than I.

MR. JACOBY: How will you get rid of him if he be a failure?

MR. HOLMES: My own opinion is that if he is not a success he will be the first man to throw up the position and

let some other come in ; moreover, I do not think he will ask for much compensation, if for any. Someone asked what would I do? Would I bring in other men from without the service to take positions as Commissioners with Mr. George? Well, with the engineering man I should undoubtedly do that. I should bring in a fresh mechanical man to take charge of the locomotive branch of the service. As for the traffic, I am inclined to think there are men in the service capable of controlling the traffic, but I do not think they are to-day at the top of the tree. My experience in the department showed me there were fairly good men capable of handling the traffic, but I do not think they are now at the top of the ladder. Until those men are given a show, I should not be prepared to go outside the service. [MR. JACOBY: Hear, hear.] I was not long in office before I came to the conclusion that the railway service had outgrown the capacity of those who had it in hand. Whether it was in trying to hoodwink the Minister in order to lead him astray that they got complicated themselves, I do not know. That may be the solution of the difficulty. There is no doubt in my mind that the Minister was not capable of arriving at a correct conclusion, nor were his officers capable of putting him right. I think the House will ultimately agree that the policy with which I started was right. At least, I am satisfied. I have not altered my opinion, and am not likely to. There must be a general clearing out in that department before we can get any good out of it; and those now complaining about disorganisation are the very men who prevented me from doing the clearing out on which I had started. There are members in this House who will complain about anything. They are simply obstructionists and nothing else. To my mind, the duty of a member of Parliament is to support the Government when he thinks they are right, and to oppose them when he thinks they are wrong. But to oppose them at every stage is not what members are sent here for.

MR. JACOBY: Did not we help you in the matter of the strike?

MR. HOLMES: We find members opposite, if the Government make an

appointment, kick up a noise about it and say Parliament should have been consulted. If the Government consult Parliament as to what they shall do, then the Government are shirking their responsibilities. If I were leader of the Government, with a majority behind me such as the Premier now has, I should take up the attitude—I am going to do so and so; and I should do it. I should not depart from it. The noisy minority opposite could “kick up” as much as they liked. That would be the attitude I should take up, and that is my recommendation to the Premier.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: That would be history repeating itself.

MR. HOLMES: It would; and it would be giving hon. members opposite a little of what I had, and I hope they would enjoy it. Much has been said as to who was responsible for the increase of railway rates. The present Colonial Secretary (Hon. W. Kingsmill) has been blamed. Well, I should like to take the blame; but I cannot. It is the House that is responsible for the increase. I told the House there was likely to be a deficit last year in the working of the railways. The men asked for more pay; I admitted they were entitled to it, but there was no provision for paying them; I could not give it them; and I told the House the only way out of the difficulty, if the men were to have the pay to which the majority of members considered them entitled, was to increase the rates; and from all directions members howled, “Well, increase the rates.” I issued instructions accordingly, to which my successor gave effect; and I compliment him on what he did. To my mind there are many articles specified in the rate-book that were carried at a ridiculously low rate. For instance, I could never understand why we carried timber so cheaply. Recently the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) suggested we might lose £15,000 a year in the carriage of timber, and told us to look at what we should gain in other directions. Well, if there be one industry which does not deserve much consideration, I think it is the timber industry. Let us encourage agriculturists and pastoralists, who are every year improving the land and making it more valuable; but the timber cutter

who clears forests, takes away one of the best of our assets, and leaves the stumps and dead wood remaining, takes away the best and leaves the worst—

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: And spends £20 an acre in doing it.

MR. HOLMES: Why should we carry his goods and lose £15,000 a year? The mill-owner is the last man for whom I should have any consideration. The man producing something on which people here can live, let us support him; but the man who is sending our timber away and selling it elsewhere at a profit, I do not think deserves any consideration at all. The Government are blamed for having charged certain engines, missing trucks, and other items to the railway expenditure of last year. I told this House 12 months ago that was what the Government proposed to do, and provision was made in the Estimates for it. We found that there were engines and trucks missing.

MR. MORAN: Was that provision made in last year's Estimates?

MEMBER: Yes; £50,000.

MR. HOLMES: If the hon. member turns up last year's Estimates he will find provision made for replacing a lot of rolling-stock that could not be found, and I was not going to be a party to buying fresh rolling-stock to replace it out of loan.

MR. NANSON: How does your actual expenditure compare with the estimate?

MR. HOLMES: I have not got it before me. As I stated just now, I do not propose to quote figures, but when I left the department four months of the year had gone. After paying expenses we had £9,000 more over the estimate than we expected, but my hon. friend tells me that there was 4,000 tons of coal that the officers had consumed and did not tell me anything about. That is the way in which the officers were hoodwinking me, and when I suggested that I was Commissioner and desired to do things in the way I wanted, there was a howl of interjections throughout this House to know whether I was the Czar of Russia or what I was. I was not very long in the department, but while I was there I was boss. I remember there was an altercation between the acting general manager, Mr. Short, and myself, and I told him that I was Commissioner and that he

was to carry out my instructions. There was a howl in the House. The Press took it up, and I was howled down in all directions. This matter was brought under the notice of the Commission sitting on the John Davies inquiry, and can you expect a man to control the railways or anything else when Parliament interferes at every stage and at every turn? My experience, as I said before, has proved that a political head responsible to Parliament cannot control the railways, and I shall go for the reverse, namely, non-political control.

MR. MORAN: Go the whole hog.

MR. HOLMES: The leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nanson) quoted figures the other night, and the fact of his quoting figures compelled me to decide that I, at all events, would not do so, because figures can be made to prove anything, especially when handled by such a genius as the hon. member. The hon. member quoted the Eastern States, saying they paid so much on the cost of the railways; but he neglected to compare the capital cost of the mileage of the railways there and the capital cost of the mileage of the railways here. Although the hon. member was blaming the Government for that expenditure, he admitted that we paid a better rate of interest than any of the other States; and yet he was blaming the Government for their railway administration. It is a much easier matter for Western Australia to pay four per cent. on £5,000 per mile of capital cost.

MR. NANSON: You cannot do it now. The New South Wales railways cost £13,000 a mile.

MR. HOLMES: I will wait till the hon. member has finished. He is not going to lead me off this point. It is much easier for us to pay four per cent. on capital cost of £5,000 per mile than for New South Wales to pay two per cent. on a capital cost of £15,000. The hon. member left capital cost out of consideration altogether.

MR. CONNOR: He showed his generosity.

MR. JACOBY: That helps his argument.

MR. HOLMES: It does not help his argument at all. Then we will take the rates. He compared the rates in this State, but he made no reference to the rates in the other States. Nor is there

any comparison between the rates existing on the railways here and the rates on the railways in the other States, and yet he complains of the result of the working of the railways. You must compare the rates. It is the rate from which you get your revenue.

MR. MORAN: You must take the bulk of the traffic as well.

MR. HOLMES: Take what you like, but you make your profit out of the rates collected on the traffic. If the hon. member does not draw a comparison between the rates we charge here and the rates they charge elsewhere, the result he brings about is not worth the paper it is written upon.

MR. JACOBY: We run the biggest train mileage in Australia, and our earnings are the highest, bar New South Wales.

MR. HOLMES: I do not propose to take any notice of the hon. member opposite.

MR. JACOBY: You cannot answer that.

MR. HOLMES: The hon. member may be an authority on some subjects, but I am certain he is not one on railway questions. The leader of the Opposition went on to say that the railways were the greatest asset the country possessed, and the greatest security for our indebtedness, and he finished up by asserting, or rather advocating, that we should run the railways at a loss. I defy the hon. member to say that I am misquoting him, because I took it from his own paper, in addition to taking it down in the House. He said the railways were the greatest asset the country possessed, and the greatest security for our indebtedness; that they were paying four per cent.—I forget what the figures were—on the capital invested in the railways, and then he finished up by suggesting that we should run them at a loss. That is only in keeping with the attitude taken up by members opposite. They are prepared to condemn anything taken up, as long as they are "agin the Government."

MR. CONNOR: You are not an Irishman.

MR. HOLMES: The member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) referred to what had been done in railway administration by the Forrest Government; how they made surpluses every year and carried the profits of the railways to the general revenue, and all that sort of thing.

MR. CONNOR: Nearly £800,000.

MR. HOLMES: Yes; and that is the trouble we are suffering from to-day, and the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) knows it. He pointed it out to the House with his eloquence, as I pointed it out in my small way, but it had no effect. We predicted all the trouble, but members let the Government shove over the liabilities to the next year, and they kept pushing them over, the liabilities again increasing. The liabilities were, I say, continually increased, and when the Government wanted a fresh supply of engines and trucks to put on traffic, instead of repairing the old ones they bought new ones out of loan money, and debited the sum to capital account. One item alone in connection with pushing liabilities from the end of one year to the commencement of the next is worth mentioning. I mentioned it at the time, I have mentioned it on several occasions, and it is, I assert, worth mentioning at this stage. There was an item of, I think, £76,000, wages and salaries due to the servants of the Railway Department on the 30th June, 1900. Of course, if this had been paid on the 30th of June, it would have been debited to the year 1900. But the Premier, Sir John Forrest, who was then controlling the destinies of this State, pushed that over to the 1st of July, and showed it as an asset in the hands of the railway paymaster. I repeat that there was £76,000 due for the payment of salaries in June, 1900, yet it appeared in the Financial Statement for that year as an asset of £76,000—I think I am correct as to the amount, but at all events it was seventy odd thousand pounds. I repeat that the sum appeared as an asset in the hands of the railway paymaster; and if you had gone down there on the 1st of July at 10 o'clock and had asked for the £76,000, you would have found it had been paid away to the men for services rendered in the previous month. That is the kind of legacy the Leake Government had to face and to put in order, and they decided that this should not continue. Provision was made in the Estimates for the replacing of rolling-stock; and the House was told what we proposed to do, and evidently approved of it. Yet we find the House, consisting of the same members, condemning the Government for doing what the House some twelve months

ago told them to do. The member for West Perth thinks it not fair to charge five engines to working expenses.

MR. MORAN: I think it was eleven engines.

MR. HOLMES: Well, 11 engines, to last year. It was explained to me at the time, and I explained it to the House, that this was only the commencement of the replacing of the engines.

MR. MORAN: I am not finding fault with it.

MR. HOLMES: Eleven engines were obtained last year to replace engines that had been worn out some years ago, or of which we had lost the run. That was the commencement of the system. We find that in the current year, instead of 11 engines being replaced a considerably greater number will be replaced, if the Government do as they should. I was told this morning at Fremantle—I give it for what it is worth—that there are about four and a-half miles of trucks on Rous Head awaiting repair.

MR. CONNOR: Whose fault is that?

MR. HOLMES: That is an accumulation of trucks which we allowed to get out of repair for some years before, and when the present Government turn to and repair them, as they propose to do and are doing, they are blamed for the expenditure on the railways. What do members want? Do they want these trucks repaired and the repairs charged to the working expenses of the year, or do they want them to lie idle at Fremantle? Let the House declare now what they want done, and not blame the Government hereafter for having repaired the trucks. Reference has been made to the action of the Government in connection with the Midland Railway. The present Government are handling that Midland Railway far better than it has been handled by any previous Government.

MR. MORAN: They wanted to handle it, you know.

MR. HOLMES: I know this, and I know it from a reliable source.

MR. CONNOR: No secrets.

MR. HOLMES: No. No secrets whatever. I have it on the very best authority—and members can get the information, too, from the same source and from the same authority—that my action in connection with charging the Midland Railway for the use of these

trucks has meant a cost of £1,000 a year to the Midland Railway Company, and a profit of a £1,000 year to the Government railways. That is an indisputable fact.

MR. CONNOR: And the increased rates give them £15,000 a year.

MR. HOLMES: It may be so, or it may not.

MR. CONNOR: It is so; do not forget that.

MR. HOLMES: It may or it may not be so. By the agreement with the Midland Railway Company the company are entitled to charge the same rate as is charged on the Government railways.

MR. CONNOR: They do not want any compelling.

MR. HOLMES: I would like to point out to the hon. member that if the Midland rate be exorbitant, there is ample steamer accommodation between Fremantle and Geraldton. If merchants consider the Midland charges exorbitant, they can avail themselves of water transport, which is much cheaper than railway transport.

MR. CONNOR: Will the steamers bring goods to Mingenew?

MR. HOLMES: The Governor's Speech refers to the Royal Commission now sitting to inquire into the civil service of this State. I have declared, and I declare again, that I have no sympathy with the policy of appointing Royal Commissions. I have no liking for Royal Commissions in any shape or form, and I do not like the one appointed to reorganise our civil service. When on the Opposition side of the House, I always contended that Royal Commissions were merely whitewashing machines; and the fact of my having shifted my seat has not altered my opinions. I have contended, and I contend now, that Royal Commissions are useful only for whitewashing purposes.

MR. TEESDALE SMITH: They blackwash some people.

MR. HOLMES: It is the duty, I contend, of the Minister to reorganise his department, or to compel his Under Secretary to offer him satisfactory suggestions to that end. If the Under Secretary will not do it, then the Minister must get an Under Secretary who will. To appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into and report on the state of the civil service, leaving it to Ministers of the day to adopt

the recommendations of the report or otherwise, as they think fit, is only delaying the matter.

MR. MORAN: It is putting two men to do one man's work.

MR. HOLMES: Exactly; it is putting two men to do one man's work. Re-organisation of the civil service is a matter which, I consider, ought to have been set about by Ministers as soon as they came into power. I do not, however, blame the present Ministers; I blame members of the House; because directly the Government begin to reorganise, and as a result dispense with the services of some officer who happens to be the friend of a member of Parliament, the House is up in arms over the dismissal. This was the difficulty the Leake Government had to contend with. As my friend the member for East Perth has so substantial a majority behind him, I suggest to him—and I think the suggestion worth consideration—that he make a bee-line for himself, and keep to it. Then he will find plenty of members on this side of the House to follow him.

MR. TAYLOR: The trouble is to keep those members.

MR. HOLMES: The result of such action on the part of the Premier might be disadvantageous in some instances, but broadly it will be satisfactory. There is plenty of room for economy in administration, and economy in administration is what we want. We do not want too much legislation; indeed, we have had enough for some time to come. If the Premier gives the country proper administration—and I honestly believe he will—he may expect long life and, so far as I am concerned, unlimited support.

MR. F. WALLACE (Mt. Magnet): I have a few words to say on the Governor's Speech generally, but before entering on that subject I feel bound to make reference to the painful loss of one with whom I was associated for five years in this House, when sitting on the Opposition benches. In those days, I may say, some hard battles were fought for what the party of which I was a member considered the best interests of the State. Having fought for so many years, and having gained a position which, as the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) says, is the highest attainable in State politics, the late Mr. Leake was suddenly

removed; and I deeply deplore his untimely removal. I can but trust that Providence will be kind to the relatives who are left to mourn Mr. Leake's death. I hope they will live a life like that of the husband and father, and that they will be honoured as he has been. That a young man really only entering on life, as Mr. Leake was, should be cut off is deplorable. I trust my poor words in appreciation of the late Premier's qualities will be a source of consolation to the members of his family. I cannot but think the mourners will be in some slight measure comforted to find Mr. Leake spoken of as he has been by those who were associated with him. The debate on the Address-in-reply to the Governor's Speech affords hon. members an opportunity to ramble, if I may be permitted to say so. Since the Speech touches on so many subjects, I do not desire to make more than a brief reference to the matters which I consider call for notice. I know there are still numerous members desirous of speaking; and, in order that every member may have an opportunity of explaining himself, there will not, I hope, be any attempt on the part of the leaders of either side to curtail the debate, notwithstanding that the time devoted to the discussion may pass tediously for those members who have already spoken and those who do not intend to speak. No doubt, some speeches are very dreary; but, nevertheless, I ask both leaders to give hon. members full opportunity of speaking. In times gone by we have been too anxious to get to work; and it has been found that the more haste we made in the beginning the less speed we attained in the end. The game of "ins and outs," as it is commonly termed, is at an end, I think; at any rate for some time. The leader of the Opposition, I fancy, is satisfied that for a considerable time to come his position is the one he now finds himself in, or at all events on that (Opposition) side of the House. While I cannot congratulate him on the measure of support accorded to the amendment he introduced by his following, I must at the same time admit that he showed a good deal of consideration in the method of his attack on the various persons whom he found occasion to assail. The hon. member's references to the

newly-appointed Commissioner of Railways, Mr. George, are only such as might be prompted by a conscientious belief that the appointment was not right. On that score, I have but to say that, inasmuch as the Government possess under the Railways Act of 1878 the power to appoint a Railway Commissioner, I believe and feel satisfied they acted within their rights in appointing Mr. George. I make this pronouncement while not desiring to pose, like so many members of this House, as a constitutional authority. Of Mr. George's capabilities I know nothing, but of his honour and integrity I know a good deal, and I am satisfied with his appointment in those respects. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) has expressed himself as prepared to give Mr. George a trial; but while I also am prepared to give the new Commissioner a trial, I feel bound to point out that the term of his appointment is six years, which is rather a long stretch of time for a trial to extend over. The only redeeming feature in that connection to me is that, in common with the hon. member on my right (Mr. Holmes), I believe Mr. George to be sufficiently manly and honourable not to wait to be asked for his resignation should he find that his administration is not satisfactory to the public or that the railways are getting ahead of him. Under such circumstances, I believe, he would voluntarily tender his resignation. Hon. members may smile and say that Mr. George will not give up his £1,500 a year until the expiration of his six years' term; but my opinion of the new Commissioner leads me to a different conclusion. I do not think so meanly of him. I come now to those portions of the Governor's Speech with which I desire specially to deal; and I ask the indulgence of hon. members while I read paragraph 7, so that they may know what I propose to speak on:—

The year just terminated reflects in the increasing flow of immigration and the satisfactory condition of our finances, the general advance which that period has witnessed in connection with the main industries of the State. In both mining and agriculture steady and gratifying progress is visible, and my Ministers are determined that every effort shall be made to foster and encourage increased development in both those industries.

In connection with the fostering and

encouraging of the mining industry, I have to point out a great defect in the administration as a whole, for which defect the Minister for Mines is responsible. The difficulty was touched on by the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor), who is regarded as a pastoral member, or a member representing the pastoral industry, but who, it is to be remembered, represents also a mining district which sooner or later must become of great consequence. The fact that the mining district in the hon. member's electorate is not being worked to-day as largely as we should like, must be admitted to be due solely to its geographical position. I believe the district will become of the first importance within the next decade, at all events. The member for East Kimberley referred to a question which I raised with the former General Manager of Railways, Mr. John Davies, and the present Acting General Manager, Mr. Short—the question of cheap freight for ore requiring special treatment which can be given to it only at the seaport, Fremantle. In asking that a concession be made to the Murchison miners to allow of their sending ore to Fremantle, I had occasion to advocate the erection of a ramp at Mount Magnet railway station. A ramp sufficient for all the purposes to be served would have been erected by a railway contractor, Mr. George Baxter, for £50. The work, however, cost the Government nearly £200. This matter has been thrown back at me again and again. It has been said that I caused the expenditure of £186 for no return whatever, since not one ounce of ore has been sent from Mt. Magnet. But, for what reason? The member for East Kimberley has discovered the reason. The Government will not grant reasonable facilities for getting the ore from that locality, as well as other portions of the Murchison district, to the coast. Certain ores cannot be treated by battery system, but require roasting in furnaces. To my appeal the department replied by computing the cost of conveying the ore to the coast in the following fashion. The trucks are at present running empty from Cue; but, in order to be loaded, a truck has to be left at the siding for one day; then so many days are required to convey the truck to Fremantle; and it

has to remain at the smelters for a day before being discharged. The departmental officers accordingly computed the cost of the truck to the department at so many days, and on that basis claimed that the ore cannot be carried for a lower rate than that now being charged. I have to point out, however, that if this House demands that the Railway Department is to be worked so as to return a profit on every class of freight, the sooner the country returns a new set of members the better.

MR. CONNOR: To that (Ministerial) side, yes.

MR. WALLACE: I shall not consider either side of the House. I want to express my opinion. I have not been asked to speak as my party may desire, nor has it ever been insinuated to me that I should do so. I speak from my present position because I believe myself to be supporting a party which serves the interests of the State better than the gentlemen sitting in Opposition.

MR. CONNOR: But you are quoting me as an authority for your argument.

MR. WALLACE: Quite so. You say some good things at times.

MR. CONNOR: You should not make use of my arguments, you know, to hurl them back at me.

MR. WALLACE: I am gracious at times.

MR. MORAN: You are always graceful.

MR. WALLACE: Next comes a little grievance I have to ventilate, and the present is an opportunity afforded to hon. members generally for the ventilation of their grievances. I refer to the policy of procrastination introduced by the present Minister for Mines. I venture to say there is no more patient member than myself sitting within the walls of this Chamber; but even Job himself would lose his patience at times, especially if he had to deal with Ministers. The policy of procrastination initiated, as I say, by the Minister for Mines is one which I do not hesitate to say would have worn out the patience of Job six months ago. For 15 months I have been asking for a battery for a locality known as Boogardie.

MR. MORAN: My sympathies are with the Minister after hearing that name.

MR. WALLACE: The Minister will have an opportunity of explaining his policy of procrastination to the House.

I wish to remark that it is now 15 months since a promise was given that the locality would be inspected and a report made on it by the Mines Department. The report made as the result of the inspection was good, but the Minister remained unsatisfied, and a delay of months occurred. [MINISTER FOR MINES interjected.] The Minister corrects me, saying that two reports were obtained and that the first one was not good. Because every mine inspected did not prove highly satisfactory, the whole field was condemned by the Government inspector. When the new man appointed by the Minister goes in and shows that some of the mines condemned by the previous inspector are good mines, the Minister says to himself, "That report is too good; there cannot be such properties in that district," and he almost wants a third inspection. We do not object to as many inspections as the Government like, but what we do object to is this policy of procrastination. I have numbers of letters addressed to me from my constituents about this question, and I do urge the Minister to assist us. But the Minister has so much form to go through, there is so much red-tape, that if you want to get a document from another department it takes fully a day.

MR. HOPKINS: Did you say one day?

MR. HASTIE: One week.

MR. WALLACE: I am giving my own experience. During the delay the miners are holding on to their "shows." There are very few companies in the Mount Magnet district: most of the mines are owned by the working miners who are being starved out, and the district is suffering. People have to abandon their "shows" and the properties appear in the forfeited list, causing the opinion outside of the district that the locality is going backwards. The miners through want of means cannot hold out until appliances are given them, and properties are abandoned. These properties appear as forfeited mines, and people abroad who are looking for investments say, "The Murchison is not worth going into: look at the number of forfeited mines there." The Minister has decided to give the battery, and everything is now on a fair way to settlement, but it will take another five months before the battery is ready to

crush, which will mean about 20 months from the day of the first report until the day the battery starts.

MR. MORAN: Is that the sort of Minister you want?

MR. WALLACE: The Minister in this instance has not the staff to get on with the business as he would like. To-day we have only one geologist available, and the applications from different parts of the country which Mr. Gibb Maitland receives are so numerous that it will take him fully 12 months to get through those on hand.

MR. HOPKINS: What about Woodward?

MR. WALLACE: I do not know that Mr. Woodward is a State Geologist now.

MR. HOPKINS: What did he do to Northampton?

MR. WALLACE: The Minister finds the staff at his disposal is not sufficient to give attention to the different districts, and I think he should ask for assistance or make provision on the Estimates for an increased staff.

MR. CONNOR: Economical reform!

MR. WALLACE: The Mines Department is not overmanned; it is the one department we can point to which has not sufficient officers.

MR. MORAN: That is a sweeping assertion for the Government Whip.

MR. WALLACE: As Government Whip I do not possess the Government secrets. I want to get on to the land question. Some encouragement should be given to the development of the State lands. The policy pursued by the idol of the State in days gone by, Sir John Forrest, was one of land settlement under certain promises; and to illustrate more clearly to the House what I mean, I will instance the district of Goomalling. People were induced to go to Goomalling and take up land under the belief that they would get a line of railway immediately, and it is only a month or six weeks ago that the railway was completed. Farming has been carried on there under the usual difficulties which surrounds farming where there is no railway line. Now we find the Government have gone to parts other than the South of the State, thanks to the present Government, and have resumed areas of agricultural land, and thrown them open for

settlement. I want to sound a word of warning to the Government in reference to fostering the farming industry. If it is the duty of the Government to settle the land, they should give the people every facility to get their crops to a market. The member for East Kimberley is saying something, but I do not hear what it is.

MR. CONNOR: You were talking about giving extra facilities to people, and I said increase the rates.

MR. WALLACE: Land settlement is progressing, I may say rapidly, in and around the Victoria district and Geraldton. If the Government follow the policy of extension as the previous Government outlined it, all the settlement in the Victoria district will be of no avail. The Government should recognise the markets belonging to the various districts in the State, and should enable the people to get their produce to those markets. It is intended now to tap the markets belonging to Geraldton and its surroundings. It is intended by the policy of the Forrest Government to tap the market which belongs to the farmers of the Victoria district, by means of a railway from Geraldton via Midland Junction to Kalgoorlie, Menzies, Leonora, and right round to Lawlers.

MR. MORAN: That is a long tap.

MR. WALLACE: There is rich country all the same. The market naturally belongs to Geraldton, and if the Government are settling that portion of the land of the country, it behoves the Government to step in quickly and secure to settlers the market which belongs to them. The present policy is a bad one.

MR. CONNOR: It is the policy of the Government.

MR. WALLACE: It does not matter whose policy it is, the policy is bad. It is a question whether we are going to encourage centralisation as in the past, which was done by the majority who sat behind Sir John Forrest in this House. Are we going to support centralisation and allow the Northern part of the State to do as it has done up to the present, support its own people as best it can? Give people in the North some encouragement and they will help to swell the Treasury. If our markets are to be taken from us, the people around Greenough, the Irwin, and

Northampton will find that their products are no good to them. They cannot compete with the people in this part of the State in the only market in the State, the Eastern Goldfields.

MR. MORAN: What are you driving at; what is your proposal?

MR. WALLACE: I want the Government, if they encourage people to settle, to do something else besides giving them cheap land.

MR. MORAN: But what is your proposal?

MR. WALLACE: That the Government should consider early the transport of the produce from the Victoria district to their market, and their market is the East Murchison, Lawlers, Lake Way, and other districts.

MR. MORAN: What is the distance?

MR. WALLACE: It is not a question of distance, if we get away from the policy of centralisation, but the distance is only about 160 miles. There is good pastoral country, and mining, but that is not the only inducement put forward for the line. The strongest inducement is to assist the people to settle on the land by giving them a proper market.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And assisting the fields as well by giving them cheap produce.

MR. WALLACE: The people on the Murchison fields are agitating on this question. If the Geraldton people had been alive to their interests and if the Greenough people had shown some energy three years ago, they would probably have had the line half through now, but the people were so disheartened by the old policy of the State. Lately, however, they have exerted themselves; they have now awakened. When people's pockets are touched they begin to cry out, and now the people of the Geraldton district are having their pockets touched. The Government must give something more than cheap land.

MR. CONNOR: Which Government?

MR. WALLACE: The James Government. I am speaking of a particular district, to which no consideration was given by Sir John Forrest, although he was leader of this House for ten years.

MR. MORAN: The Throssell Government gave your district every consideration.

MR. WALLACE: The Throssell Government did not exist for any length of time.

MR. MORAN: The Throssell Government existed long enough to survey the land and open it up.

MR. WALLACE: Sir John Forrest is the father of the land settlement scheme.

MR. CONNOR: The Forrest Government gave a longer railway to the district, for the population settled there, than any other place in the world has.

MR. WALLACE: That is quite true, but should the Government build a line right round Kalgoorlie to get to Carnarvon? I say the Government should open up the different ports. If it is proposed to go to the London market to borrow money for building railway lines, I shall not oppose it because I believe the State will progress as soon as the Government give facilities to the farmers and the pastoralists who have been struggling for years. Members should think of this, and probably I shall have their assistance when the matter comes more practically before the House. The question of the appointment of Mr. George I have spoken to, and I only want to give a word of credit to the member for West Perth who, in speaking in the House and at some of his election meetings in West Perth, rightly placed on the shoulders of Sir John Forrest, and took from the shoulders of the member for the Williams and the late General Manager of Railways, the blame for the scarcity of rolling-stock. Members who have sat in the House during the past three or four years will remember the appeals made for rolling-stock to the then Commissioner of Railways (Hon. F. H. Piessé) by the General Manager, and how Sir John Forrest replied to the Commissioner and said: "You do not want this stock now," and the Commissioner said, "It will take two years to get the stock indented." He pointed out that the order should be placed immediately. The vote, if I remember rightly, was reduced from about £400,000 to £200,000, and the then Commissioner voted for the retention of the full amount, but was beaten by the supporters of Sir John Forrest; and I believe some of the members then in Opposition approved of the reduction. And what do we find? That instead of

getting our locomotives at the time calculated by the then Commissioner, I believe it is only now that we are getting some of them; so I think the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran), who was a strong supporter of Sir John Forrest, deserves credit for his honourable criticism of that action. I do not know how many members are pledged to the appointment of Commissioners; but I stated during my last election battle that I was in favour of removing the railways from political control. And inasmuch as there is one Commissioner already appointed, and it is said a Bill will be brought in making provision for two more, it does not follow that because I supported the Government against the amendment of the leader of the Opposition, I shall support that Bill.

MR. MORAN: To throw it out will be taken as a vote of want-of-confidence.

MR. CONNOR: The hon. member would support the Government in anything.

MR. WALLACE: The hon. member (Mr. Connor) is, I believe, possessed of the "open mind" with which the leader of the Opposition was once credited.

MR. CONNOR: No one can accuse you of that.

MR. WALLACE: If the hon. member desires to persist in these discourtesies, I would ask that the Speaker put down this sort of thing, following out his expressed intention. We are men by nature, and for goodness sake let us be men in manners. Let us fight these battles fairly, instead of sitting like the hon. member, eternally smiling and frivolously interjecting. I enjoy a good interjection, but I do detest persistent frivolity. From the colour of the hon. member's hair we should expect something better. Getting away from the hon. member's opinion of myself, I would point out that if the prospective Bill does not contain the conditions I consider it should embody—

MR. MORAN: You are in favour of the full control being in the Commissioners?

MR. WALLACE: I am in favour of removing the railways from political control.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Bill will put them absolutely under that control.

MR. WALLACE: Pardon me. The Bill promises to put them under political

control; but I shall not vote for any half-and-half measures. I will either have the one thing or none. I cannot help it if my Government do not agree with me.

MR. MORAN: There will be a gay time with so many differences between Government supporters.

MR. WALLACE: If the House will not be consistent, I guarantee there will be a gay time; because I do like consistency.

MR. TAYLOR: It is a thing you do not seem to have much of.

MR. WALLACE: As to the civil service, I do not know the position the House now holds, when the work of the Royal Commission is in progress.

MR. MORAN: The House has a free hand, anyhow.

MR. WALLACE: But I should like to say, if there be one thing our esteemed friend Sir John Forrest should be ashamed of in the Public Service Act—it was opposed by myself and many others—it is the section which establishes the right of heads of departments to make secret reports against those under them. I think it a most abominable section.

MR. MORAN: I agree with you. It is not at all British.

MR. WALLACE: If we have in our service a class of men who should be gentlemen at the head of these departments, who are mean enough to write secret reports about their subordinates, I say we should deal with them here; and I imagine they would not be dealt with too pleasantly.

MR. HOPKINS: Has not that always been done?

MR. WALLACE: The Act is only about two years old. What may have been done before was not done in accordance with the statute. There must be a misunderstanding among Ministers, who, I believe, are endeavouring to correct me. But I require no correction, for I have looked up the section. The reports are termed confidential; but what difference is there between confidential and secret? [MR. MORAN: None whatever.] The person about whom they are writing does not know what is going on. He has no chance of answering the allegations.

MR. HOPKINS: No chance whatever.

MR. WALLACE: Is it not another form of assassination, a form of anarchy?

And the idol, the gentleman whom some members fairly worshipped for years in this State, and who by some is worshipped now—has established, I will not say a department for the cultivation and education of detectives, because they are not so honourable as detectives, but a secret service department. We do not know what the Royal Commission will do; but I hope something will be done to cure that, because I believe there are many cases of injustice; and while I am in this House—I do not care who is with me—I shall see that every person, white man, Chinaman, Afghan, whatever be his colour, who has been treated unjustly shall get justice. I have in my mind's eye what I believe to be some cruel cases of injustice perpetrated under this Act; and I say the inclusion of that section is a shadow resting on Sir John Forrest.

MR. MORAN: And on the Ministers who use it so largely.

MR. WALLACE: Quite so. Well, perhaps they are as bad as those who make the reports, for encouraging them. Another matter. Year after year we sit here and make laws. It has always been a sore point with me, the question why these laws are not administered. What is the good of loading the statute book with Acts that are not administered? There is a provision in that Public Service Act that if a Government servant becomes financially embarrassed and takes advantage of a composition, or goes through the Bankruptcy Court, he shall be dismissed from the service, pending—[MR. MORAN: Reconstruction]—the arrangement of his affairs. But we find that section has not been administered. We find men to-day holding positions which should not be held by them. Why should that be? Some of them are my personal friends, and I should be sorry to see them ousted; but if they are unfortunate enough to become amenable to the law, let them be dealt with as the law directs. On the question of education, I do not think there is one man in the House or outside who can condemn our State system. We find some are perhaps dissatisfied because a school or schools are not placed in every locality when demanded; but taking the department as a whole, I believe our system stands foremost in Australia. It is an admirable system, and the results

shown in the report now on the table will substantiate my statements.

MR. HOPKINS: Good teachers are leaving for want of decent salaries.

MR. WALLACE: Well, I believe the salaries are paid according to classification; and I know of instances when, directly a man has shown his ability and that he merits a higher position, he has got it instantly. True, there are some minor injustices, such as the too frequent removal of teachers. Perhaps the children's interests are not considered as they should be. When we have in one town seven school teachers in five years, it is about time some protest was made; for that is a serious injustice to the children, every schoolmaster having his own method, notwithstanding the general departmental plan. But that is only a minor blemish, which can be removed by the department. I cannot speak as I should like, because hon. members will insist on talking, and my voice is not strong enough to overpower them. I cannot hear myself. I wish to refer to this matter of secret purchases of land. [MR. MORAN: Call it confidential.] The source is entitled by the Auditor-General, the Secret Purchase Fund.

MR. YELVERTON: Another form of assassination.

MR. WALLACE: Directly the House assembles, we have hon. members bickering across the floor at the Government about this secret purchase, and condemning the system of spending money without authority. And why? Perhaps I had better not say why, because I think the Speaker would pull me up. However, it is evident the Government did not approach those members with a view of buying their land and giving them an opportunity of putting up the prices. Regarding compulsory arbitration, I should be sorry to believe we cannot get justice from arbitration courts. I must, at the same time, say that in reviewing the number of arbitration cases between the Government and private owners, in every instance the Government have had to pay very high prices. So the Government, notwithstanding they acted unconstitutionally in spending this money, have, I believe, saved the State some hundreds of thousands of pounds; and persons other than those who have parted with their land at fair prices will thank

the Government most heartily for the step they have taken. I come to the Royal Commission on the Coolgardie Water Scheme. I for one have often said Royal Commissions are only whitewashing machines; but no one perusing the report of this commission can place it in the same category. This is one of the most outspoken reports I have had the pleasure of reading in this Assembly, and all I fear is that the members of the Commission, in their outspokenness, will be brought to book. I went through it to mark off those items upon which I should like to speak when the time arrived; and I found that the whole report was marked off. [MR. MORAN: Give it to us.] No. But while I have opposed the appointment of Royal Commissions, and supported the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) in calling them whitewashing machines, I must say, if Commissioners such as these could always be found, I should invariably favour their appointment. The justice of that report has yet to be gone into, but I feel sure that members of the Commission have given a report without regard to personal friendship for any of those people concerned, and without fear. It is, in my opinion, a most unbiassed and honourable report, and I hope the time will soon arrive when the House will have an opportunity of discussing it. Then I hope that finally, when the House has arrived at a conclusion, the Government will be found acting in accordance with the decision of Parliament. That the country has suffered from maladministration of this Coolgardie Water Scheme is patent to everyone, and if a person or persons are guilty of what is charged against them in this report, I for one would urge the Government, as far as I have any power to do so, to take farther action and bring those persons to book; because it is a cruel shame that the money of the people of this State should be treated and wasted as this has been. Let me tell the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) that he, along with the members of the party with whom I sat for years, did not approve of this scheme. I have heard the hon. member say that the scheme was not wanted; that the people on the goldfields did not desire the water. True, we have to alter our opinions as time goes along—

MR. MORAN: Did you hear me say that?

MR. WALLACE: I did.

MR. MORAN: Look it up for me. It would be a great help for me.

MR. WALLACE: I was one who was prompted, as new members are always, by outside influence, evil influence, ever ready to get the ear of a new chum in Parliament, and was filled up with untruthful, biassed reports. I came in here believing I was a full-fledged engineer, and I told Sir John Forrest that the water would never get there. I was wrong, and I admit it; and I hope now, with everyone else, that the scheme will be followed with success. I am glad indeed that Sir John Forrest is to be asked to perform the ceremony of turning the water on. I think it a most graceful tribute to pay to him, though I did not agree with him in politics.

MR. MORAN: He is good enough to turn the water on, anyhow.

MR. WALLACE: I have nothing particular to explain about walking from one side of the House to the other. I have always followed the policy I am pursuing to-night.

MR. JACOBY: A nice-looking policy.

MR. WALLACE: As long as members occupying the Ministerial seats follow the course they have pursued during their time of office, and which they pursued while they were in a minority, I will be found with them, and I believe, with due respect to the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Nanson), that Ministers would indeed have to be very bad before the country would accept the hon. member as leader of this House.

MR. J. RESIDE (Hannans): I have certainly been struck during the course of this debate with the sympathy which has been extended to the goldfields people by the members of the Opposition, and I shall hope, later on in this session, to claim the fulfilment of some of those promises and that sympathy. I would like also to tell them that although the Labour party are thankful for the advice they have rendered to us, yet at the same time the Labour party are quite competent to fix their own opinions, take their own course, and answer to their constituents for their own action. There is one thing I decidedly think should be brought about very soon, and that is

the abolition of the food duties, which would be a great assistance to the people of the goldfields. I hope, with the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran), that those duties will be done away with, especially as they are no protection whatever to the farmer. If members of this House are in favour of assisting the goldfields people, they will either give them some reduction in regard to railway rates or else will construct the Esperance line, and thus give a shorter route for sending goods to them. As far as the railway difficulty is concerned, it is a legacy from the old party. A great deal of the trouble which exists has been caused by the policy of the past. You recollect that the old Government—the Forrest-Throssell combination—starved their lines of rolling-stock and neglected to procure adequate workshops to keep them in repair, and then they boasted about the big profits they made. Now the Government have to foot the bills, and there is nothing but a deficit staring them in the face; consequently they are attempting to raise the rates. Although the rates in some respects were justified, speaking as an Eastern Goldfields representative I say it is unfair to expect us up there to pay for all the unprofitable lines in the State. I agree with the policy outlined by some members in this debate, that if the object of low rates is to assist industries, and there is a deficit, that deficit should be made up by direct taxation. We have been told by some members on the Opposition side of the House that the railways should not be run to pay, yet at the same time those members have not pointed out how we are going to make up for the loss on the railways, and I assert that the only way to do it is by direct taxation. In reference to some criticism that has been passed, there has been a good deal of fault-finding, but few people have attempted to point out to the Government the lines on which they may be able to make some improvement in respect to the administration of the railways. Everybody admits that the cost of the administration of our railways is excessive, and the best way to reduce that excessive cost—and I consider it can be reduced, and in my opinion the member for Sussex (Mr. Yelverton), and the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes), touched

the point—is in relation to the Locomotive Department. Speaking as a man of some experience amongst machinery, and one who takes an interest in this question, I assert, from inquiries I have made, that there is great room for improvement and economy in the locomotive branch of our railways; and I also assert that a great deal of this trouble has been caused by the administration of the past in getting rid of Mr. Campbell and installing Mr. Rotheram. I may point out that when Mr. Rotheram came over here from New Zealand at a pretty good salary, he also brought a team of New Zealand experts with him. The introduction of these New Zealand men here has been the cause of jealousy, and consequently disorganisation in the staff. One of the acts that Mr. Rotheram did shortly after taking office was to despatch two of the chief officers—the chief clerk and the chief accountant—who were getting £350 a year, with a paint-pot to travel round and paint the tare figures on various trucks and wagons, and he wants now 15s. a day for their expenses, whereas he could have got the work done by a common labourer at 8s. or 10s. a day. Mr. Rotheram has been handicapped by not having sufficient workshops, but he has not taken the best advantage of the labour and facilities at his disposal. He has been carrying out new fads and experiments instead of putting men into vital work, vital repairs upon the rolling-stock. The interjection by the member for the South-West Mining District (Mr. Ewing) reminds me of one item he referred to, that being that Mr. Rotheram is responsible for the introduction of what is called the “soft-coal funnel,” otherwise the spark-arrester. About 200 engines have been fitted with this soft-coal funnel, each engine costing about £35, and 200 engines at £35 would be an estimated cost of about £7,000. I would ask members as common-sense men, and men of some practical experience, whether it is right that this should be carried out when it is known, and should be known to the gentleman controlling that department, that these same things have been tried in New Zealand and thrown on to the scrap-heap as a failure. Furthermore, I say that the introduction of these soft-coal funnels has caused a great increase in the cost of running these locomotives; and not only

that, but they have decreased the efficiency of the engines, because the placing of these funnels on the engines means a reduction in the exhaust pipe, and consequently it causes a big pressure in the cylinder, more power required to drive the engine, and more coal needed to get the power; and not only that, but the engine itself can only pull two carriages less. It has been estimated by practical men that the increased cost for coal on the 150 engines through the use of these soft-coal funnels has been £16,000 for one year. These things are no credit to the Engineer, because, as I have already asserted, the same scheme in reference to the soft-coal funnels has been tried in New Zealand, and it had to be discarded as a failure. I believe the object in putting on that soft-coal funnel was to avert bush fires; but when members recollect the fact that we have paid only about £1,500 to meet claims for bush fires, I think it will be conceded that it would be better at the present time to let the thing go and put the men on to something that is actually vital. There is another matter to which I would like to call attention, and it appears to me rather a peculiar one. At one time in this State they used to manufacture brake blocks, safety chains, safety springs and side springs, choppers, and buffer pins. The Locomotive Department ceased manufacturing all these things in the State and imported them. I believe the idea of members of this House is that we should try to manufacture as much of the railway rolling-stock and requisites as possible in this State, and that instead of decreasing the manufacture of them, we should endeavour to increase it. One most peculiar thing I have found in the course of my inquiries was the fact that a good deal of the machinery they have been introducing over here for some time has been coming in packing cases. These packing cases are composed of pretty good timber, and I believe they could be sold at a fair price; but instead of adopting that course, the authorities controlling that department have seen fit to break up the cases, put them on trucks, and send them to Geraldton for firewood, paying 30s. a ton for freightage over the Midland Railway, whereas firewood can be bought in Geraldton for 16s. a ton. Another thing is the fact that

scrap-iron from Geraldton was sent to Fremantle, and it cost 30s. per ton for freight, whereas it was sold at 13s. a ton. This is one of the things causing loss to the Railway Department.

MR. CONNOR: We have had enough about scrap-iron.

MR. RESIDE: Perhaps the hon. member is championing the gentleman controlling this branch of the Railway Department; but I am inclined to agree with the member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) that he should be parted with. The member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) is an expert in figures, and probably some figures would interest him. During the time Mr. Campbell was in charge of this department, which was in 1897 and 1898, the expenditure was £315,000. In 1898-9 it was reduced to £297,499, representing a saving of £17,510; and the cost per train mile at that time was 1s. 9½d. Six months of the next year, 1899-1900, was under Mr. Campbell's administration, and the other six months under that of Mr. Evans, the Interlocking Engineer, the expenditure for the year being £406,565. The great increase in expenditure was due to extra mileage run; the mileage rose from three and a quarter millions to four and a quarter millions, whilst the cost per train mile was slightly increased, to 1s. 11d. The principal cause of this increase in the cost per train mile was stated to consist in the circumstance that there was no permanent head of the staff. When, however, it is seen that the last report shows the cost per train mile at 2s. 5d., and farther when it is remembered that the present cost per train mile is estimated by certain people who think they know the subject at 3s., it must be admitted that there is great opportunity for cutting down excessive expenditure in the locomotive branch. Another matter which may interest hon. members is that when Mr. Rotherham took charge of the branch, he reported the condition of the rolling-stock—locomotives, wagons, and carriages—to be "only fair." During the next year the expenditure of the locomotive branch increased from £406,565 to £497,187, a leap of £90,000 in a single year. The train mileage, be it remembered, had actually decreased during this year by 90,000 miles, whilst the

cost per train mile rose from 1s. 11d. to 2s. 5d. Mr. Rotheram states, as one of the reasons for the abnormal expenditure, the circumstance that the condition of the rolling-stock was unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory, after all that trouble and expense! I am prepared to maintain the reason is that the work of the department was not directed to proper channels. I shall give an illustration. The numbers on the engines, which had cost between £8 and £12 apiece, were not good enough for Mr. Rotheram, who must occupy the time of the men and spend the money of the State in putting on new numbers, at a cost of about £15 per engine. That work, I say, was absolutely unnecessary, and the money spent on it was thrown away at a time when the country was crying out for increased rolling-stock and when there were hundreds of crippled carriages lying at the Fremantle jetty and in other places. Hon. members need only go to the Fremantle jetty to-day to see a string of trucks, as long as the jetty itself, laid up awaiting repairs. This brings to my recollection the fact that some time ago, when the shortage of rolling-stock was highly acute, Mr. Kingsmill, the then Minister for Railways, stated the department had only 103 locomotives in service, 145 being crippled. I ask, is it right that the work of the locomotive employees should be devoted to mere embellishment and the making of unnecessary alterations when 105 locomotives, more than half the locomotives owned by the State, are laid up awaiting repairs? I am prepared to maintain that if all the rolling-stock owned by the State were at the present time in proper running order, there would be no need to cry out for additional rolling-stock. We have sufficient stock for our needs, if only it be kept in a proper state of repair. In proof of my assertion I may mention that some time ago there were actually 900 trucks awaiting repairs at Fremantle, Albany, Geraldton, and other places. A matter which strikes me as rather peculiar has occurred in connection with certain new American engines, Baldwin engines, which, as is known to most of us, were recently imported. At a cost of about £56,000, twenty Baldwin engines were imported. As I take it, a man who understands his work would have sent proper designs and specifications

to America, so that when the engines arrived here the only thing necessary would be to put them together and send them off on their business. We find, however, that when the engines did arrive it was at once considered necessary to put on workmen to make alterations. Many of these alterations, to my mind, were quite unnecessary.

HON. F. H. PRIESSE: Were not the engines cabled for?

MR. RESIDE: Certain details in connection with these alterations are worthy of special mention. The old fusible plugs, which to my mind are perfectly good, were removed from these engines, and new plugs of an inferior description, to my thinking, were inserted. Seeing that each boiler has two fusible plugs, and that the substituted plug is the inferior article, I cannot help wondering why so much expense and trouble were unnecessarily incurred. The result of the substitution is that the new fusible plug, which is supposed to blow out and give warning to the engine-driver when the water gets too low in the boiler, blows off before the water does, in fact, get too low. As a consequence, a number of locomotive employees have been degraded; and those men, I maintain, are suffering for nothing more nor less than the fads of the Locomotive Superintendent. To give an example of the management obtaining in the locomotive branch, I may mention that when one of the Baldwin engines had been erected and was given a trial run, the compensating buckles on the engines broke, with the result that the compensating buckles in the whole of the 20 engines imported had to be replaced. That is the kind of article we are getting for our £56,000. A matter which came under my personal observation when I passed through the yards is that the driving-wheels of all these engines had to be put in the lathe and turned down, because they would not fit the rails. There were, in addition, other alterations in various parts of the engine, costing in all from £35 to £40 per engine, I believe. I want to know, who pays for these alterations? Do the Government pay, or does the Baldwin Company? Farther, I should like to know who is responsible for sending such a specification that when the engines arrive they are unfit to go into traffic? There are many of these

matters which appear to me peculiar, to say the least. Farther, I understand that Mr. Rotheram is responsible for removing the blow-off cocks of the boilers, and replacing them with some new fads of his own. The substituted blow-off cocks are worse than the original articles, so that the extra expense incurred is utterly unwarrantable. Next come the lubricators on the engines. The lubricators supplied by the American manufacturers were good; in fact, the engine-drivers were thoroughly satisfied with them. Hon. members must know that these lubricators cost £6 apiece. We find the locomotive engineer taking off the old lubricators and replacing them with articles costing £8 apiece, but not nearly so satisfactory in their working.

MR. JACOBY: Where do the original lubricators go to? Into the stores account?

MR. RESIDE: Yes. They form part of the obsolete stock we have to square up in connection with the stores account.

MR. HOPKINS: They form part of the Treasurer's surplus.

MR. RESIDE: Another matter requiring attention is the cost of trucks. When Mr. Kingsmill was in charge, the Railway Department could place a four-wheeled wagon on the line here at a cost of about £80, while the wagons Mr. Rotheram is putting on the line to-day cost the State nearly £200 apiece.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Those are the bogies; the others are four-wheeled trucks.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Nine tons, four-wheeled.

MR. RESIDE: No; I am talking about the other trucks. When the new trucks arrived, they could not be put together and set to work immediately; a gang of men had to be put on to make alterations, so that a good deal of time was lost before the trucks were ready for traffic. I say that the man who cannot give an order for an ordinary four-wheeled wagon in such terms that when it arrives here it is perfectly ready to be put together and sent into traffic is not fit for a responsible position. Yet another matter requiring attention is the excessive tare which the wagons now carry. In days gone by, a six-ton truck was tared at about three and a half tons; but the eight-ton trucks now put on our lines are tared at five tons.

This means a heavy increase in the dead-weight haulage. Next, there is a matter for which I think there can be no excuse. I believe it happens even at the present time that goods trains for the goldfields are delayed for want of coal to run them. What is more, I have been told by certain people that occasionally coal has to be taken out of the bunkers of freight trains and put on the locomotives of passenger trains. I maintain that if the locomotive branch cannot keep in stock a sufficient supply of coal to carry on the railway service—

MR. THOMAS: What you describe has happened at Kalgoorlie station several times.

MR. RESIDE: Yes; it has happened at Kalgoorlie station. There is no excuse for such things. Next, I have to point out that Mr. Rotheram is responsible for the discarding of the Wilson axleboxes. These axleboxes were giving satisfaction; but Mr. Rotheram thought fit to introduce a new type of axlebox, leaving on the hands of the storekeeper a quantity of boxes estimated to be worth £5,000.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: Those axleboxes are scattered all along the railways.

MR. RESIDE: Then Mr. Rotheram substituted for the old springs a new kind of spiral spring, with the result that the Wilson axleboxes are inclined to run hot. That running-hot affects the spiral spring, causing it to collapse, and so the truck is thrown out of use for a time. The number of these breakages, I may state for the information of hon. members, from February to July on the Eastern Goldfields line alone, that is from Coolgardie to Southern Cross, was 188. These breakdowns, it must be remembered, mean delays to the freights. Many of the delays in the transport of goods to Eastern Goldfields consignees are caused by nothing more or less than Mr. Rotheram's introduction of his faddish spiral spring. For the same period, February to July, there were also 72 cut axles; that is to say, axles which had run hot. Let hon. members consider—72 cut axles on the Eastern Goldfields line between February and July! Here is another fad of Mr. Rotheram's. The steam regulators in use on the engines were not good enough for the present Locomotive Superintendent. People who

are in the habit of travelling on the suburban lines may often have noticed that trains bump and jolt at starting and stopping. No doubt the blame is usually placed on the shoulders of the inexperienced drivers; but a great many of these bumps and jolts, I am in a position to state, are caused by Mr. Rotheram's steam regulator. The Locomotive Superintendent discarded the regulator which was giving fair satisfaction, and which the drivers could control, and by means of which they could give steam gradually, in favour of one in every respect inferior, which gives steam with a full "go" and consequently causes jerks and jolts. Here is another unnecessary alteration involving the country in useless expenditure. I am indeed pleased to observe that my remarks on this important and serious question are affording the member for East Perth so much entertainment.

MR. CONNOR: You mean West Perth (Mr. Moran): East Perth is enjoying himself outside.

MR. RESIDE: I have mentioned just a few of the matters which I think call for attention. I certainly consider it the bounden duty of the Government to inquire into them and to see that an alteration is made. The new General Manager, or Commissioner of Railways, or whatever he is to be called, has a fair knowledge of these matters; and I think he will be able to do good by giving them his attention: that is, if he be properly supported by the Government. I strongly recommend the Government to take immediate steps towards ending the wasteful administration of the locomotive branch. A matter to which my attention was called the other day is that the new class of engine being imported from America at great cost has a firebox of a type condemned in England as long as 25 years ago. Men experienced in these matters, and possessing a practical knowledge of railway work dating from their boyhood, predict that the fireboxes will prove a failure. A really serious defect pointed out to me in connection with the Baldwin engines is that the water gauge does not give the true level of the water. Consequently they run the danger of "bursting up the show." (Laughter.) However, I say, as far as I am concerned,

I do not think the railway question is one either for hilarity or party politics. I certainly think, although the Opposition had to bring forward a no-confidence motion to sustain themselves and the country, and show that they were game to do their duty, it was unfortunate that they picked the question of railway administration to tackle the Government on. There is not a man in the House who is satisfied with the condition of the railways of the State, and it was wrong for the Opposition to do what they did last session when the Government attempted to straighten railway matters, and when Mr. Holmes tackled the question in the right direction. The Government were thrown out of office over this question, and I am sorry the Opposition attempted to do the same thing on this occasion. I do not think they were serious, but if they had been successful in upsetting the political situation, instead of improving the position the railway administration would have ended in confusion being worse confounded. As far as Mr. George's appointment is concerned, it would have been better if the question had been referred to Parliament, especially for the Government. Parliament would have taken upon itself the responsibility; but matters had been unsettled so long that it was necessary that some step should be taken. As to the increase in the railway rates, the people on the goldfields do not believe in being taxed for the benefit of other districts. I suppose the goldfields people would like to get their commodities carried cheaper than now, still we are willing to pay our share of the working expenses, sinking fund, and interest.

MR. THOMAS: On our own railway; not on the others.

MR. RESIDE: It is only fair to ask us to do that, but not to ask people on the goldfields to make up the losses incurred on other lines. I hope some scheme will be adopted to give some concession to the goldfields people as far as railway facilities are concerned. As to the board of commissioners, I am not in a position to give an opinion on the question until I see the Bill which it is proposed to bring before the House. One thing that struck me last session was the necessity for some alteration being made in reference to railway management in this

State. The result of the John Davies inquiry board showed me that the general manager of railways did not shoulder sufficient responsibility. I am sure that in many details the responsibility could be left with the general manager, and not with the political head of the department. The Commissioner of Railways very often does not understand the question when giving approval. I think some alteration should be made by which the general manager should shoulder more responsibility than he does at the present time, and I hope the House will approach the question in such a manner that good will result, as far as the railways are concerned, also I hope some effort will be made in the way of decreasing the cost of administration. I was surprised the other night when the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas) spoke on the question, and told a rather doleful tale of the mining industry of the State.

MR. THOMAS: Oh, no.

MR. RESIDE: I do not think it came with good grace from the hon. member who represents foreign capital to discredit the mining industry and say, as he did, that the mining industry was going down. It is hardly time to cry "stinking fish" when we know that our small population is responsible for one half of the gold produced in Australia.

MR. THOMAS: I never did.

MR. RESIDE: You gave the impression to the House that the mines were drifting to destruction.

MR. THOMAS: I never did anything of the sort.

MR. RESIDE: I certainly consider that the hon. member gave the impression that if the mining industry went on for a few more years there would be no mining industry at all, and that we only needed to carry the calculations on for a few years and the industry would be wiped out. I only want to call attention to one paragraph of the Mines report for 1901, which gives a table and says:—

It will be seen from the above table that the number of tons of gold ore raised and the number of ounces of gold produced per man employed above and underground is 93·87 tons and 108·04 ozs. respectively, as against 76·99 tons and 87·95ozs. in 1900.

As the number of men employed on the mines is practically the same as last year, the work done by the miners must be

better, because when there is such a big increase on the output it cannot be said that the mines are failing.

MR. THOMAS: I did not say they were failing; I said the production per ton was going down.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The average is not decreasing in the same ratio.

MR. RESIDE: I think as a general rule on the goldfields, as in the Eastern States, the shallow zone is always the richest, and as the mines go down the average value of the ore is generally less.

MR. THOMAS: Certainly; that was my argument.

MR. RESIDE: If the average value is decreasing, the same number of men is employed and the total production is increasing. Every man engaged in the industry above or below ground is producing 108ozs. of gold. There is one thing I would like to refer to in reference to the inspection of mines. It is a question which has occupied the attention of the Minister somewhat, and I hope he will do something until a better inspection of mines is carried out in Western Australia. I certainly know that the percentage of accidents, both serious and fatal, is too high, and I hope the percentage will be reduced. There is one thing particularly interests me as far as the East Coolgardie goldfield is concerned. It is the most important goldfield in the State, the mines being responsible for 55 per cent. of the gold yield, and the mines employ 57 per cent. of the miners of the State; yet that goldfield which is employing such a large number of men at the present time has only one inspector. I have argued previously that one inspector is not sufficient to carry out the work in this district, and I hope the Minister will see his way to appoint an assistant inspector for East Coolgardie and to have a better system of mines inspection than has been the case in the past. There is another matter that is deserving of attention, some alteration should be made in the regulations under the Sunday Labour in Mines' Act. There is too much unnecessary Sunday work carried on at the present time, and the reason is the faulty administration of this particular Act.

MR. THOMAS: Hear, hear.

MR. RESIDE: I am glad to hear that the hon. gentleman is in accord with my opinion. I am also glad to know that it

is the announced intention of the Minister to introduce a Mines Regulation Act to make some necessary amendments, and farther to provide for the safety of the miners employed in the gold mines. There is one thing which I think calls for the attention of the House, and I think the Minister has included it in the amended Mines Regulation Act: I refer to the excessive employment of recently arrived foreigners. The employment of these men should be stopped in connection with gold-mining. It is not creditable to those patriotic gentlemen, the British capitalists, that they should ask the Australian miner to go begging for work and not to get it, while foreigners from Italy and Austria are imported and employed on the mines.

MR. THOMAS: Who is importing them?

MR. RESIDE: Some people belonging to the Chamber of Mines.

MR. THOMAS: I think you should give the names.

MR. RESIDE: David Norrie & Co. is one firm.

MR. THOMAS: Why not stop them. They are not allowed to import these men.

MR. RESIDE: Farther, I consider that men who do not understand the English language and are not intelligent are a perfect menace to the workmen employed underground; and for that reason alone they should not be allowed to work in such a dangerous occupation as gold-mining on the fields nor on timber stations in the South-West. Something should be done in this direction. There was a promise made some time ago which I hope will be carried out this session. I refer to better provision in reference to the employment of qualified engine-drivers, both at the timber mills and in shops and factories. In Western Australia we are behind the times in this direction. Such a law has been in force for a considerable time in Victoria and elsewhere. Engine-drivers on the mines are compelled to go through a pretty stiff examination, and it is only right that engine-drivers employed in shops and factories and on timber mills should undergo a test. While speaking of engine-drivers I include firemen who are carrying out responsible duties, being in charge of boilers, and if they have a mishap they may wreck the whole place.

HON. F. H. PIESSE: "Burst up the whole show." (Laughter.)

MR. RESIDE: Yes, they may "burst up the whole show." That is so. These men should also have a certain amount of knowledge of the English language and be put through a test. On some of the mines on the East Coolgardie field the mine owners are beginning to engage Austrians and Italians who do not understand the English language, and these men hold responsible positions, although they do not understand the English language intelligently. It is a menace to the miners underground to have men who do not understand the English language looking after the boilers, and it is thought they should undergo an examination in their work and also pass an education test.

MR. THOMAS: Of course the mine owners do not want to look after their own property! They want to injure the place as much as they can!

MR. RESIDE: I do not want to take up the time of the House longer. I have mentioned a few matters and I hope they will be attended to. In reference to the redistribution of seats I hope the Bill will be framed in a manner which will give satisfaction to the people. I consider the leader of the Opposition is quite right, that the time has arrived when we should take into serious consideration the idea of abolishing the Upper House. I certainly consider one good strong Chamber quite sufficient to look after the legislation of the country. We do not want two Chambers. The object of every State in the Commonwealth in entering the federal union was to reduce the cost of local government.

MR. HOPKINS: Correspondingly reduced, at any rate.

MR. RESIDE: I look for a reduction in the fact that the Upper House is not required, and I hope that something will be done in this matter in the near future. In regard to the redistribution of seats, it is unjust that in the district of East Coolgardie there is a population of 26,000 with only three members, while there are other districts containing a few hundred people, who have the same representation.

MR. DOHERTY: Oh, you have sufficient.

MR. RESIDE: Sufficient, perhaps, in some cases; but I certainly think, if you

are entitled to represent 200 or 300 electors, my constituency should have a few more representatives. There are other questions on which I should have liked to touch; but I do not wish to take up more time, therefore I shall conclude.

On motion by Mr. F. CONNOR, debate adjourned until the next sitting.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at one minute past 10 o'clock until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly.

Tuesday, 5th August, 1902.

Papers presented—Question: Railways, Spark Arresters
—Question: Land for Selection—Address-in-Reply,
seventh day—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

BY THE MINISTER FOR WORKS AND RAILWAYS: Paper relative to alteration in Classification and Railway Rate Book.

BY THE PREMIER: Regulations under Workers' Compensation Act.

BY THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Census Returns, 1901, Parts 1 and 2.

BY THE TREASURER: Charts of Esperance Bay.

Order: To lie on the table.

QUESTION—RAILWAYS, SPARK ARRESTERS.

MR. J. EWING asked the Minister for Railways: 1, When the locomotives of this State were first fitted with the Standard Deflector (better known as the Rotheram spark arrester). 2, How many locomotives have been thus fitted. 3, What is the back pressure caused by this deflector. 4, Whether it is a fact that

this spark arrester has proved a failure, and is now being removed from the locomotives. 5, What this experiment has cost the State. 6, On what date was the Harwood spark arrester first brought under the notice of the Government. 7, Whether the Harwood spark arrester has been thoroughly tested; if so, with what result. 8, What is the price of the Drummond spark arrester, which is being fitted to some of the new locomotives now being imported.

THE MINISTER FOR RAILWAYS replied: 1, About November, 1900. I am not aware that it is known as the Rotheram spark arrester, as it is in general use and is adapted for burning brown coal or lignite. 2, 170. 3, The deflector does not directly cause back pressure. The area of the exhaust nozzle has to be slightly reduced with the standard deflector. The back pressure varies with the shape, area, and position of the exhaust nozzle, also the speed that the engine is running and the quantity of steam used. 4, No. 5, The cost to the 30th June, 1902, has been approximately £5,200, and the work is not regarded as an experiment. 6, October, 1901. 7, It is now being tested. 8, About £75 each.

QUESTION—LAND FOR SELECTION.

MR. JACOBY, for Mr. Thomas, asked the Premier: 1, Whether arrangements are being made for the throwing open of the land at Grass Patch and Salmon Gums for selection, as recommended by Inspector White. 2, When will this land be available.

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, In about a month's time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

SEVENTH DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous Wednesday, the proposed amendment having been negatived and the general debate continued.

DR. M. O'CONNOR (Moore): I join with the Government in offering my sympathy to Mrs. C. Y. O'Connor and her family in the great loss they have sustained; and I hope we shall have an opportunity of giving them on the Estimates a substantial bonus, for Mr. O'Connor's work in this country should,