

washaways on the Great Southern Railway, and they desire to speak.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at a quarter to six o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 4th August, 1904.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 3.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—METROPOLITAN WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE.

MR. C. J. MORAN asked the Premier: 1, What has been done in connection with the Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage under the powers conferred by Act last session. 2, If the Government have definitely decided to recommend any complete scheme to Parliament, and have they definitely considered and decided upon ways and means. 3, If it is intended to submit, at an early date, the Act of last session for the review of this Parliament, as promised.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James) replied: 1, The Act has not been brought into force because that would have rendered the appointment of a new board necessary. An undertaking was given to Parliament last session that this should not be done until an opportunity was afforded the various local bodies to consider the Act and suggest amendments. In the meantime, however, no time has been lost, as a staff has been for months preparing the necessary plans

and surveys, which should shortly be ready. 2, The Government recommend the scheme as outlined in the reports of Mr. Davies and Mr. Palmer. The question of ways and means is one of the matters which the board will have to consider. 3, The amendments suggested by the recent Conference of local authorities will no doubt be considered, and Parliament given an opportunity of discussing them.

QUESTION—PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

MR. MORAN asked the Treasurer: 1, Whether he is satisfied that all liability incurred during the last financial year was paid before the 10th July, and that no liability has been passed on to the present financial year. 2, In connection with the large reduction in surplus during July, was the £60,840 advanced to Departments to meet July expenditure only. 3, If so, how is the extraordinary expenditure for July accounted for. 4, Has this amount to advance, which it is said originated in November, 1903, been clearly shown in previous months.

THE TREASURER replied: 1, I believe so, but am unable definitely to say. This duty devolves upon the Auditor General—vide Section 51 of the Audit Act, 1904. 2, Yes, and for each subsequent month till the advance is refunded in July next. 3, Exclusive of advances, the expenditure was only £15,000 more than that of July, 1903. 4, Yes, since inauguration of system. I should like to add that, anticipating some possible misapprehension on this subject, I have prepared a full explanation of the system of making these advances, which explanation I intend to hand to the Press.

MR. MORAN asked the Minister for Works: 1, Did he take steps to have accounts which were presented to his department before the end of financial year submitted to Mr. Jull for his purview. 2, If so, when and why were these instructions issued. 3, Did Mr. Jull temporarily hold back any accounts presented before 10th July.

THE TREASURER replied: 1, Yes. 2, On the 15th June. Because the Under Secretary for Works had made very strong protests against the action of the Treasury in paying accounts without his

certificate on Schedule O, as provided for under the Audit Act, alleging that the action of the Treasury seriously interfered with the Minister for Works's control of his own department. 3, The books are closed on the 10th July. No voucher remained in the Under Secretary for Works's office after the 8th, on which day he sent the following minute to the P. W. accountant, and the instructions contained in that minute were duly carried out:—"I was surprised to learn from Mr. Munt, who has just been to see me (2.30 p.m.) that your books for this financial year are closed down, seeing that there are a number of vouchers going up to you this afternoon, and the books for the financial year should not usually be closed down till the 10th. All accounts possible should be paid, especially those in connection with roads and bridges. If necessary, I am sorry to say, your staff will have to stay back to-night and to-morrow night to get them through."

QUESTION—HARBOUR TRUST PROPERTY.

MR. ANGWIN asked the Premier: Whether the Minister in charge of the Fremantle Harbour Trust has caused a schedule to be made of all property vested in the commissioners, and determined the value thereof in accordance with Section 52, Fremantle Harbour Trust, 1902. If so, will he cause a copy of such schedule and value to be laid on the table of the House.

THE PREMIER replied: The schedule has been made, but the values have not yet been determined. I shall be glad to place a copy of the schedule on the table of the House, if the hon. member desires it.

QUESTION—ELECTORS' VOTES, PUBLICITY.

MR. DAGLISH, without notice, asked the Premier: Whether it is true that a *fac-simile* copy of the returning officer's rolls used for the Fremantle, North Fremantle, and South Fremantle electorates at the recent general elections, with the returning officer's marks against the names of the electors who recorded their votes at the recent election, has been handed to Mr. J. J. Holmes. 2, If so, by whose authority has this been done without an order of the Court. 3, For what

reason and with what object. 4, What action have the Government taken in the matter.

THE PREMIER replied: I have no personal knowledge of the matter referred to. The Colonial Secretary, however, informs me that information of the nature communicated in the first question was asked for by Mr. Holmes, but refused. He was told that if he desired information as to whether electors whose names appeared on more than one roll had voted, the information would be supplied if specific names and numbers were referred to. The Colonial Secretary is not aware if any such information has been applied for or given. The same reply was given to a similar request from Mr. P. Stone, another candidate at the late elections.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the TREASURER: By-laws of the Roads Boards, namely, Preston, Mount Magnet, Greenbushes, Buckland Hill, West Guildford, Kimberley Goldfields, Lawlers.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

FOURTH DAY OF DEBATE.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley): As I have to occupy a seat on what are called the Independent benches, I wish to speak as an Independent, and to put as plainly as I can before the House the reasons which have actuated me in taking my seat here. My first and main reason is that in the interests of the State I think I should look first at the State and afterwards at party. I am independent of parties; therefore I feel I am independent of any influence from either side of the House, and have only to use my unbiased judgment to decide how to act on the important issues with which we are confronted. I do not think it is generally realised that Parliament has now reached a stage never reached before by any Parliament in the British dominions. For many years past there has been a steady rise on the part of the masses seeking power. That is the natural result of education. Anyone who objects to the masses obtaining power is condemning himself if he supported the cause of free and secular education. It is a natural corollary that men of ordinary intelligence should, when they can utilise

that intelligence, seek for power; and the man who blames them for so doing is, I think, hardly worthy of consideration. In my opinion, as this activity on the part of the masses, or a portion of them, has strengthened, so have the masses pressed their desires upon the Ministry and the Parliament of the day; and the present Ministry have gone a long way towards meeting those desires. To-day the position is that the Ministry do not possess a majority in the House, nor have the party directly opposing them a majority. If this state of affairs continue, the result must be that the desires of the Opposition will grow stronger every day, as will their influence on the Government benches; and the Opposition may force their desires upon Parliament, owing to the persistence of the Ministry in trying to maintain office with a very narrow majority. That situation I consider very unhealthy for any State, and, therefore, I think the sooner it is ended the better. Such is my reason for taking my place on these Opposition cross-benches. With regard to the present Ministry I wish to say that I, though sitting in Opposition for years past, have to thank the Minister for Lands for the very able work he has done in his department, a department in which I am particularly interested. I am sure he has done very good work, and has established a record which it should be the aim of his successor to emulate. Another Minister, the Minister for Mines, I believe has given general satisfaction to the mining community. I am not able to speak myself of that, but from what I can glean, I believe he also has earned a high reputation in his office. The Minister for Works also, during his term of office, I believe and I know exercised an immense amount of earnestness and application to his work, and did very much good.

MR. JOHNSON: The present Minister?

MR. HARPER: I am speaking of the present Treasurer, and not of the present Minister, regarding whom as Minister for Works I have had no opportunity of forming an opinion. As to the Premier, we all recognise the brilliancy of his attainments; but like all brilliant men, or nearly all brilliant men, he has that drawback of often being carried away by enthusiasm, and not maintaining that solid, stolid course of conduct which is

most desirable in high and historical positions. We can all credit him with these high qualities, and, above all, I believe for the very high quality of honesty of conduct and of ambition; and nothing that I know of has ever operated against his character in that respect. But it is the lack of that discretion required in a high position, such as he holds as Premier, which has sometimes got him into serious trouble. Knowing very well this disqualification of his own, it is a remarkable fact that he did not, as most men would do when he found a vacancy in his Cabinet, fill it with a man who had an abundance of that quality which he lacked. He took as a colleague a gentleman with the same disqualification as his own in even a greater degree; and it is a dangerous thing for the interests of this State to be subjected to the enthusiasm of men carried away, as they sometimes are, by the ardency of desire in attaining their objects. I can imagine that the Premier and the Minister for Works could, with their vehemence, very easily overpower the more moderate aspirations of the rest of the Cabinet. That, I say, would be dangerous to this State, and I think we must bear in mind that the forces opposite would be apt to do more harm to the State, working through the leader of the Government and his colleague of whom I speak, than would be possible if they were in Opposition themselves. When members are in such a position as the Labour party to-day, and are seeking power—because although the leader of the Opposition has told us they do not seek office, I cannot help saying I think they do—when any man takes the front seat on the Opposition bench, he tells the world he wants office——

MR. DAGLISH: Was it direct opposition in the last Parliament?

MR. HARPER: I do not know.

MR. DAGLISH: You saw them save the Government several times?

MR. HARPER: It is no good for the member to cavil at it. He takes the front seat, and if he does not want to occupy it he should not sit there. I can quite understand that the party would like to keep the Government in office if they thought the Government weak enough to have something squeezed out of them. I can quite understand that this may be

the case, or it may not; but I say that, when the party take the front Opposition bench, their business is to get office as soon as they can. Looking at the interests of the State, this is the way I regard the position. The Labour party in power will have to consider other interests than those which they now consider. They are sent by a class; they represent a class, and some of them represent very extreme sections of that class. Directly they are in power they have to broaden their views, and consider how they are going to carry the responsibility which is put upon them. I can imagine some specific instances of cases most important, far more important at the present time, I consider, than anything which has been brought before the House. All the manufacturers of this State, or a very large number of them, tell us that as the result of federation it is impossible for them to continue to manufacture in competition with the manufacturers of the Eastern States. Surely that is a question which it would be better for those who represent labour to fight and decide, than for those who are not representing labour. Are the manufactures here to cease and the employees to be driven to the Eastern States to seek employment, or what is going to be done? Are wages to be lower here to make competition possible, or are wages to be raised in the Eastern States to make things equal? Surely these are points of paramount importance, and they should be dealt with by those representing labour. Take another instance. The member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis) told us last night that this country loses something like £277,000 through the use of Collie coal. I think I can add to that, because I am quite confident that the use of Collie coal has cost the farming community in this district the balance between that and £300,000, and nothing received for it, whereas this money which has been lost by the use of Collie coal has at any rate been distributed. The charge made by the member for Coolgardie was, in effect, that the coal industry was bolstered up at the expense of the whole community.

MR. HENSHAW: At the expense of the railways.

MR. HARPER: The member representing Collie district, although he spoke

afterwards, was eloquently silent on the subject. Whether that gives consent to the proposition or not, I do not know.

MR. DAGLISH: He disputed the statement.

MR. HARPER: It is very desirable for the leader of the Opposition to decide whether the country is at present bolstering up the Collie coal industry in the interests of labour or in the interests of capital. Whichever interest it is, we had better know, and decide what is best to do. The interests of the State are mixed up in this to such an extent that we should know whether this is to go on or is to decrease, and I say emphatically that those who represent labour, who are the largest number of persons interested in this trade, are those who should grapple with the question. Surely, if they settle it one way or the other, the representatives of labour cannot accuse the present Government of having done anything against them. I should like to say a few words with regard to a subject mentioned very early in this House, that is the caucus. We have heard a great deal about the caucus on all sides. The member for Hannans (Mr. Nelson), I think it was, the other night described to us the caucus. I was extremely interested to hear his description up to a certain point, but I looked in vain for a reference to something I expected to hear about, but it was left out, and that was the caucus behind the Labour party. We have some evidence of what is done by the power behind the Labour party.

MR. JOHNSON: Does the hon. member refer to the Government, or to the Independents?

MR. HARPER: A few days ago the secretary of the Labour party received a communication indicating which way it was desired members should act, and a reply was sent informing the Trades and Labour Council politely that members would be very glad to get their suggestions, but that they would like to get them privately—whispered to them, and that it was not desirable to make them public. That letter was made public, and was not altogether received in a friendly spirit. It is not necessary to know any more about this than to know human nature, and to know that people

who put others in power desire to obtain some of that power for themselves.

MR. HENSHAW: Those are the electors.

MEMBER: What about the Chambers of Commerce?

MR. HARPER: Chambers of Commerce have no power of fixing any member who represents them. I have no objection whatever, and do not see that any members can have objection, to a caucus amongst members of the House. It is obvious this must be done on all sides; but the difference between a caucus of members of the House and a caucus of members who only represent a class, is that the members of the House hear both sides of the question and discuss it in the face of opposition expressed, whereas if a matter is settled *in camera* by class members, they can only get one side of the question, the Labour side, and the result is that they take a one-sided view. Human nature generally does take that view—it's own side; but that is altogether different from the position of a caucus of members of Parliament. It is a most legitimate thing that members should meet and discuss, in the face of whatever contest there may be, both sides of a question and come to a resolution. There can be no objection to it; it is always done. [Interjection by MR. TAYLOR.] There are plenty of parties outside Parliament that influence members, as is indicated by the resolution forwarded to the Labour members the other day informing them that a committee had been appointed to watch their conduct.

MR. DAGLISH: It was a misrepresentation by an unfavourable Press organ.

MR. HARPER: I notice that it was the hon. members themselves who thought it necessary to make some little objection to it.

MR. DAGLISH: Until they found it was a misstatement in the Press.

MR. HARPER: It does not seem to have been accepted very cordially. I can quite understand that, directly the mistake was seen, everything would be done to hide and withdraw it. It is obvious on the part of a set of men sitting as a party to force their own views: it is human nature. I have lived longer than the member for Subiaco, and I know it; and I am not singular in this. We can observe the same thing spoken of all

over Australia where the same question has arisen. So members cannot blame me for it.

MR. DAGLISH: The hon. member is not claiming originality?

MR. HARPER: I am not claiming originality, and I do not think the hon. member has any either, judging by his speech the other night. I just want to make clear that to a caucus of members of this House I see no objection; but any influences from a class section trying to bind a man down in Parliament to a certain course, I say, are unhealthy to public interests. [Several Opposition MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] Members will say they are not affected; but this I know, that there are many behind them, thousands of men, watching an opportunity to jump their places in this House. That is just the difference. Hon. members do not seem to realise that in an open electorate there is no organisation and combination that can weaken or injure the backbone of a man, as can be done in Labour electorates. I shall give an instance. A few years ago, in the last Parliament, a question arose with regard to a strike. No doubt the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor) recollects it. The Government took a certain course and were supported by the then members of the Labour party. It was resented by those behind the Labour party that they should have taken this course, and pressure was brought to bear upon them. Within a week afterwards the same question was brought up again, and two of those men had lost their backbones.

MR. DAGLISH: It was not the same question.

MR. HARPER: The instance points to the moral I have observed. Men have not the power to resist, when they are bound to a class interest, that they would have if they were in the open field. That is all I have to say on the subject. I trust that before very long these Labour members will find themselves on the opposite side of the House.

MR. HASTIE: Will the hon. member support us?

MR. HARPER: No; I shall not support the hon. members; why, I shall very soon tell them. We all know that in this party there are some moderate men and some extremists.

DR. ELLIS: So there are on the other side.

MR. HARPER: The extreme men will try to force things to a degree unhealthy to the interests of the State.

MR. HASTIE: All the more reason why the hon. member should help us.

MR. HARPER: All the more reason why I should stop on this side of the House and watch them. That is what I intend to do. I feel confident that many of these members imagine they are going to do great things and create revolutions; but this progress has been going on for the last century, a steady development on one side. The broadening of the franchise has been bringing it about for the last century, at any rate; and in the end, common sense comes to the rescue. That is what will happen, I believe. It is the position I take. Whatever extreme views may come into this House, they have only to face the House and members will find that the community will not allow them to run to excess. There is no reason, as I have often said before, why we should not find just as good if not higher intellects on one side of the House as on the other. No matter where a man is born, if he has the intellect and higher gifts, he should succeed. At the same time, the State must make safeguards against injury. One constantly hears from one set of people who are interested in capital that the country is bound to go "to the dogs" if the Labour party get into power. I may just as well say that the country is as likely to go "to the dogs" if the capitalists get into power. I believe that the common sense of the race is quite equal to meet the case at present; but we must bear in mind that the position we are now in has never been attained by any Parliament before. Therefore, there is all the more reason for the greatest precautions to be taken; and I trust that the hon. members aspiring to office when they do get there will realise that they have an immense responsibility in this country, and that they will use it to the best advantage. They have some planks in their platform to which I am absolutely opposed, and for that reason alone, if for no other, it will be impossible for me to assist them even to the degree of sitting on the very farthest seat on the Ministerial side. I believe many of their notions are crude

from inexperience and want of knowledge, and experience will show whether I am right or wrong. At any rate I am opposed to many of them, and we shall see the matter threshed out. Another point I should like to touch upon with regard to this present position is that a good many people, and especially those representing Labour, express a desire for the development of the referendum system. Now I do not know whether any member has troubled himself to think what the ultimate result is to be if the referendum becomes common. In fact, I very much doubt whether the experience we have had already warrants us in thinking very much of it. If the referendum is developed and a certain number of questions are put to the people, the people will cry out and demand more, and every year will bring a fresh crop.

DR. ELLIS: That is not the case in Switzerland.

MR. HARPER: I knew the hon. member would quote Switzerland, a few valleys in a mountain range and a people locked up together. We have an immense continent and very much wider chances before us than ever Switzerland had.

MR. BATH: It is also adopted in some of the South American Unions.

MR. HARPER: I am not going to say whether it is right or wrong. I say that the development of the referendum means the ultimate abolition of Parliament. If what I have alluded to goes on, it is obvious that there will be no necessity for Parliament.

THE PREMIER: The experience of South America proves the hon. member's case.

MR. HARPER: Yes; power ultimately passes into the hands of a dictator. It is a case of, "give a tiger blood, he wants more." It is the same thing in human nature. Give a man a taste of something he has not had before, and he wants more. I say that those who are urging it must realise it is going to produce a revolution if it succeeds, and that it will mean the abolition of Parliament, for all we will need to do is to take two experts to argue the case on each side, as in the Law Courts, and then submit it to the people. That is the logical result.

DR. ELLIS: That might be the best way to govern.

MR. HARPER: I do not say whether it is good or bad; I simply say that the people should not adopt that course without knowing something about the result. With regard to Parliament itself, I should like to say something as to its conduct. I believe I am the oldest member in this House, having been something like 17 years in it; and I may say that it gives me great pain indeed to see the degradation that has gradually developed in the conduct of the House. I very much regret to say that two of our Premiers have contributed very largely to it. Sir John Forrest was one of those who was constantly interjecting and interrupting debate in a way which I know, from a communication, was a very sore trouble to our late revered Speaker, Sir James Lee Steere, who on more than one occasion spoke to me about it and said that he did not find that support which he should expect from the Premier of the State. I very much regret to say that there is no greater offender in this respect than our present Premier. It is a habit which is becoming irrepresible with him, and he encourages the same thing in others. There are several other members of the House who indulge in this habit. There are two members who sit behind me who have been very good students of the Premier indeed, and the member for Mt. Margaret is also very good in this respect. I want to point out that the Premier, who has been trained in a court of law where decisions are arrived at after deep and careful consideration, must surely recollect that this House is the maker of the machinery which is worked in the courts, and surely where the machinery is made there should be as much order as where it is worked. If this system continues, the feeling of the country, which is strong against the habits of Parliament, will grow so strong that it will have a very dire effect upon the representation as it exists at present. Imagine for a moment the Premier in the Supreme Court allowing anyone else to make an interjection, or making an interjection such as is made in this House. It is a careless and frivolous habit altogether, and is injurious. I hope the new members who have come into the

House will bear in mind what I have said and not follow in the footsteps of the Premier, for they will be doing harm to the institution they have come in to assist. I hope the Premier will in the future control his impetuosity. I know how hard it is to do that, but it can be controlled. If it can be controlled in a court of law why not in Parliament? That is all I desire to say. I intend to cast my vote against the present Government remaining in office, because I think it is in the interests of the State to do so.

MR. HARRY BROWN (Perth): I intend saying only a few words, for I am suffering from a severe cold, and possibly during the last few years I have not been able to give to general politics—being engaged in the smaller sphere of municipal government—the time I ought to have given as a politician. I am surprised, since I have been in the House, to find by the speeches of members of the Opposition what a disreputable, unprincipled lot the present Ministry are. Throughout the whole of the debate I have not heard one word of credit given for a single thing which the Ministry have done. What rights the political Labour party have obtained in the past they have received from the present Premier. I say advisedly, I have not heard a word of thanks from the political Labour party for all they have received. This debate has been an absolute waste of time. There are 22 members in Opposition, and their minds are made up. I think the Premier did a wise thing, the only possible thing that could be done, when he submitted a vote of confidence in himself, so that if the country required to be ruled by the political Labour party and the Independents, who may take one side or the other, let the political Labour party rule. I am sure it was pitiable to hear the plea of the leader of the Labour party that he did not require office, and I must say that I was delighted to hear the outspoken remarks of the member for Hannans (Mr. Wallace Nelson). I think the Premier was really glad of such a worthy opponent as the member for Hannans, who told the Premier plainly that if there were the best Premier and the best Government in the world here, the Opposition had done with them, that the political Labour party were in a majority and were going to rule. If

the leader of the Opposition had made that statement, the country would know it, and he would not get into office by a subterfuge, by telling the public he did not want office but was forced to take it. Let the leader of the Opposition follow the outspoken manner of the member for Hannans, who said the party wanted office and were going to get it. I am pleased indeed that the Coolgardie Water Scheme has been completed, and I think the goldfields members should try and assist the coastal people by allowing the coastal towns to obtain some portion of the water which is now practically running to waste. I understand that upon the Coolgardie Water Scheme, with its large capital, the country is losing at the present time between £50,000 and £60,000 per annum. One only requires to go to the valleys of the Helena to see the huge quantities of water that could be conserved in the catchment area. By the construction of a dam below the weir, sufficient water could be conserved which would not only be sufficient for Perth, but for the whole of the towns between Midland Junction and Fremantle. Members are aware that Perth has not only to support its own water scheme at present, but has indirectly to support the national work, the Coolgardie Water Scheme. I am sure the goldfields members will not be so narrow-minded as to object to pipes being connected with the scheme to supply water to the coastal towns. It is pleasing to me to find that the Government, for the benefit of Perth at least, have found a more congenial occupation for the Engineer-in-Chief in London ; for so long as the Engineer-in-Chief had the control of the engineering department here it would be many years before there would be a departure from the artesian water supplies for Perth. That gentleman was pledged to artesian water supply, and it was almost criminal, with the large quantity of water in the Mundaring dam, to farther continue the abortive artesian supply. With reference to the water and sewerage scheme, I trust that either the present Government or the Labour party, if they come into power, will give some attention to this matter for the benefit of the city of Perth. At present the absence of a scheme is a standing disgrace, and if the Government are not prepared to carry out a scheme, if they will pass the

necessary legislation, the Perth City Council are prepared to undertake the work on their own account. If the figures as supplied by Mr. Davies in his report are correct, it would only take the sum of £112,000, and for this sum a portion of North Perth and Leederville would come under the scheme. If the work could be done for that sum it would be a saving to Perth of £5,000 a year on the present unsatisfactory system. At the present time we are paying interest on a loan of £200,000. I can assure members that if the Government are not prepared to undertake the scheme, but will pass the necessary legislation, the Perth Council will rise to a sense of their responsibility and carry the work out themselves. Several references have been made here to the question of postal votes, and I may say at once that I am absolutely against postal voting altogether. This matter has been threshed out repeatedly at municipal conferences, and I believe a Bill will be brought forward this session abolishing proxy voting altogether. It will be a good thing if this is done. For my part, I would only appoint Resident Magistrates for the purpose of taking postal votes, for I am sure the system can be abused very much indeed. We have heard from the Opposition that it has been abused, but I do not know of any case myself. I know of one anomaly that did occur which is far worse than any trouble about postal voting. I believe that one of the members of this House, within a month of his election, was practically an electoral officer of the State. I do not say that he used his position to farther his election, but it is an anomaly that should not exist. In reference to land settlement, I say advisedly that in the present Minister for Lands we have one of the best administrators who has been connected with that department that we have had for a considerable time ; and I think if the work that has been undertaken by him is only continued by his successor, we shall not have such criticisms as were levelled at the Minister last night by the member for Northam. I think that the Minister's success has depended to a great extent upon an officer who is above suspicion. I refer to Mr. W. Paterson, who without doubt is one of the best

civil servants the State has ever had. I was surprised indeed, and I believe other members of the House were surprised, to hear the member for Northam express his disgust that before an advance was made to a settler the matter had to be investigated, and an inquiry had to be made as to the applicant's financial position. If a loss had occurred in the running of the Agricultural Bank without these safeguards and inquiries being made, the member for Northam would be one of the very first to throw mud at the Government for allowing it. With reference to the Collie coal question, we have been told that a huge deficit has been caused by the purchase of Collie coal. But I say that much of the loss has been caused by the political Labour party, who have repeatedly urged in the Press that the local industry should be carried on at any cost, and almost at any loss. In various institutions with which I have been connected—waterworks, hospitals, and others—in every case we have found it absolutely impossible to use Collie coal. It cannot be compared for price with the Newcastle, or even with jarrah; and in almost every case the wood has had to be used, and is giving better results than the Collie coal. I think the sooner we drop the Collie industry the better, if that industry is to be carried on at a loss to the country. The price of Newcastle coal can be always kept in check by using the vast quantities of timber practically being burnt daily as waste in the mills, provided we have a little more rolling-stock to bring that timber into the city and the towns. With reference to a University to which I see the Speech refers, I have not heard the Premier or any other member pay a tribute to the Perth Council for giving up the magnificent piece of land which is to be the nucleus of the university funds. I think the establishment of a university is a question which may be shelved for a considerable time. This State is doing its utmost, and in fact more than its fair share, to educate its children. The primary education we are giving here is practically the best in the British dominions; and if technical education could be farther extended, that provision would for some time to come stand us in very good stead. If we wish to educate our children beyond that standard, then

secondary education, instead of being provided in a large and costly fashion by the State, could be facilitated by a system of scholarships and bursaries in those private secondary schools already established. I say that it was never intended that our population should be taxed to give a secondary education to the children of those parents who can well afford to pay for it. As to the taxation of unimproved land values, even the Premier and several Opposition members seem to be unaware that there is already a machinery for imposing such a tax; and I may add that a great many roads boards in the State have taken advantage of the section in the Roads Act which permits of the impost. I can assure members that if such a local tax is imposed, there is no room whatever, in this State at all events, for a national land tax. An estate within five or six miles from Perth is already rated at 1d. in the £, and is contributing over £500 a year to the local roads board. I hope municipalities will be given the same power to tax unimproved land values. I have thought over that for years, and am absolutely in favour of it; but my contention is that if the unimproved land tax is imposed municipally, there is no room for a national land tax in addition. I am quite sure that the burden to be paid to the local authorities in the shape of land tax would be sufficient to burst up any estate that is now lying idle.

MR. BATH: Is the estate which is paying £500 a year being burst up?

MR. H. BROWN: Yes; it is now being sold. To show how that land tax is working now, I may remind members that a minimum rate of 2s. 6d. is charged on every block; and there are blocks within eight or nine miles of Perth worth not more than £2 or £3 a block. The land when bought cost the owner about £1 12s.; the half-crown rate has now been levied for four or five years; and in several of those cases the owner, in addition to the cost of his transfer and deeds, has paid the rates; and the rates have practically already exceeded the value of his land. That alone should set members thinking whether it is worth while to impose a national land tax, if the tax already provided is enforced by the local authorities. I may add that in the Roads Act taxing on the unimproved values

is optional; but I should like to see it made compulsory, and I would ask the House this session to give such power to the municipalities. The proposition has been brought up time and again, and thrown out. Last year similar power was given under the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Act; and if it be good enough for the Government under the water and sewerage scheme, it should be equally good for municipalities. If the amended Municipalities Bill is brought in, I will do my best and fight my hardest to see that municipalities get the power they desire to rate on the unimproved value. As to the alienation of Crown lands, I have heard the Opposition say during the recent campaign that they are absolutely against it. I intend, just to demonstrate their inconsistency, to call this session for a return showing all lands granted for trades halls during the last few years. "Oh," say the Labour party, "alienation of Crown lands is not good enough for other people, but it is good enough for us." I notice that in the last two or three years land in Fremantle, I believe to the value of £2,000 or £3,000, has been alienated; and in addition grants of £2,000 have been made to build trades halls. If it is good enough for the political Labour party to have those concessions, to have Crown lands alienated, surely it is good enough for other political parties to get similar consideration. I am told that all over the goldfields similar grants of land have been made.

MR. BATH: Whoever told you that was wrong.

MR. H. BROWN: In Perth a piece of land was granted on the outskirts of Thomas Street, for which the fee simple was given. The land, however, was too far away for the members of the political Labour party. Other land was purchased in Wellington Street by the Government, at a cost of £900, and the deeds of the land in Thomas Street were returned to the Government for the money they provided for the new site.

MR. ANGIN: Do you know that the political Labour party has no land?

MR. H. BROWN: Not content with rating unimproved land values, our friends the Opposition say, "Rate everybody else, but do not rate us." In the proposed new Municipalities Bill brought

before the Municipal Conference, grants for similar purposes were exempted from rating. I am pleased to state that at the conference this exemption was struck out, and I hope it will not be reinserted by Parliament when the Bill comes before us. There are enough exemptions now. One of the exemptions was "all trades halls." Now why should trades halls be exempted more than any other buildings?

MR. TAYLOR: You say nothing about grants to municipalities.

MR. H. BROWN: We hold our grants in trust for the people, but you hold yours in trust for a particular sect. Another matter. The Conciliation and Arbitration Bill was, I believe, fought for by both Opposition and Government. To me it seems pitiable to note the criticisms levelled at those gentlemen who have administered the Act. In any part of the world, has a litigant power to practically appoint one of his own judges? We have heard members of the Opposition criticise the work of that Arbitration Court. If men want advice, they generally go to their solicitors; but the Opposition profess to pit their opinions against those of the Judges of our Supreme Court.

MR. WATTS: Can you or anyone else justify their decisions?

MR. H. BROWN: Can you or anyone else say that the judgments are wrong?

LABOUR MEMBER: We prove them wrong by higher authorities.

MR. H. BROWN: One of the best Judges we had in this State was the late Justice Moorhead; and I say that his end was practically expedited by the scathing remarks passed on him for his administration of the Arbitration Act.

MR. DAGLISH: Are you speaking as a medical authority on the Judge's illness?

MR. H. BROWN: I say that those scathing criticisms expedited that man's death.

MR. DAGLISH: Are you a medical authority?

MR. H. BROWN: I make the assertion anyhow. Only a few weeks ago a decision of Mr. Justice Parker was given, and a writer to the daily Press stated that Mr. Justice Parker had practically stultified himself in a judgment that he gave, in order to save himself £2 or £3 a year. I refer to the case of temporary waiters employed at night, at 10s. for two or three hours' work. The

appellants required 15s. Mr. Justice Parker, I think from the bench, said that he usually paid 10s., which seems a fair remuneration for two or three hours' work. When that award was given, the gentlemen interested absolutely said publicly that Mr. Justice Parker was biased because he, probably two or three times a year, engaged an extra waiter and did not wish to pay him 15s.

MR. HENSHAW : Do you know that in the award there was a provision of a minimum wage for waiters of £1 per week?

MR. H. BROWN : One of your chief men said of Mr. Justice Parker that rather than increase the pay of a waiter from 10s. to 15s., he delivered a biased judgment. Now would a Judge, for the sake of a few paltry pounds a year, thus prejudice himself in the eyes of the public? Again, with reference to preference to unionists, that is the only objection I have to the political Labour party. I, as well as the political Labour party, am here to represent the workers of Perth; and I say that the nonunionist should require and get the same protection as a member of that party. The occupations of many men preclude their joining unions. If it were attempted by legislation to give preference to nonunionists, Labour members would naturally object; and if non-preference is good for one it is good for another. With reference to population and immigration, no doubt stronger efforts should be made to put the unemployed on the land, if they will go. The members of the Opposition say practically "Our wealth is our labour." Well, if it is, we are told by the member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis) that there is plenty of such wealth about the country—the unemployed. But the Opposition are altogether against the introduction of capital.

LABOUR MEMBERS : We never said so.

MR. H. BROWN : You are against borrowing, and I cannot realise the why or the wherefore. This State must have capital. Why cannot we drop this warfare, and try to curry favour with the capitalists, try to bring them into the country instead of fighting them at every possible opportunity? We know well that the labour of any of us is absolutely useless without capital; and the truth of

that is exemplified when you yourselves say that your labour is your capital. If it is true that labour is capital and you have plenty of men unemployed, as one member has said, then you have plenty of wealth; but when it comes to putting men on the land and expecting them to get a living by cultivating it, we must recognise it is useless to do so unless the men have some capital to start with. With reference to land settlement, I do think the new system of field-work which is being tried in the South-West is very good; and I can go farther, as I have said on a public platform before, that from my experience as a magistrate sitting occasionally in a police court I do think it is absolutely criminal to send men, when sentenced on charges of drunkenness, to serve a term among criminals in a gaol. I do not regard it as a very great crime when a man is brought up on a charge of drunkenness; but I do think we are breeding up a class of criminals by having no means of keeping such men, when sentenced for a short term, from suffering by contamination with criminals in our prisons. If an attempt is to be made to clear the lands of the colony, one practical way would be to give these men who are convicted for slight offences an opportunity of some proper employment by putting them to work on the land, say by some system of payment by wages or reward, and this would enable them while undergoing sentence to earn something for their families. If you get the value of their work, that will be something in return for the wages given. Men coming from the goldfields to the coast would readily settle on the land as cultivators if some system of clearing could be devised by which they could earn something while clearing the land. As I have said, a system of putting men on the land as cultivators without some money to start with is useless; and I think it would be almost criminal to bring men from outside the State into this country with their expectation of settling on land, but starting without means to carry them on. By the system I have suggested in regard to persons under sentence, you could take the better class of criminals from the gaols and set them to clearing the land, and by some payment or reward you would enable such men, and would

attract other men, to go on the land and reap the reward of their exertions.

MR. MORAN : That is advanced socialism.

MR. H. BROWN : It may be socialism, but it is a work that will well repay the State. It would be far better to keep these men in occupation than waste their time in doing nothing while under sentence. In conclusion, I have to thank hon. members for the hearing they have given me.

MR. HENSHAW : You have not referred to the back slums of the city.

MR. H. BROWN : With regard to the remark of the member for Collie, I have given as much time if not more time to the work of the city in municipal matters as any mayor during the last few years ; and I may say I was surprised to find the back parts of the city in the state they are. I hope that, with the assistance of the Central Board of Health, the City Council will be able to make Perth a city fit to live in. I am going through with the work now, and although I know it is a nauseous job and one that will bring me bad feeling from a number of land owners in this State and particularly in Perth, yet during the short period I have to serve as mayor of Perth I am going, without fear or favour, to carry out that action in its entirety, and I intend to back up my officers every time, and will not be approached by any land owner. In every case where owners of property have approached me since this matter came up I have told them that I will not go behind my officers. Those officers have full instructions to carry out the demolition of buildings that are not fit for habitation. I hope that in the Health Bill which is to come before the House this session, Parliament will give the health boards greater powers ; not only in regard to health matters in the city of Perth, but in reference to all municipalities in the State. A building is condemned as unfit for human occupation, and while it remains standing is a menace to the public health. An amendment in regard to that will be found in the new Bill, and I regret that the workers living in Perth have had to live and sleep in the dens that they have had in the middle of the city, and I hope this will soon become a thing of the past. With regard to health matters my friend

the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Daglish) knows the opposition and the difficulties with which local boards of health and the Central Board have to deal. It would be almost better if the supervision of health was taken out of the hands of the municipal bodies ; but it will be for this House to say during the present session what provisions shall be made for improving the present condition, particularly to provide that a district medical officer who is disconnected with any locality should be given entire charge of the inspection, and so do away with the present dual control.

MR. ANGWIN : All local boards do not clash with the Central Board of Health.

MR. H. BROWN : The Central Board of Health have supreme control over the local boards, and can come in whenever they like and supersede a local board. Every member of the Central Board is an old employee ; every one of the officials, the inspectors at all events, have been old servants ; and it is their fault that Perth is in the present condition in regard to health. Whilst I am mayor of Perth, I have neither the time nor have I the inclination to go behind my officials. I am sure the hon. member would not have me or any councillor to go round acting the part of inspectors in Perth. If you have inspectors, trust them ; and when you find them not doing their work, get rid of them. (General applause.)

MR. P. J. LYNCH (Mt. Leonora) : I rise to take part in the discussion, although if I were allowed to express the opinion of an individual neophyte, I should not offer any excuse for the prolongation of this debate. Still, noticing the unwillingness of members of the Government to force a conclusion, the time must be spent, uselessly perhaps, in going over ground that has already been touched on more or less by other members. I fear I can add but little evidence to that given already by members on this (Labour cross-bench) side of the House, in support of the stand they have taken ; but representing a constituency which is far removed from here, and which on that account may have special reasons for looking upon the proposal now before the House, I feel that I may endeavour to offer some reasons that have hitherto not been touched on. It has been contended to-day by one of the morning

newspapers that the proper course to be taken was for the Opposition in this House to cite their case and let the leader of the Government reply. To my mind, if that course were adopted it would destroy all chance of cross-examination; for in the course of defence the leader of the Government might use some arguments that were assailable, and that is the reason to my mind why the fairest course is that which is being followed in the present case, for each member on each side to state his view of the question. In the reply made by the Premier on Tuesday, we find that not only did he strive to reply to what is called the indictment made by the Labour party, but he also indicted the Labour party in turn. On his part, we were referred to as the "trades hall party," and he also referred to the caucus in terms that were not complimentary. It is necessary on our part to reply to those charges in brief. For my part I am not at all ashamed of belonging to a political party in the House that is associated with trade unions, and I am at a loss to know why any member on the Government side should taunt members on this side with trade unionism, or with any taint that may be associated with it. I would direct their attention to that period in the progress of this country when, were it not for trade unionism, the country would have been at a low ebb, not only socially but industriously. I direct attention to the time when trade unionism was utterly smashed up, and I may say that I was one of the band who suffered a reduction of wages equal to 11s. per week as the result of the annihilation of trade unionism. I want members on that side of the House to justify their stand in saying that we on this side should not be associated with trade unionism, which has been the means of rescuing the workers from the bad condition of that previous period. We also hear reference made to a pledge, as though men on this side of the House were bereft of every sense of honour by being pinned to the assurances they gave their electors on the hustings. Ours is a business pledge, and we feel that whatever we utter on the hustings we should not be ashamed to bind our signatures to afterwards. We recognise that in doing this we are

treating with average humanity. It is true that if we were dealing with ideal humanity we could trust their word to the full, and a pledge would not be necessary; but we have not George Washingtons and Cincinnatuses, we are dealing with average humanity, and we have come to the conclusion, after sampling it not only in Australia but in the old world, that we have to bind men in black and white to make them adhere to the pledges given by them on the hustings. That is the origin of the pledge, and it appears to be nothing more than what a business man in every-day life would insist on. Is it not more necessary to have a pledge when works are being done in the interests of a nation, or in the interests of a community, than it is for a mere business transaction in buying and selling? We take a receipt and we give a receipt, and we need the signature of the vendor in return. We need a pledge, and that is the reason why the Labour party have adopted it, to consolidate our forces, so that we can confront the man with bold type and his own assurance. We are also charged that we meet in caucus; as if that were something unusual in the history of the political arena! We find that no later than last week or so the Ministerial party have had occasion to resort to caucus, in order to farther their own ends. But they went still farther, and actually had a sentinel outside the precincts of the building to ensure secrecy. There is a legend in the Cannibal Islands—I think it is Fiji—where it is held sacred that no white man should be allowed within a certain radius when a secret conclave is being held. I am at a loss to know why the Ministerial party should have shown such signs of reverting to the old cave-dwellers' ideas as this. The Labour party have adopted the caucus, which has been in existence ever since parliamentary government was instituted, ever since the great Reform Bill of 1832: we are only copying the example which has been set for us. There is this farther justification as to the adoption of the pledge on the part of the Labour party. With other political parties the caucus has been adhered to to obtain the allegiance of smaller politicians to the greater personalities. There were times when the two

parties were so much alike in their platform that the difference was as slight as that between tweedledum and tweedledee. At that time the caucus was resorted to to farther the ends of those who wished to control the rival factions. What is the difference in relation to the Labour party? We adopt the caucus for the purpose of securing the adhesion, the allegiance, and the loyalty of those who believe in every plank of our platform. The caucus is used to ensure the allegiance of each member of the party to the carrying out and the advocacy of that platform. It should be unnecessary to indulge at any length in this discussion; at the same time there are a few salient matters that I cannot help referring to. The first is that the present Ministry take serious objection to being deposed, in consequence of the loyal services they have given, and the progressive character of their legislation.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Our legislation is on the statute book, and speaks for itself.

MR. LYNCH: Is it not true that you have had to depend upon the votes of the Labour party for your existence?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: No; we repudiate that statement.

MR. LYNCH: Turning to the objection of the present Ministry to be turned out of office, is it not true that some of the members of the Ministry were for years seeking to oust another Ministry from office? And as far as services went, they do not equal the records of that Ministry whom they sought to turn out. There is the Coolgardie Water Scheme; the Premier continually opposed that scheme, which I may say is nothing but the life-blood of the great industry of this country. Then there was the progressive railway policy, which is also attributable to Sir John Forrest. There are the inland water schemes, which give drink to those in the interior. The extension of the railways and the telegraphs owes its origin to the administration of Sir John Forrest. We have also the Arbitration Act, and notwithstanding that we have heard many things said of Sir John Forrest and the difficulties he sometimes experienced in getting that recognition which was due, I say that the introduction and passage of such a measure as the Arbitration Act

stands as a monument to his statesmanship. When the time comes to write the names of the statesmen of this State, that of Sir John Forrest will be entitled to the worthiest place. The present Government attempted to depose that gentleman from office. The Premier is anxious to know the real root of the trouble why he is being turned out of office. The country wants to know why Mr. James and his associates are continuing in office, and the thinking elector wants to know why that composite Ministry should remain in power. I say composite, because the dangling of a portfolio has made some of the members of that Ministry come together and effect a reconciliation. The electors have expressed themselves so unmistakably on the point. The electors have good memories, and they remember that some of the members on the Ministerial bench, before a portfolio was dangled in front of them, searched the English vocabulary to find the most bitter things to say against one another. The electors now want to know why there has been so happy a reconciliation. When the average elector reflects on the statements made by Ministers before they accepted portfolios, and when they reflect that certain members actually shifted their seats in order to escape the odium of certain other persons, they are forced to ask themselves, do the present Ministerialists wish us to look like a parcel of fools? Do the Ministry want the people of the country to appear as so many fools, incapable of reasoning? Do the Ministry think that the electors forgot the very next day the actions of the past? I think the electors have come to the conclusion that the opinions expressed by certain members of the Government of one another were hollow in the extreme. As far as the statement of the Premier is concerned, that the Labour party attempted to best him, if the Premier was acquainted with the evolution of political events he must speedily have come to the conclusion that it was the only natural thing to be expected. The Labour party in their numbers are only what was to be expected with the gradual extension of the franchise, and the removal of the disabilities from those who had, in the past, been robbed of their political rights. The Labour members

had certainly not much to thank the influential Press of the State for. The Labour party as they appear here to-day are not only entitled to accept the responsibility thrust upon them, but they are entitled to far more credit than they get. If we reflect we will find that before the entry of the Labour party into the arena of politics their exertions were not recognised. The Labour party came into existence in New South Wales in 1892. A convention had been held the year previously for the purpose of bringing into existence a constitution for the Commonwealth of Australia, Sir Henry Parkes being chairman of that convention. Throughout the discussions which occupied the attention of that convention not a word was said about one man one vote. A convention was held some years afterwards in Adelaide, and a draft constitution was agreed upon. During the short interval of seven or eight years this great reform had passed from the stage when it was not recognised until it finds a lasting place in the Constitution of the Commonwealth. Has that not been attributable to the Labour party in New South Wales? The people of the country are somewhat slow in recognising the obligations which they owe to the Labour party in this connection. Coming nearer home, I may mention, as a farther justification of the Labour party, that they have been responsible for a great many laws which find a place in our statute book, and which, had the Labour party not been in existence, would not have been passed. Amongst these are the Arbitration Act, old age pensions, the liberal franchise, unimproved land value taxation: all these measures are now within the arena of practical politics, and they have been brought about, in a great measure, owing to the exertions of the Labour party. That is a justification of the present position of affairs, and in no sense do I offer an apology for the Labour party, and certainly not for the responsibility of criticism or even of power thrown upon them. With regard to the shortcomings of the last Ministry I want to assert that in many Acts, brand-new pieces of legislation, there are so many shortcomings, flaws and defects that it means a wide divergence by the Ministerial side from the policy of the Opposition. Before

proceeding with that I may mention that last year the Estimates included extravagant expenditure; and an unwillingness to develop the industries of this State has been a chief feature of the administration of the present Ministry. When we find the lavish expenditure on roads and bridges, especially on the roads round the Caves down south and on park improvements at the Zoological Gardens, and at the same time the parsimony shown in providing ample school accommodation on the goldfields, that forms a special count in the indictment of the Ministry. I know centres in that country with 200 and 300 inhabitants which are without a school, and this lavish expenditure to which I refer has been the chief characteristic of the Ministry now seeking for a fresh lease of office. We come to the Mining Act, which no doubt is in many respects all right.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Tell us how the Mining Estimates were treated, and the large increases in the Mines Department this year.

MR. LYNCH: I am prepared to give the Minister for Mines all credit for many administrative acts. As far as the Mining Act is concerned it still contains flaws of a sufficiently grave character for it to be absolutely useless as a piece of legislation to serve the hewers on the fields. Perhaps after all there could be no more condemnatory reference, from the workers' point of view, in regard to the measure than the opinions expressed by the Chamber of Mines; and in this connection I should like to draw the attention of the Minister to the fact that he regarded as one proof of impartiality the fact that the Chamber of Mines, after having gone carefully through the Bill, took exception to only one solitary clause, and that clause was taken exception to on highly justifiable and at the same time specific grounds. The clause to which they took exception was a simple one that mining companies should be saddled with a provision that a labourer's wages equal to a month's pay should take priority of all other claims. They wanted to know why the mining industry, and rightly so, should be singled out for such an imposition. They were quite right. On all other clauses of the Bill they were silent; and I put it to the Minister whether that silence does not point to

the fact that the Mining Act was framed on lines that suited the Chamber of Mines whilst it was unsuited to workers. In regard to rent for mining leases we find that a provision remains whereby struggling men are charged one pound an acre for land which probably does not do more than provide them with a living. The Act is in the same position as it was when the present Ministry came into office; and notwithstanding that the goldfields in the persons of 13 mining representatives have come here with the express intention of repealing that particular clause, the James Ministry, which now asks for a renewed lease of confidence, says the measure is perfect in every detail. Take the expression of opinion of 13 as against three. The measure is not a progressive one, and does not commend itself to the people mainly interested, namely the workers and dwellers on the goldfields. We come now to another much-debated subject, and I confess that from present appearances it does not command that special attention which perhaps it needed some time ago; that is a provision in the Bill to so regulate the supply of labour that those who come from other parts of Europe shall not be anything like an unreasonable proportion of those toiling on the fields. The Minister for Mines was very impressive on this point when touring the goldfields, and he did not disguise his willingness to include in the Bill, or rather in the mining regulations in the future, a clause specially regulating the proportion of workers there. This, of course, would only be following the example of Germany and other States who have had to deal with this problem. We find that the Governor's Speech contains not a clause on the subject, notwithstanding the expression of opinion of the Minister for Mines when on the fields. I admit that this is not so serious as it has been, but it is statesmanship to not only recognise the present difficulty, but to legislate for the future needs of the people, when we find that this may occur in the future. I should like to have seen some reference in the Speech to the allusions of the Minister when on the fields.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: There is a reference to the Commission in the Speech.

MR. LYNCH: I am talking of the Governor's Speech, and I presume it is on that the Minister for Mines is proceeding.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The Commission will take evidence in regard to these matters.

MR. LYNCH: I contend I am justified in drawing attention to this, as a vital question so far as some fields are concerned. I have found Britishers there who have been thrown on the road, and at the same time some 50 or 60 per cent. of foreigners have been employed on the place. So, while there is a possibility of a recurrence of a position of this kind, it is only right that we should expect faithfulness to the professions made by the Minister for Mines.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You forget they have to publish their rules in Italian.

MR. LYNCH: We come to the land policy, and that does not so keenly affect the welfare of the people of the fields. Great advantage must ensue from a land policy of a vigorous and progressive character. Amongst the undesirable features of the Governor's Speech is the absence of reference to any intention to provide against the accumulation of large estates in the future. I find that the policy of the Government in order to encourage closer settlement is to repurchase estates, yet that a railway contractor was actually successful in securing 20,000 acres of first-class land on 20 years' purchase. It is showing a short-sighted policy or worse when an area of that description can be obtained. Such procedure will form in the very early future a stumbling block to settlement. I contend that the granting of these estates on the one hand and the subdivision of land on the other, seems a stultifying of the Ministry of the day. No man can deny that it is the province of the statesman to look to the future, and yet we find the present Ministry buying up estates and at the same time creating a condition of affairs under which large estates will be built up. Does not that mean a positive contradiction of policy? They have the power to restrict these large estates. Wilkie Brothers got 20,000 acres of land on the 20 years' purchase system; and if that is a sample of what can be done, the Ministers must have their eyes shut to

future possibilities, and the necessity of guarding against evils which are now growing by the accumulation of these large estates. There is also the question of railway freights, which is rather a time-honoured grievance I will briefly refer to. I do not seriously impugn the figures of the member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis) that the Eastern Goldfields line yielded three million pounds in excess of working expenses, or in other words has actually paid for itself. If that be so, it shows this is the best paying portion of the railway system. The inhabitants who come within the range of the supply which the Eastern Railway caters to are, on that assumption, saddled with the finding of wages for the huge army of workers who are working the system, that is the non-paying lines as well as the paying ones. As members see in the Governor's Speech they are also saddled with the 4 per cent. for interest on the capital cost of the railways; that is to say that dwellers who come within the range or the special zone of the goldfields line are paying the interest and working expenses of the other portions of the system. Now, whilst that is being done we also notice a difference in the freight on household goods delivered; a difference so striking that it really means nothing short of a gross injustice to those people who have to find a livelihood within that area. The rate for produce raised locally is £5 0s. 10d. per ton, as against a rate in the other States of £2 5s. 7d., and thus we consider we have a grievance of the first order. If it is so necessary to encourage the butter industry, the manufacturing industry, in this portion of the State, would it not be fair and reasonable to encourage it at the expense of all the inhabitants of the State, rather than at the expense of those residing in the mineral area? The more scientific way of dealing with this matter would be to have the local produce used in the coastal regions in the neighbourhood where it is manufactured and grown passed through a custom-house, and thus have it, shortly, on the same basis as the produce carried by the railways at increased rates. And in advocating this, I yield to none on that side of the House in my desire that those who hold gold-mining properties, as well as those who hold other properties in the State, shall receive

justice as far as my vigour will command. We are entering on an era of prosperity, I hope, in this State. We have gold to the extent of one-eighth of the world's output; we also have coal, and notwithstanding what has been said by the member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis), I believe the case against Collie coal is not so bad as he has stated, for we have to take into account the fact that the country benefits by the royalty paid for Collie coal. In referring to coal, I do not wish to seriously impugn the figures of the member for Coolgardie, but I do wish to see justice done to a local industry. The timber industry and the pastoral industry of the Far North have great future possibilities which cannot well be gauged; and now that we are entering on an era of prosperity, and having the Labour party in a menacing attitude for assuming power, I want for the future to see, as a member of the State and a shareholder in the community, that its welfare shall be just as jealously guarded by the Labour party as it can be by any other political party. While we recognise that we will keep a steady eye on the material prosperity of the State as a whole, we will not lose sight of, but rather make it of equal importance to look after, the material welfare of the units that compose the community; and in doing this we will not mar the progress of the State as a whole, but rather assure the people that the legislation contemplated by us as a party will, in the future not less than in the past, conduce to the material welfare and prosperity of the community as a whole. As to what Labour legislation may do for a country, we see that New Zealand has been rescued from the brink of national insolvency, and raised to such a condition of prosperity that it now occupies the premier position among these dependencies. I have only to say, in conclusion, that the reason why the front Opposition bench is now occupied by the Labour party is in a great measure due to the intention that they will in future carry out the legislation which they desire, and will no longer do it by proxy. Whatever beneficial acts can be set down to the Ministry of the past, theirs is only a reflected light; and the sun on this (Opposition) side of the House intends to do its own shining

in future, and not rely on the light of a burnt-out planet. The Labour party intend not only to legislate for improving the condition of the workers, but also to keep a careful eye on the material prosperity of the country; believing that this will ensure greater prosperity to the State as a whole than it has enjoyed hitherto. I have no doubt this is the intention of every member of the Labour party, but I will not go so far as to say it is the intention of every other member in this House, because other members who have spoken in the debate have evidenced an almost worm-eaten, slavish inclination to fear that the credit of the country is at stake, and that all our prosperity has been dependent on the goodwill and good graces of the money-lender in the distance. I want to see the time come when this State, as far as possible, will be self-contained and self-supporting, and will be independent of the money-lender outside. In conclusion, this country need have no fear that with the increased responsibility which is thrown on the Labour party, there will be any injury done to the material interests of the country; for I believe that as the party goes on increasing in number, it will also increase in respect; and that the party on this side, in being ready to accept responsibility, will preserve its name for cleanness of administration, even in the bumbler walks of life with which its members have been connected.

[A pause ensued.]

MR. J. C. G. FOULKES (Claremont) : I regret to see a reluctance on the part of some members on the Opposition cross-benches to express their views. The whole of the people are more anxious to hear the views of some members than of other members, particularly the member for Kimberley (Mr. F. Connor) and the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran). It is not extraordinary that there should be some criticism with regard to the actions of a Ministry after it has been some time in office. We have had a Ministry that has been in office for practically three years, and during that time has had various subjects to deal with; and as it is impossible for a Government any more than for a private individual to give satisfaction to all classes of the community, it is only to be expected that

certain criticisms should attach to decisions they have arrived at, and to works they have carried out. First we had the Leake Government, then the James Government. I listened carefully to the indictment made by the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Daglish), and there were two facts that struck me; firstly that the charges brought against the leader of the Administration (the Premier) were so few in number, secondly that the leader of the Opposition dealt only with matters of minor importance. Another feature of his indictment was that all these complaints were connected with subjects not of first-class importance. To illustrate, I may mention that at least ten minutes of his important speech were devoted to the domestic side of Subiaco. I have said the matters of complaint brought forward by the leader of the Opposition were small in number. I can only deal now with the various charges brought forward by the various speakers. It seems to me extraordinary that the leader of the Opposition should have so few charges to bring against a Government that has been in existence three years. I soon realised the real reason why so few charges were brought forward by him. Of course the reason is that during the last three years there have been no more loyal supporters of the Government policy than the members who now sit on the front Opposition bench. Every decision arrived at and every public work carried out by the Government have practically received the support of the Labour party in the last Parliament. Naturally it cannot be expected that the member for Subiaco, the leader of the Opposition, who has always been fairly consistent, should bring a long list of charges against the James Government, because there have been no more loyal supporters of that party than the member for Subiaco and the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie). Whenever there was the slightest doubt regarding the existence of the James Government there were no more panic-stricken members than those two. Of course we are deeply grateful for their efforts, and the Minister for Lands is also deeply grateful. I recognise some members in the Labour party were not in sympathy with the rest. I remember that there were two members who did not support the others in their

support of the James Government, those being the member for North Murchison (Mr. Holman) and the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor). We know those two hon. members bitterly assailed their colleagues for giving such support to the James Government. They were not listened to at the time; but still I have come to the conclusion that there cannot be any more bitter attacks made by the members of the Labour party against the James Government than the personal attack made by the member for Mt. Margaret against the member for Kanowna for the grateful assistance the latter gave to the Government at all times. I have been very much struck with the lenient and minor complaints, because we cannot treat them as serious, brought by the member for Subiaco against the James Government. Compare these minor complaints with the serious charges made by the member for Mount Margaret against the member for Kanowna for supporting the Government! I should like to call the attention of the new members of the Labour party to this. Of course I recognise the fact that they have made up their minds to vote against the James Government; but when they record their vote it carries a certain amount of responsibility. I should like to call attention to the fact that, in recording a vote against the James Government, they are also recording a vote against the Labour members of the last Parliament. We cannot get away from that fact. It is a reasonable conclusion. The real reason brought forward with regard to the removal of the James Government is the reason given by the member for Hannans (Mr. Nelson). He gave us a most interesting speech; and he was very frank, more than some others to whom I listened. He said, so far as he was concerned, he had no cause of complaint against the James Government. He admitted it was the best we had ever had in this State, and said that he took care at any time never to say a word against that Government. He attributed the reason of the arrival of so many Labour members here to the widespread Labour movement in other parts of the world; and he instanced America and Germany. It seemed to me to be a most extraordinary reason that whatever the state of affairs in America might be with

regard to labour and capital, it should affect this far-off portion of the British dominions. The hon. member made mention of another fact also from which one can draw a conclusion. He spoke of the Labour party in Germany. He must have quite ignored the fact that there is no Labour party in Germany.

MR. NELSON: What?

MR. FOULKES: There is a Socialistic party, and therefore I have come to this conclusion, that because the socialistic party have been flourishing in Germany, the member for Hannans thinks the Labour party, as he calls them, should flourish to a greater extent in this State. He seemed to think that because they are socialistic in Germany the Labour party here should also be considered as having socialistic tendencies.

MR. MORAN: What is the difference in the policies?

MR. FOULKES: I do not know, although I know that a short time ago the various Labour bodies in this State sent a delegate to attend a socialist conference to be held at Amsterdam, so that there must be a great deal of connection between the Labour parties here and the socialistic parties of Amsterdam and Germany. One item brought forward by the member for Subiaco was a charge with regard to mining administration and with regard to a recent case tried in the Supreme Court. I refer to the case of a warden on the goldfields (I forget his name for the moment) against the Minister for Mines for slander and wrongful dismissal. Of course, we know that the case was tried before a judge and jury, and that a verdict was given by the jury, I think for the sum of £2,500 as damages.

THE PREMIER: £2,750.

MR. FOULKES: Being a lawyer, I know something as to how cases are presented before a jury; and I can inform the House that it is always very difficult to defend a Government or a company before a jury. Juries either consciously or unconsciously have a certain amount of prejudice, well known among lawyers, against Governments and against companies. Companies and Governments do not enlist the same amount of sympathy in the minds of a jury that the single individual is likely to enlist, and the reason for that is to a certain extent natural.

They think that a Government and a company have unlimited funds at their disposal, and for that reason juries are always likely to err on the liberal side in the matter of damages. In this case the jury awarded a verdict of £2,750; but the Minister appealed against that decision to the Full Court, and asked that there should be a new trial granted. The warden attended before that Court of Appeal, and the Full Court said to him (I am abbreviating as much as possible) "If you will consent to a verdict of £1,000 we will let that stand. If you will not consent to it, we shall make an order for a new trial." The Judges by that to my mind showed their appreciation of the verdict and damages awarded by the jury, and certainly the complainant himself could not have felt on very secure ground when he was willing to give up £1,750 rather than face the ordeal of a new trial. So that verdict is not so convincing to my mind that the action of the Minister was wrong, because I know from experience that verdicts given against a Government and companies are not always to be relied upon, and the records of the Supreme Court will prove to us that frequently verdicts given by juries under these conditions are upset and damages in a great number of cases reduced. The member for Subiaco gave a homily on the Minister bringing serious charges against a private individual; and to that extent, of course, I was very much in sympathy with him; but to my horror and amazement that same member for Subiaco a few minutes afterwards breathed denunciations against a man who is well known in this State, and spoke of him in most abusive terms, spoke of him as a tyrannical employer. I know nothing of this gentleman, nor of the manner in which he carries out his duties. At that time the member for Subiaco was discussing the question of taking postal votes, and he complained that Mr. M. C. Davies had been appointed to take postal votes, and spoke of him as a tyrannical employer. I felt sorry to hear the member for Subiaco speak in abusive terms of Mr. Davies, because I know he is a large employer of labour. The member for Subiaco is likely in a short time to meet this House as its Premier. Already by his many good qualities he has obtained a high position in the House;

and I regret very much that, with the prospects he has before him, he should use epithets towards employers of that class. I consider it is the duty of every member of this House, whether employer or employee, at all times to do his utmost to try and bring employers and employees more in accord one with the other, and to abstain at all times from using terms of abuse towards one class or another. There are always times of discord between employers and employees, but abusive language of that kind is not the best way to bridge over the differences between them. The member who preceded me gave us a citation about the effect of caucus. I do not know very much about caucus, because I have not attended many. We had a meeting the other day of Ministerial supporters, and there was nothing secret with regard to it. Somebody said something about a sentinel. I never saw any. I can assure members that out of all the members at that meeting there were no pledges taken. Nothing was taken in writing, because it was not necessary to ask us to define our views, and to put our names to them. We had sufficient confidence in one another.

MR. WATTS: So have we.

MR. FOULKES: That seems extraordinary when the hon. member gave us to understand the other day that it was absolutely necessary to have a written pledge.

MR. WATTS: To the electors. Caucus never takes any pledge.

MR. FOULKES: There are 22 Labour members in this House, and if 12 of you decide that the James Government must be maintained, although 10 members may be in opposition to the proposal they are still pledged to go with the majority and support the James Government. That is the difference between this side of the House and the other side. I remember when I first joined this House a few years ago, there was a caucus held of the seven Labour members at that time, and it was decided by a majority of four to three or five to two that the James Government should be supported in office. We found some time afterwards the whole of the members of the Labour party were agreed to support the James Government in office, although two of the members did not approve of that. It is a matter of history that in New South

Wales, by a majority of one, the Labour members decided to support a certain Government; and although there was such a narrow majority in the Labour caucus, the whole of the Labour members in that Parliament were pledged to give their support to the Government. I said just now that the country was anxious to hear something of the views of the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) and the member for Kimberley (Mr. Connor). I should like to remind the Labour party and the members of those constituencies I have mentioned, that even if they do put the James Government out of office the Labour party themselves have not a sufficient majority in this House. They only consist of 22 members, and therefore if they want to carry legislation in this House they will be dependent on the goodwill of the member for Kimberley, the member for West Perth, and the member for Dundas (Mr. Thomas). These are the three members who control the situation. I have a certain amount of sympathy for the leaders of the Labour party for the position in which they will find themselves, because I feel certain they will find those three members hard taskmasters, if they want to get their support. The member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) will also go against the James Government and will assist in turning out that Government. The state of affairs in this House reminds me of an account given by Lord Macaulay in one of his essays with regard to Russia. I forget the title, but it gives an account of the coronation of one of the Czars of Russia, and it describes that at the time the previous Czar had recently been assassinated. The new Sovereign was to be crowned, and Lord Macaulay describes the procession of the new Czar on his way to Moscow. Macaulay states that in this procession the Czar was preceded by the assassins of his predecessor, behind him was a rear-guard consisting of the assassins of his grandfather, while around about him were his own assassins (later). You will find this will be the position, that the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie), the member for West Perth, the member for Dundas, and the member for Kimberley will be the escort of the member for Subiaco (Mr. Daglish) to the Treasury benches. The member for Subiaco will find that, although these

members assist him in assassinating (I speak in a political sense) the present Government, they will be equally ready to politically assassinate the successors of the present Government, in a very short time. They will also find that the member for Beverley will be equally ready to assassinate them. So under these circumstances one can see the Labour party will have a difficult and trying time before them. They may consider now they are winning a great victory in turning the James Government out, but from what I can see owing to the fact that they have no majority they will be hopelessly at the mercy of the other members of the House. They may consider themselves in office, but I can assure the members of the Labour party that they will not be in power. Although I say this, I can assure them that so far as the members of this side of the House are concerned they will try and assist them in carrying out measures which are likely to do good to the country. The Labour party pose, for a long time have posed, as though they were the only people who had political salvation. They always refrain from mentioning any good work done by the Government, and they only take care to mention what good is done by themselves. Whatever is done is always done by them. The member for Kanowna interrupted five minutes ago, and the fact of his doing so brings to my mind—he will remember it very well—an incident that happened two years ago. I can remember very well when the member for Murray (Mr. W. Atkins) was returned to the Assembly. At that time when Mr. Atkins made his maiden speech in the House, the member for Kanowna, who is at all times a kind-hearted man, congratulated him upon the excellent speech he had made. I should like to tell the new members of the House and to warn them of the shocking results that happened to the member for Kanowna, who had to explain to some political labour body, and apologise and give reasons for the congratulations he had given to Mr. Atkins. I do not know what they said to him, but I remember when he came back. The result of it has been that I never afterwards heard him or any other Labour member

in the last Parliament speak well of another member of the House.

MR. JOHNSON : That is wrong.

MR. FOULKES : It is quite true. Perhaps they have learned a bitter lesson from the experience of the member for Kanowna, and have refrained from giving credit when any good acts have been done by the James Government. I do not think it is very creditable to them to pose as if they were the political saviours of the country, and as if they were the only true friends of the working class. They have no right whatever to that title. There are other men in this House who take quite as great an interest in the prosperity and welfare of the labouring class as do the members of the Labour party. There are a certain type of religious people who think that unless a person belongs to their particular faith he has no chance of salvation. Unfortunately in politics in labour circles the same kind of thing prevails. They try to make people think there is no hope of political salvation unless a man belongs to the political Labour party. That is the idea they try to convey. [Interjection by MR. HOLMAN.] I hope the hon. member will not interrupt me. If he does, I shall be obliged to report him to that board of control. (General laughter on Labour benches). I hope I have not frightened him. I did not mean to do it.

MR. HOLMAN : I won't do it again.

MR. FOULKES : I believe it has been arranged that all communications between the culprit and this board of control are to be treated as strictly confidential. I will not prosecute him before that board unduly, and I only mention this just to warn him of misconduct on his part.

MR. HOLMAN : It will have great effect.

MR. FOULKES : We can congratulate ourselves on the whole upon the state of affairs in this State. There are great prospects before us. All that is required is good government, and it is the duty therefore of every member in the House, no matter on what side he sits, to give the very best attention, irrespective of party, to the welfare of the State. I believe that the members of the Labour party are keenly anxious for the prosperity of the State to continue. All I ask them to do is to try in justice to view as dispassion-

ately as possible the opinions of those outside the Labour party, and give us credit for honesty of purpose ; not looking upon us, because we are not members of the Labour party, as being enemies. We are as sincerely desirous for the welfare of labour as you are, and we are also equally desirous for a permanent and strong Government to remain in office for the welfare of this country.

MR. G. TAYLOR (Mt. Margaret) : This is the first time I have had the pleasure of addressing the House since you, Mr. Speaker, have attained that high and honourable position ; and I desire to offer you my hearty congratulations. I am sure you will fill that position in the dignified manner which it demands. I am also confident that no matter on what side of the House a member may speak, he will receive fair play throughout. In speaking on the amendment it will be necessary for me to go over ground which I have gone over previously in the old Chamber. There are in this Chamber 24 new members, who perhaps only watched the trend of politics as they gleaned it from the Press. That being so, and I being a member for three years of the old Parliament, and having consistently opposed the present Government, having been of the opinion that the present Government did not have the confidence of the people of this State as far back as two and a-half years ago, I am doubly competent to say to-day that they have not got the confidence of the State, as the result of the last elections has clearly proved. The result supports me in the contention which I have held for some time.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS : More particularly in Kanowna.

MR. TAYLOR : Yes. I am not going to allow the Minister for Lands to draw me in reference to Kanowna. The recent elections, as I said before, have proved beyond doubt that the James Government have run the length of their tether. It will be necessary for me to speak of the time when there was a change in the Premiers, when Mr. Morgans succeeded Mr. Leake, and when Mr. Leake returned to power. By doing that I can point out to the Chamber and to the country the position of the present Premier. At that time, when Mr. Leake was Premier, our present Premier was an honorary

Minister in the Cabinet. Members of the old Parliament will also remember that, when the Morgans Government were defeated and when the late Mr. Leake resumed the Premiership of this State, his then close colleague, the present Premier, who was sitting directly behind him in his first Parliament, also the late Treasurer (Mr. Gardiner), his bosom friend privately and politically, and also the present Minister for Lands, who sat directly behind the Leake Government at that time, all of whom were earnest in their desire and ably supported that party until Mr. Leake took the position of Premier on the second occasion, removed as far from the Leake Government as was possible. The member for East Perth, who is now Premier, got on the Ministerial cross-benches; the Minister for Lands got back as far as he could into the same bench as that on which the Labour party sat; Mr. Gardiner, then member for Albany, sat alongside the member for East Perth on the cross-benches. Practically they severed their allegiance from their political and private friend, the late Mr. Leake. For what reason? The reason then given to this Chamber and to the country was the inclusion of the present Treasurer (Hon. C. H. Rason), who then held the position of Minister for Works. I have dealt with this matter in this Chamber at great length on different occasions. I will not go into it in details; but it is necessary for the guidance of new members of this House that I should refer to the position as it was at that time. The position I took up at that time I have maintained ever since, for I am sure neither the Premier, nor any of his Cabinet Ministers, nor any member on the Government side of the House can accuse me of being inconsistent; and no one knows better than my friend the present Minister for Works (Hon. J. L. Nanson), for he and I sat quite close together on the Opposition cross-benches.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Joint conspirators.

MR. TAYLOR: I am surprised, if the Minister is earnest in that remark, that he would sit in Cabinet with a conspirator. I do not know whether he spoke in joke. When we realise what the member for Boulder has done to reach the position he now holds we shall not be surprised.

We shall not be surprised when we bring our memories back to the violent attacks the member for Boulder made on the present Government after the late Mr. Leake resumed power.

MR. TROY: He has repented now.

MR. TAYLOR: I do not know that he has shown much sense of contrition. I do know that he has drawn his salary regularly.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The member for Mt. Margaret has not done that.

MR. TAYLOR: The member for Mt. Margaret has done so, and he hopes to see more honourable men sitting on the Government benches. Whether I am one of those or not, it matters little. I will do the same in the future as I have done in the past. It is all I can do while in this Parliament to represent the people of Mt. Margaret in a straightforward and honourable manner, and not to allow any portfolios dangling before my eyes to prostitute my politics. Referring to the position of politics at the time I speak of, I would like to point out that what was generally accepted as a split in the Labour party was caused by that party desiring to support Mr. Leake's Government after the inclusion of Mr. Rason. I held strong views then, and I hold strong views to-day, on any member of the Labour party's supporting people who have turned traitor on their own party. That was the position I took up then, and I take up that position now. I am sorry that I cannot say my friend the member for Boulder feels so strongly in that way. The Leake Government lasted for a short while. We remember that after Parliament prorogued our late friend, Mr. Leake, never met the House again. Mr. James, the then member for East Perth, took the position of Premier after having expressed his antipathy to the inclusion in the Cabinet of the Minister for Works. It was the first time in the history of his political career that he made himself objectionable to the majority of electors of Western Australia. I will say this, in justice to the present Premier, that when I first came to Perth three and a half years ago, there was no man in Parliament who stood so high in the opinion of the workers on the coast as he did. I had various conversations with those who held high positions in industrial unions,

and they spoke in glowing terms of him. So high did he stand in the estimation of the democrats of Western Australia, that I believe he thought he could do anything he liked and still retain that position. However, having joined that Ministry after the position he took up previously, he waned in the estimation of the democrats of Western Australia. We found his first move was to remove from Cabinet the member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth), replacing him by the member for Albany (Mr. Gardiner.) Many of us knew the long political campaigns that the late Mr. Leake and Mr. Gardiner had made on the Federal question, and the intimacies and friendships that existed between them; and we find later in this era of private and political friendships Mr. Gardiner resigned his position in favour of the present member for Greenough (Hon. J. L. Nanson), so that it might be taken by his former dear friend and assassin. I am speaking politically. No man made greater attacks on the Leake Government than the then member for Murchison, now the member for Greenough.

At 6:30, The SPEAKER left the Chair
At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. TAYLOR (continuing): When the Speaker left the Chair, I had arrived at the stage when Mr. James took the position of Premier of the State. I had previously pointed out that at that time he had forfeited the confidence of the democrats of the State, owing to his having to condone two serious political crimes. He had to condone the crime of the appointment of the Commissioner of Railways, and also the carrying out of the secret purchase of Fremantle properties. It is necessary that I should speak of these two charges along with others that I have made against the Government during the last campaign, and on frequent occasions during the last two years of the old Parliament. Whatever I have to say, and whenever I mention Mr. George's name in the discussion, I only do so to indicate that he was the person who was taken from the Opposition side of the House and appointed to the position of Commissioner of Railways. I am not discussing the merits or demerits of the Commis-

sioner, but I am pointing out the mode of that appointment. I never did make any serious objection to the appointment of the Commissioner. I dealt on previous occasions with the mode of appointment, and I say it was a political crime, for there was no more hostile opponent to the James Government or the Leake Government, of which the James Government were the successors, than the present Commissioner of Railways when he sat on the Opposition side of the House as the member for the Murray.

MR. BURGESS: What does it matter so long as he is a good Commissioner?

MR. TAYLOR: I am not discussing that matter. I thought I had made that abundantly clear when I rose to speak. I am discussing the mode of appointment, and I say that it is bad for any Government, when they are frightened at an enemy, to give that enemy a position such as Commissioner of Railways. There is no doubt in my mind whatever that the Commissioner of Railways was bought by the Premier.

MR. BURGESS: Who bought the Independent body?

MR. TAYLOR: I am not responsible for the Independent members or any member in this Chamber; if I were I should speak on their behalf. I am not responsible for the appointment of the Commissioner: that is a crime that rests with the Government and the member for York who supports them.

MR. BURGESS: I was not here.

MR. TAYLOR: If the member for York recognised this action of the Government as a crime, he would not be seated on the other side of the House now, but on the Opposition side. He is just as guilty in keeping a Government in power who committed such a crime as if he were here when that crime was committed. It was known that the member for Murray, the present Commissioner of Railways, or it was believed that he knew, a great deal more about the Justice Parker case than has been found out since, and the outcome of that case was the Spear-Parker libel action. It was the opinion of the Government that the member for Murray should be silenced. They recognised that in the member for Murray they had a political enemy, and the position of Commissioner was made for him, and given to him, for that

reason I believe. I am not alone in that belief; it is shared by numbers of people throughout the State. That was one of the first crimes committed by the present Premier. Then there was the condoning of the secret purchase, which was equally bad. I am not going to say whether the Government made a good or a bad purchase; I am speaking about the principle of the purchase, and I say it was bad. No Government should secretly purchase land or anything else; no Government should spend the people's money without first having the consent of Parliament. These are the grounds on which I object to the Government. I felt so strongly about these matters at the time, that I spoke against the Government, and I spoke against those crimes afterwards, and now I have an opportunity I again raise my voice against that kind of administration. That was the first time on which the Premier stepped down from the high pedestal on which he stood in the estimation of the people of Western Australia. The Minister for Mines says I am insinuating. I am not. I say I do not know if the member for East Perth took any hand or part either in the appointment of Mr. George, or whether he was responsible in any way for the secret purchase. I heard the Premier excuse himself when he became Premier by saying that he had loyally to support his predecessors. Members of the old Parliament will remember when the Premier first addressed the Chamber on these questions, he pointed out that the Government who preceded him had done these things, and he had to carry them out loyally, and stand or fall by them. I am told he is loyal. He is loyal at the cost of his political honour. The Premier then pointed out that he had no desire to hold office for any length of time; that his main object in becoming Premier in his native State was to pass a Redistribution of Seats Bill that would be more equitable than the Act then on the statute-book, a Bill which would provide for fairer and more liberal representation in this State, and by that means he hoped to secure a better Parliament and a better Government. Did the Premier do that? No. He brought in a Redistribution Bill which he knew full well, and which this Chamber knew full well, would not pass

in another place. Thus he merely hoodwinked the people of Western Australia. That is beyond doubt. No Minister who sits on that Treasury bench can contradict the statement. It was well and widely known in this House that not one of those Bills—the Redistribution, the Electoral, or the Constitution Bill—would pass in another place; consequently there was little or no discussion of details in Committee on some of those measures. As to the present Minister for Works (Mr. Nanson), it is needless for him to call for *Hansard* to read extracts from his speeches on these measures. The violent attacks made by that member as leader of the Opposition at the time will be recollected by members of this House. Even those new members, numbering 24 in this Chamber, have, I suppose, read them in the newspapers, and some of them have had an opportunity of hearing the speech of the hon. member in the Queen's Hall, just before that time. The secret purchase alone is sufficient to justify the country's loss of confidence in the present Government. On that item alone, without touching on the appointment of the Commissioner of Railways, without dealing with the Fremantle Harbour Trust Bill, or with the action of the Government in reference to the Minister for Mines and his lawsuit with ex-Warden Hicks—that secret purchase alone is sufficient to condemn them. The first two charges are sufficiently severe and sufficiently grave to warrant the House removing the Government from the Ministerial bench. I will now speak with reference to the inclusion in the Government of the present Minister for Lands (Hon. J. M. Hopkins). That was the next event which followed. Dr. Jameson, then Minister for Lands, took a position in South Africa, and his portfolio became vacant. The Premier, having successfully silenced the member for Murray (Mr. W. J. George) by appointing him as Commissioner, followed that up by offering the Lands portfolio to the present Minister, because he recognised in the member for Boulder another formidable foe. That member had made various attacks on the Government, and even went from Perth to the goldfields, called public meetings, and raised the indignation of the goldfields people

against the James Government for their Redistribution Bill and other measures before the House at that time. What was the result? That when the Lands portfolio was offered to the hon. member he acted like other Ministers who have joined since. All his political ideals and political principles were sunk, and he accepted the portfolio of Lands. This shows that the present Government have held office for two years by purchasing their opponents; and that is what has ruined the present Premier in the eyes of the electors of this State. These charges were laid against the Government during the general election campaign; and, spite of all the disparaging remarks made against the Labour party, the issue was very nearly a clean-cut issue. The question was generally between the Labour man and the Government supporter; the issue was as to the administration of the Government; and with what result? The Labour party was returned by a larger number of electors than returned the Government supporters and the Independents put together. The combined forces of Ministerialists and Independents did not receive as much support at the general election as did the Labour party.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Will you give the figures?

MR. TAYLOR: They have already been given by various speakers, and I shall not weary the House with figures; but the Labour members received far more support for the seats they successfully contested than did any similar number of Ministerial candidates.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: How many votes were recorded in your favour?

MR. TAYLOR: There was no contest.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You had an election.

MR. TAYLOR: I had the honour of being returned to Parliament, after three years' opposition to the present Government, without having a contest. Dealing with that point, the Premier and the then Treasurer (Mr. Gardiner), considered one of the best speakers the Government had, travelled through my district and spoke in every centre from one end to the other, in the attempt to weaken me with my electors, and to secure the return of a Government supporter. And they failed. They could not find even a man who dared to stand. Now we know that not one

Western Australian Premier ever previously travelled through the country announcing his policy.

THE TREASURER (HON. C. H. RASON): Did not you travel in other districts, and in some of your colleagues' districts?

MR. TAYLOR: In every district that I could visit, supporting my colleagues.

THE TREASURER: Not opposing them?

MR. TAYLOR: No. In every electorate I spoke in during the election I spoke in support of the Labour candidate. I spoke in the Menzies, the Boulder, and the East Perth electorates.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Not in Kanowna?

MR. TAYLOR: After the selection ballot I never spoke in Kanowna, not even during the campaign. I will not allow the Minister to place me in a false position. Wherever I spoke during the campaign I spoke against the Government candidate and in support of the Labour candidate; and had it been necessary for me in the campaign to speak in favour of the Labour candidate in Kanowna, I was there to do so.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Mr. Hastie is blushing.

MR. TAYLOR: There is no need for him to blush. I was saying that Ministers travelled through the Mt. Margaret electorate with the object of securing a man to oppose me.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: You had an election, you know.

MR. TAYLOR: I had no election; but the Minister had an election, and a very close election; and if it had not been for postal votes he would not be here.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: That is absolutely untrue.

MR. TAYLOR: I say the postal votes put the hon. member in Parliament; that the opposing candidate received 39 postal votes, and the Minister 150 odd.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: That statement is incorrect.

MR. TAYLOR: I have the figures, and challenge the Minister to dispute them. When I make a statement here I am in a position to substantiate it. The number of postal votes recorded was: Buzacott 39, Gregory 152. The majority for Gregory in the election was 121.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The figures are wrong.

MR. TAYLOR: I have the figures for every polling booth in your electorate. I can read you the poll at every booth in your electorate; and the first polling place that catches my eye is that of Menzies, in which you lived for eight or nine years, and carried on business, and were mayor of the town; and I find that there, after the people had had an experience of you as their member for seven years, a new man, practically unknown—Mr. Buzacott, a prospector—polled 423 votes against your 372. At Woolgar, 4 miles from there—only a stone's throw, we call it in the back country—Mr. Buzacott polled 89 and the Minister for Mines 47. This is in the part of the Minister's electorate where he is best known.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: What about the back country?

MR. TAYLOR: Ah, where the sops were doled out. I travelled through the back country, and saw traces of political sops from one end of it to the other. Those are the figures. I can give figures for all the polling booths in your electorate. If it were not for the postal votes the Minister would not be in this Chamber.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: That is incorrect.

MR. TAYLOR: It is true. The arguments used against the Government during that campaign were never heard by those who recorded the postal votes. They voted for the Minister on his record of seven years ago. They did not know exactly what he had completed up to date, or he would not have received such large support.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: He did not give any sops to the back centres.

MR. TAYLOR: He gave all the sops that it was possible to give; in fact, so many sops were given out of his department that he has overspent the money voted for development purposes on the goldfields.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Do you object to that?

MR. TAYLOR: I have the hon. member's own word for it.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: And the great bulk of it was spent in the hon. member's district.

MR. TAYLOR: And the biggest portion should have been spent there. Part of the district I represented in the old

Parliament is now represented by Mr. Lynch (Leonora), whose constituency is taken out of the old Mt. Margaret electorate; and the only additions to Mt. Margaret are the two centres of Kookynie and Yundamindera; and a portion of my electorate, another centre, is now represented by the member for Murchison (Mr. Holman), another portion has been put on the Cue electorate, and another portion added to the Mt. Magnet electorate; and when you consider the vast area which I had the honour to represent and the importance of that country you will realise that it is nothing but a mining centre, and that the main part of the mining development vote should have been spent in that portion of the country. That disposes of the interjection of the Minister that most of the money had been spent in my district. At that time my electorate covered one-sixth of the whole of Western Australia marked on the map, and it was a very scattered country, new and undeveloped country. One should realise the wants and requirements of that district, and that this was the portion of the State which was opening up the gold mining centres of Western Australia. Now we come to the Harbour Trust Bill and the appointment of the chairman of the Harbour Trust. Members will doubtless remember that when the Bill passed through Committee I had a paragraph inserted in it by which no person receiving profit under the Crown could be eligible to be the chairman of the board. I moved that clause after a heated discussion, and I pointed out I felt confident that if that clause were not inserted a member of another House would be appointed to the position. I also stated that if it were not he it would be a member of this Chamber who was then the Government whip, the member for Fremantle, Mr. Higham. How did the Premier and Ministers rise in their places in righteous indignation with the member for Mt. Margaret for suggesting such a thing as that the Government would be corrupt enough to appoint a supporter of theirs in another place. [MEMBER: They had no supporters in another place.] The hon. gentleman knows full well that Capt. Laurie was a Government supporter. He helped in the whole campaign during that election. The member for Boulder

knows full well that Capt. Laurie was returned at the time when Mr. Moss was standing for election after having accepted office in the Morgans Ministry.

THE TREASURER: The Chamber of Commerce had nothing to do with it.

MR. TAYLOR: The Chamber of Commerce has always been behind the present Government. I dare say the Chamber of Commerce assisted in a large measure in returning the hon. member. What the Chamber of Commerce has not done the "National Ass." has done; the Rev. Mr. Wheatley & Co. have done what the Chamber of Commerce has failed to do. Then we find the hon. gentleman standing up in this Chamber and talking about democracy, and trying to gull this House that they have been returned by the democrats of this State. This is not in accordance with those who were found upon their platforms during the election campaign. I was pointing out that there had been the insertion of a clause in the Harbour Trust Bill to prevent the appointment of a member of Parliament or a person receiving profit under the Crown. I was successful in having that inserted in the Bill; but what was the result? The Premier rallied his forces and recommitted the Bill, and had the clause struck out. He pointed out that there was no necessity for the clause, that there was no danger of the appointment being made as indicated by the member for Mt. Margaret. The House, or a sufficient number of members, accepted that and removed the clause. What was the result? The Bill was hardly passed and made law when Captain Laurie was appointed chairman, and he still holds the position.

THE TREASURER: And a good appointment too.

MR. TAYLOR: No position should be given by a Government for support. Any Ministry should be above that, and should not frame laws by which they would put supporters in a big fat billet.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Do you call that a big fat billet?

MR. F. CONNOR: Yours was.

MR. TAYLOR: When one considers that Captain Laurie is the chief stevedore at the port of Fremantle, and that he is chairman of the Harbour Trust, I say there is something beneath the surface.

There is some ground for the view taken by those who object to the chief stevedore being chairman of the Harbour Trust. I have heard in Fremantle and in Perth too that the chairman of the Harbour Trust has taken out ships that were berthed in convenient places for unloading because he was not the stevedore, and put in ships for which he was stevedore. I repeat these are statements which I have heard people make. I have no authority other than that I have heard the statements. I will make inquiries, but I have not yet had sufficient time to do so, seeing I first heard of it on Monday last. There was this no-confidence debate, and then those people who were injured or were supposed to be injured were making complaints to me, as people do make complaints to members of Parliament; and I have not had time to follow them up. I am not going to say they are true, or that they are untrue. What I say is that where we have a gentleman chairman of the Harbour Trust and chief stevedore we shall have these remarks made. You want to have a man who is above suspicion, so that no one can say he has an axe to grind. There are members here who represent Fremantle, there are gentlemen who possess more maritime knowledge than I have, and they will perhaps be able to speak more eloquently and forcibly than I can. I am only pointing out that I took exception to the Bill having a provision in it by which the Government could appoint their political friends to these positions; and I only instance this case because the Government assured the House there was no danger of their making this appointment, as I suggested they were capable of doing. I find, too, that whatever charges I have made against the Government during the last two and a-half years have been borne out by fact: every charge I have made. I have never indicated any line I expected the Government to take on matters of this kind which has not been taken. The Government have taken full advantage of any power they had to silence their political enemies, and to capture and foster their political friends. Now we come to the inclusion of the present Minister for Railways in the Ministry. I can be quite calm on this point. It is needless for me to warn on this subject. The House knows full well the political

differences between the then member for Murchison and the present Government. This House has heard the member for Murchison (Mr. Nanson), as leader of the Opposition, denounce the Government in no measured terms. It has heard the same gentleman denounce the Government from the cross-benches.

THE TREASURER: The Minister for Railways?

MR. TAYLOR: The Minister for Works. No one would dream of denouncing the Minister for Railways. The Minister for Works has denounced himself in the eyes of the country. He has spoken in this House against the Government in such a manner that the Government recognised him as a formidable foe; and the House and country recognised in Mr. Nanson a man whose politics were totally different from those of the present Government. The hon. gentleman moved a no-confidence motion against the Government purely on administrative matters. He also moved an amendment to a no-confidence motion from the cross-benches. We found that this heat and all this eloquence, verging on the hysterical, by the Minister for Works against the Government were very easily silenced. I, who sat behind the hon. gentleman on the cross-benches for a considerable time noticed a quieting down. When once it was known that Mr. Gardiner, the Colonial Treasurer, was not going to continue in politics, and there was a possibility of a portfolio becoming vacant, the then opponent abated his objections to the Government, and for the last few weeks myself and others, especially the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran), noticed flirtations between the Premier and the present Minister for Works; and, as I am reminded by my friend the member for West Perth, they afterwards eloped, only the elopement took place between the Minister for Works and the Treasurer, who went to the Treasurers' Conference in Melbourne. After that bitterness, after the speeches made, and the vindictive fighting and slashing against the Government by the Minister for Works, we now see him sitting on the Treasury bench, and thoroughly believing in the Government.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Doing well.

DR. ELLIS: The Government are not well.

MR. TAYLOR: He may be doing well; but however well he is doing, the Government are doing very badly. I say that was the last straw which broke the camel's back. The inclusion of the hon. gentleman in the Cabinet made the fight during the elections much more easy for my hon. friends the Labour members. They found good material to deal with when they dealt with the inclusion of Mr. Nanson in the Ministry. It was spoken upon by all sides of the House, by people of all shades of political belief, and, as I say, that was the last straw which broke the camel's back. I should like to indicate how the matter has panned out since. The appointment was made just after Parliament prorogued. It was well known that the Treasurer (Mr. Gardiner) was going to the Treasurers' Conference in the East. The appointment was not made while Parliament was sitting, so that the matter could be discussed in the House; but the moment Parliament was prorogued it was made. It was an honorary one at the start, and the hon. gentleman was sent over to the conference in company with the Treasurer, I suppose I am safe in saying, at the expense of the State. The hon. gentleman had decided weeks before to go to the East for a trip, and as soon as the appointment was made he went away as honorary Minister to the conference. I do not know whether there was any necessity to have an honorary Minister in company with the Treasurer at that conference, but I say it was very bad taste to appoint him as honorary Minister and take him off to the East at the expense of the State.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I have not received my expenses yet. Will your Government pay my expenses?

MR. TAYLOR: So far as I am concerned I would not make one to pay the hon. gentleman's expenses.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Why do you say the expenses were paid, without finding out whether they were?

MR. TAYLOR: I said I supposed the hon. gentleman went away at the expense of the State, but he says he has not received anything but hopes to do so. The setoff to that by the Premier through an interjection was that the

position was not vacant and consequently he could not make the appointment until Mr. Gardiner resigned. When the Minister took office he did not take Mr. Gardiner's position, but the present Treasurer (Hon. C. H. Rason) did, and the new Minister took the Department of Public Works. He did not go to his constituents. He took office without it, but he did eventually go back to his constituents. I find that after the campaign various requests were made from his district. I am reading from the *Geraldton Express*, and the hon. gentleman can contradict me, for I do not know whether the remarks are true. The hon. gentleman, who is editing a paper, will know how much credence can be placed on a newspaper report. On the 2nd July, at a meeting of the Upper Chapman Roads Board, held a few days after the election, a letter was read from the Public Works Department advising the board that the Minister had approved of the following grants which were then available:—£100 for the construction of Wallaby Road; £100 for the improvement of the Chapman Agricultural Area; £100 for the construction of a road (16 miles) to Mt. Erin, and £100 for the construction of East Chapman-Narratarra Road, being £400 of special grants for construction, and that there was a second instalment of annual grant of £250, making a total of £650.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: They were all passed by Parliament.

MR. TAYLOR: If so they were withheld till after last Parliament and until the very last of the financial year, until a very nice time to let the hon. gentleman advise the people in that remote portion of his electorate that the moneys were available. It savours of political sops, at the time of an election, for a Minister of the Crown to stalk through his electorate and make these grants available.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The board had only to apply and the money would be made available. It was voted by Parliament.

MR. TAYLOR: My experience of these roads boards is that when there is money on the Estimates for them, they do not wait until the last moment before they make application.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That board waited.

MR. TAYLOR: No wonder the hon. gentleman represents them. It accounts for his presence here, when they have not enough sense to make an application for items passed for them. Perhaps this item has been passed. A letter was read from the Public Works Department stating that the officer in charge of Dusty Bank Bridge contract work would be instructed to place himself in communication with the roads board in view of determining the best position for a well between Narratarra Post Office and Geraldton. Is this another specimen?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is one of the wells provided by my department.

MR. TAYLOR: The amount for this portion of the State is £1,950, and I am told on very good authority, and I looked at the returns of the poll in this portion of the electorate and found there were 62 votes recorded there. Each of these voters was worth £31 a head. Now if this State has to find that amount of money to secure the return of members of Parliament, I say they are very costly. I have looked up the *Geraldton Express*, and I find that the votes recorded there were only 62. I have asked the people who know the district and they say this is true.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Parliament voted the money.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. gentleman stated time after time during the passing of the Estimates that there were no items on the Estimates for this district.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Prove that.

MR. TAYLOR: *Hansard* will prove it. On the Redistribution of Seats Bill the hon. member pointed out that his district was the most neglected district in the State, that the then member for Greenough (Mr. Stone) was so neglectful of that portion of the State, and also because the member for the Irwin was so neglectful, that there was nothing on the Estimates for the district, and nothing in the Redistribution of Seats Bill given by the Government to that portion of the State. The neglect of the Government of that portion of the State, by allowing the land to be locked up by the Midland Railway Co. and not letting the people have free

access to their proper port, was the hon. gentleman's strong attack against the Government. The hon. gentleman does not want me to go on any farther pointing out how inconsistent he is in supporting to-day the Government to which at the time he had such an objection. We find that the Premier in Coolgardie said he believed there was reason for inquiry regarding the abolition of the Upper House, but he was not with those who cried out, "Abolish the Upper House." How does that agree with the Queen's Hall speech of the Minister for Works? We well remember that speech, and how the hon. gentleman desired the abolition of the Upper House.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Quote what I said.

MR. TAYLOR: I shall quote what the hon. gentleman said in this House on the Redistribution of Seats Bill.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Undoubtedly.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. gentleman accused the Government of being too conservative and of keeping the old conservative idea of two Chambers, instancing the Federal Parliament, Canada, the United States and other places which he mentioned to back up the abolition of the Upper House. I am so thoroughly with him on that point that I am opposing the present Government; but the hon. gentleman in order to maintain the position of Minister has waived all those principles to which he adhered.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Quote what I said.

MR. TAYLOR: That is not easy. The hon. gentleman has said so many things in this Chamber, and he has gone back on mostly all of them. If the hon. gentleman desires me to quote, all I have to do is to get *Hansard* on the Redistribution of Seats Bill, and I can quote. All I have to do, to condemn the hon. gentleman, is to read his own speeches. He is now Minister for Public Works and representative for Greenough, and he will stand condemned on his own speeches when we recognise the position he holds to-day compared with the position he held at that time.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That is what I am asking you to do; but you will not do it.

MR. TAYLOR: I am pleased I am bringing the hon. gentleman. We shall have a repetition of the little banter between him and the Minister for Lands, when the hon. gentleman was on this side and the member for Boulder on the other side of the House.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Don't weary the House.

MR. TAYLOR: You wearied the House when you delivered the speech in the first instance; I am not going to weary members by its repetition.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member is out of order in addressing members personally; he must address the Chair. In connection with interjections it is no more in order to interject personally than it is to speak personally. Interjections must be given through the Chair.

MR. TAYLOR: It is with no disrespect to you that I was addressing the hon. gentleman. While I have been in this Chamber I have always endeavoured to pay respect to the Chair, no matter how warm I may get in discussion; but I should like to ask the Premier, if he were in his place [MR. MORAN: The Premier is in his place—outside], over what period the Minister for Works has guaranteed his present convictions. We have heard the hon. gentleman, who speaks so long and often in this House, speaking about what he believes to be the best for the country, and about the politics he believes to be the best for the State; but as the hon. gentleman has gone back on them so often, I should like to know how long his present convictions are guaranteed for, so that the Premier may know on what ground he stands.

THE TREASURER: The hon. member is asking for some more convictions.

MR. TAYLOR: The Treasurer's are not too fixed. They were firm at one time, but they have been advocated from all parts of the House. I have no desire to refer to the Treasurer's convictions. I have repeatedly done so in the House, and to some satisfaction. The Treasurer's political career is well known. There is no person in the State whose armour should be sounder than the hon. gentleman, for every hole he has had to defend times out of number during his career as a Minister. I shall devote a few minutes to the hon. gentleman's

political principles if I so desire, but I am not going to do so on this occasion. In dealing with the Mines Department, the Minister for Mines last night when addressing the House pointed out the good work that his department had done, and that they had saved something like £10,000 in the administration of the Mines Department last year as against the cost of running the department three years ago. Those of us living on the goldfields know full well that the treatment of ore on the goldfields has been considerably reduced in the last three years through railway facilities and various other things, and through being able to treat it in a more up-to-date fashion. The same thing should apply to the State batteries. The saving spoken of by the Minister for Mines is not such as had been made by private companies. We find to-day that there are low-grade ores being treated as low as 5dwts. and 6dwts. and they pay. The total extraction in some cases is 6dwts. and they are a paying proposition. Four years ago it was not so. These places are 80 to 90 miles from a railway line. Three or four years ago these works could not be carried on at a profit. When I asked the Minister for Mines what saving he had made out of the sands which belonged to the prospectors and not to the Government, he would not give me a reply. He said he had not got the return. I attacked the Minister upon that point during the campaign. Considerable quantities of tailings have been treated, and the gold won should have gone to the prospectors, but it has gone into the Treasury. That is where the saving on the public batteries comes in—it is from the tailings which the Government have practically robbed the prospectors of, and that phase of robbery is still going on. The Government are now annexing the slimes from the prospectors. The Government are now treating something between 7,000 and 10,000 tons of slimes at Mulline, averaging something like 7dwts. to 25 dwts. to the ton.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (Hon. J. L. Nanson): Will you lay an information.

MR. TAYLOR: It is no good laying an information against the Government, for they will not be in power long enough to appear in Court.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member can go into the police court and lay an information if he likes.

MR. TAYLOR: I know this to be true. There is a stack of slimes belonging to the prospectors, and the Government are annexing those slimes. A deputation waited upon me about this matter, and the Minister for Mines has pointed out this deputation was only imaginary. I say that the deputation did wait on me during the election, and pointed out that they partly owned the slimes, but that there was something wrong with the vats and filtering press, and the work could not go on when I was there. It was a generally understood thing that the Government would clear out of the slimes more than would pay for the battery. I was led to understand that there was another stack of slimes accumulating. The Government have never thought it worth their while to put up a cyanide plant until there was an accumulation of tailings. I think the only plant which is going, treating the slimes, is at Mulline, but the Government as a rule will not put up a cyanide plant to treat the slimes until there has been an accumulation. The Government have made their savings in this way; they have made it appear that there was a profit on the battery treatment, but as far as the stamps are concerned the Government have never made a profit.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: They stole gold in order to make the battery returns better? Let us have it definite.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member says that his Government stole gold; I am glad the hon. member admits it.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: That was your statement.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member with his journalistic mind and stretch of imagination can say anything. I say the Government have not erected cyanide plants until a large stack of tailings has accumulated, and the Government claim the tailings as their property and the gold extracted from them as the property of the Government. I say the gold should have been the property of the prospectors. If the Minister was the friend of the prospectors which he would lead the House to believe he is, he would erect cyanide plants and extract the gold, and give it to the prospector, and not

annex it for the Government so as to reduce the cost of the battery treatment. The Minister for Mines has pointed out that he found the battery system of Western Australia in a chaotic condition, and that in three years he has placed it in a flourishing state; but the Minister has made the system flourish at the price of the prospectors. He has erected cyanide plants and annexed the gold, and that is how he has made the public battery system of the State pay. The public batteries have not reduced the cost of crushing, as was stated by the Minister for Mines. I should be glad if the Minister were in his place to hear what I have to say.

THE TREASURER: He is here now.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. H. Gregory): You will be a little bit more cautious now.

MR. TAYLOR: I will not, but I will go over some of the ground to let the Minister know what I was saying. I was pointing out that the Minister for Mines had treated a large quantity of tailings—to the extent of 12,000 or 16,000 tons—and that legitimately the result of these tailings was the property of the prospectors, yet the Minister had annexed these tailings to reduce the cost of the battery treatment.

THE TREASURER: You said that was how he made the batteries pay.

MR. TAYLOR: It has reduced the cost. The Government charged 10s. per ton for cyanide treatment, whereas the cost to private companies for cyaniding ranges from about 3s. 9d. to 4s. and 5s. 6d. per ton. That is what cyaniding costs, yet the Government charge the prospectors 10s. per ton.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Is there not some difference in treating small parcels?

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member is quite right: if there was no difference there would be no reason to charge 10s. a ton and up to 16s. a ton for crushing. The hon. member knows that on the large mines of the State, the operation of crushing and everything in connection with the gold treatment are done as low down as 19s. 6d. per ton; that includes mining, crushing, cyaniding the tailings and the slimes; the cost is brought down to 19s. 6d.

MR. HOLMAN: It is as low down as 13s. 10d.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member says it is 13s. 10d., but I am talking about outlying places where the work is not on a large scale, and there the cost is 19s. 6d. The Government charged 16s. for crushing in some places.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Where?

MR. TAYLOR: At Lake Darlôt the Government were charging that amount.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: How long ago is that? It has been reduced. The last reduction was from 15s. to 11s.

MR. TAYLOR: What is it now?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: From 10s. to 14s.

MR. TAYLOR: The first charge the Government made was £1, then it was reduced to 17s. 6d., and then it was brought down to 16s. and 15s. Lake Darlôt is in my electorate, and it was the last place at which the reduction was made. Prospectors were paying £1 at Lake Darlôt when the charge was 14s. to 15s. in other parts of the State.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I did not make the arrangement; I reduced the price.

MR. TAYLOR: The hon. member made the arrangement because the battery started under the Minister's supervision, and it was under no other Minister. The battery at Lake Darlôt has not been worked except under the present Minister. The hon. member knows that the battery was taken over just after the Leake Government came into power, because I protested against the battery being purchased by the State; that was the first thing I did. A week after I interviewed the Under Secretary for Mines about it; the Minister came into office, and the charge made to the people was £1. Will the Minister contradict that?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I won't contradict anything you say.

MR. TAYLOR: I am speaking the truth, and what I know to be a fact; the hon. member cannot contradict it. The price was kept up at Lake Darlôt longer than at any other battery in the State. The tailings were treated by the Government, and the result was annexed by the State, the Government practically robbing the prospector of his hard earnings. In

many instances the prospectors had to knock off their shows because they could not get the result of the tailings. In only one case, where a battery has been erected, has the Minister put up a cyanide plant straight away. The Minister waits until the tailings have accumulated before he puts up a cyanide plant. I believe that at Nullagine the Government intend to erect an up-to-date battery and cyanide plant, which will be the first that has been properly started in the State. The Minister might contradict me in that. In his speech the Minister for Mines has pointed out the good qualities of the State Mining Engineer and other departmental officers. If the State Mining Engineer is no better authority on mining matters which I do not know, than he is about the things of which I have some knowledge, then he is not deserving of the eulogy of the Minister. I would like to ask the Minister, does he consider the puddler—and I referred to this on the Estimates—which has been constructed at Broad Arrow, the work of an expert? Will the Minister answer that question? It is a standing monument of the State Mining Engineer's incapacity. What has happened at Kanowna where the State Mining Engineer has been supervising the attempt to pump the deep lead? Have the Government been successful in draining the deep lead, the supervision of which is under the State Mining Engineer?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: How did he supervise it?

MR. TAYLOR: We were told in the House that it would be much easier for the Minister to control his department if he had the expert knowledge of officers to guide him as to expenditure. Mr. Montgomery has visited Kanowna, and I am sure he has written a report on this matter. I want to know from the Minister whether that work was a success under Mr. Montgomery's supervision, or even under the Minister's supervision. I have been watching the papers, and when I was in Kanowna I could not ascertain anything of it save that it was a wilful waste of public money to endeavour to pump the water out there and pump it back again. It is for such acts of maladministration that the Minister and his department have been eulogised by

various Ministers. The eulogy generally comes from one Minister to another.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: You took very good care to speak after me.

MR. TAYLOR: Speak after you? All the Labour members could not speak at once; though until to-night we have averaged four speakers to one on the Government side.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: What about the strength of argument?

MR. TAYLOR: You have not felt our strength yet. The hon. member is not green to our strength; I think he is somewhat brown. The Minister spoke last night as to the attitude he had taken up in reference to composite unions. If they were ever composite unions they are composite unions now. He said they were composite unions because they had a publican and a storekeeper in them. He knows a good deal about the Arbitration Act, under which composite unions are to be registered, when he says that the inclusion of a publican and a storekeeper makes a union a composite union.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: I was talking about the time when I said in Kalgoorlie that I would recognise the A.M.A. At that time the A.W.A. was a composite organisation.

MR. TAYLOR: The same class of workers were in that union to-day as were in it then. The only way in which the Arbitration Act affected that union was because each member had to be a *bona fide* worker within the definition of "worker" in the Arbitration Act; and there were certain hotelkeepers and certain storekeepers who were members of that union, and who, after the passage of the Arbitration Act, could no longer be members, and consequently ceased to be members; and the union is composed of the same class of workers as the A.M.A. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Johnson), who is general secretary of the A.M.A., will bear me out. They are both unions protecting mining employees, and are practically composed of the same class of workmen. There may be more of one class in one union than in another, but the unions are practically composed of the same class of men—men following the same calling, men with the same hopes and aspirations; men who have banded themselves together for mutual protection against the employers. There is no differ-

ence; and I say the Minister has favoured the A.M.A.—a young, rising union. The Premier saw that, as Attorney General; and he and the Minister for Mines made it easier for the Registrar of Friendly Societies to register the A.M.A. than to register the A.W.A. They recognised in the A.W.A., the older union, a formidable political foe—a union largely responsible for the return of the first batch of Labour members to Parliament; the first union which turned itself into a political organisation for the purpose of sending Labour representatives to Parliament; and the present Government recognised in the A.W.A., of which I am a member, a formidable foe. I suppose the Government thought that the member for Mt. Margaret was a reflex of the other members of the union; they had my undying hostility, and the members of the union likewise had for that reason to face the opposition of the Government. And it is not only the opposition of that union which the Government have to-day; they have the opposition of the organised workers of Western Australia and of the unorganised workers also, or we should not see so magnificent a result as we see in this Parliament; we Labour members could not have been so successful in securing so many seats or in winning so magnificent a victory at the polls, had it not been for the enthusiastic Labour movement throughout the length and breadth of the State. The Premier tries to sneer at us as being under the control of the Trades and Labour Council, and hall-marked by that council. I should like to say that the major portion of the members of the Labour party are returned by people outside the unions; but I will say that the members of the unions throughout Australia are responsible for the Labour movement to-day. They are the men who fought in the ranks of trades unionism when unionism was used for industrial purposes only; they are the men who have made the Labour movement what it is to-day. They are the men who fought for Labour principles at the peril of their liberty, when Governments composed of the same class as Ministers opposite would bring out their gatling guns against the man who dared to support industrial unionism during a strike. The Minister for Lands interjects. When he was in Gippsland and

knew nothing about politics, grand and noble men were making way for Labour representatives to enter the Parliaments of Australia; industrial unions turned themselves into political organisations; and this is the result. I say the unorganised workman to-day is guided in his politics by the trained industrial unionist, knowing that the man who has given time and study to the Labour movement is in the ranks of unionism; and when the unions select a candidate, I am pleased and proud to see that 90 per cent. of the unorganised workers support the candidate of the organised workers. And as a proof of that, did any party in any Parliament of any country go back to their electors as the Labour members went back from this Parliament at the last election, and find so large a proportion of their members returned unopposed? Seven Labour members left this Parliament for reelection, and five were returned unopposed. How many members were returned unopposed on the Ministerial side? How many on the Independent side of this Chamber? No party in any Parliament of any country to-day went back to find their electors so completely satisfied as were the electors of the Labour party in the last Parliament. And I venture to say that if we had a general election to-morrow there would be fewer Labour members' seats contested than seats of any other members of this House. I am positive that it is the hardest thing imaginable to unseat a Labour candidate. Once a Labour man is returned, the constituency is a Labour constituency for all time. The Labour man himself may be rejected, but another Labour man takes his place. Scarcely any party in any Parliament can ever win back a seat from Labour; because the principles to advocate which the Labour man is sent to Parliament he advocates to the best of his ability; and if he goes back on his electors, there is no longer room for him in the Labour movement when he again submits himself for election.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS (HON. J. L. Nanson): What about the pledge?

MR. TAYLOR: Oh! That is why there is on the Government side of the House such an aversion to the pledge. How many pledges would not the

Minister for Works require to sign, and what sort of pledges would be needed to bind the hon. member, to fix his convictions for, say, six weeks? One would have to keep portfolios out of his reach, or if the portfolios were plentiful the pledges would have to be very numerous. In dealing with the composite union of which the Minister for Mines spoke last night, I say that whatever friction that Minister and the Premier tried to raise before the elections among the various unions of this State has now ceased, or practically ceased. The gentleman representing Menzies (Mr. Gregory) will find, as he found at the last election, that there was no split in the camp; that in his electorate were two unions, one of which was the A.M.A.; and the A.M.A. controls the workmen immediately around the Menzies polling booth, where a vote was recorded substantially in favour of the Labour candidate, and against the Minister for Mines. There, where the Minister thought by his favouring the A.M.A., and by trying to play off one union against another he would secure their votes, he found that the unionists saw too far through the hon. member, weighed him and found him wanting; hence the heavy vote cast against him. Four miles away, at Woolgar, where the other union controls the industrial portion of the Labour movement, the A.W.A. cast a heavy vote of two or three to one against the Minister; so it makes no difference what the Minister thinks about these unions. I am pleased to say they did not think very much about him. While dealing with the Minister for Mines I should like to make a few remarks about the Hicks-Gregory case. Last year, speaking on the Mines Estimates, I opposed Government support being given to the Minister in that action, and condemned the Government for supporting him. The *Hansard* report of 18th December, 1903, reads—

MR. TAYLOR: It had been said the application for a new trial was perhaps made with the object of Parliament being prorogued before the matter could be dealt with and the necessary fees and expenses paid over.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The hon. member would be sorry to believe that.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The amount had already been paid, and not by the Government. That might surprise the hon. member.

Such was the Minister's interjection on

that occasion; and by that interjection I was disarmed. I spoke merely to safeguard the public funds. The Minister had to pay £2,750 damages awarded by the Court, and we had been given to understand that the Government intended to pay in that money. I was opposing the proposal, and the Minister interjected that the money was already paid into court, and not by the Government. I want to know, why did the Minister interject that, to silence me on that point and give it out to this House that the money was paid in by some private person? We found out afterwards that the money was paid in by the Government.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: The money was paid in by a private person.

MR. TAYLOR: I happen to have learnt since who the private person is, and the Minister is aware I know that. We find that the private person was practically the Government. We know full well that when the Minister made the statement that the money was paid in, it was only to deceive me and to deceive this Chamber. I say that is a crime which no Minister should commit. If a Minister is acting straightforwardly and honestly, if he thinks the Government will support him, why does he not own up to it and not mislead me and mislead the House by statements of the kind? We find that the Government did pay in the money, and the Government to-day have paid money. We find there is a new trial. When the case came before the Chief Justice the damages were decreased from £2,750 to £1,000. The Premier has dealt with this subject in various places. When he was dealing with it in the old Parliament he pointed out that the Minister had perhaps made certain statements which he should not have made, but they were in the execution of his duty; he had made them to the Press; and the Premier conveyed to the Parliament and country that the statement was made to the Press in person, in the ordinary way. The Premier said the Minister perhaps said things off-hand, not thinking they were going to be published or printed, and there was more printed than he expected. That was the way in which the Premier spoke, and tried to defend the action of the Minister for Mines. We find this

information, which perhaps the House was not in possession of then, and which I was not in possession of until recently, and I am sure the country is not seized of it yet. In the interrogatories by Hicks's counsel to the counsel for the Minister for Mines, there are three questions, which I will read. This was delivered on the 10th October, 1903. The first question to the Minister for Mines from Harney and Harney is :—

Did you write or cause to be written the article headed "Dismissal of Warden Hicks," which appeared in the *North Coolgardie Herald* on the 29th of May, 1903?

Here is the answer :

I wrote a statement almost identical with the article referred to. An exact copy of such statement is hereto annexed, marked "A."

Question 2 :

If not the whole of the said article, did you write or cause to be written any portion of same, and if so what portion?

The answer to that is :

Answered by my first.

Question 3 :

If you wrote the whole or any portion of the said article, to whom did you hand the same? And give the name and address of such person.

Reply :

I handed the said statement to George O'Connor, *North Coolgardie Herald*, Reid Street, Menzies.

This was handed in to the Chief Justice as evidence during the trial, but it never appeared in the Press, nor did it appear in any other way by which the country knew that this article was written by the Minister for Mines and was handed to the press representative, Mr. O'Connor, Reid Street, Menzies. I say the Minister knew full well the contents of the article after having written it, and I suppose read it and re-read it. He had ample time to cool down, and make a statement which was other than libellous, if he desired. I could have had some sympathy with the Minister, if he had made a statement in an excited moment and had had no time to recall it, and it appeared in the Press; but when I find a Minister of the Crown who will sit down and write a libellous article against another person, against a citizen of this State, condemning him in the eyes of the country—an article written coolly and deliberately, and of which, when he came before the Judges,

he failed to prove any one particular portion—

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Do not say that?

MR. TAYLOR: He never proved one portion, nor has he proved his innocence up to to-day. He has been convicted of libel, and damages have been awarded against him to the amount of £2,750. A new trial was asked for on the ground of excessive damages. That was the ground, and not that the Minister could disprove that he was guilty; not that he could alter the decision of the Court. The Chief Justice was of the same opinion, that the damages were excessive, and they were reduced to £1,000, all expenses to be paid by the Minister; or otherwise a new trial would be granted, both parties, I think, having to pay expenses.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Did the Chief Justice say that he was morally guilty?

MR. TAYLOR: The Chief Justice did not say anything about the guilt so far as I know. I know I read a speech where the Chief Justice said that if he were guilty he deserved certain treatment, and, if so and so, so and so would be the result. The damages were reduced and they have been paid by the Government. I say that does not remove the stigma from the Minister of being guilty against Warden Hicks. The position to-day is the same as it was when the Court first gave a decision. There was no idea or intention on the part of the Minister to try and prove his innocence before that Court. He appealed to the Court with the object of reducing excessive damages, and that is all he has done. The Minister stands there, as I said before, found guilty of libelling Warden Hicks in, I say, a most malicious manner. I believe the statement was made maliciously by the Minister, when I find how this question is answered and learn that the statement was written by the Minister and handed in to the *North Coolgardie Press*. Why was it handed in to the *North Coolgardie Press*? No Minister of this Government or any other Government should be responsible to the Press. The Minister was quite within his rights in dismissing Warden Hicks, if he was satisfied that Warden Hicks committed breaches which he should not have committed; and we are

on common ground about the dismissal. No one questions the dismissal. The dismissed officer could have availed himself of the law, if he thought he was wrongly dismissed.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : He could not.

MR. TAYLOR : He could have had an inquiry, and that is practically the same.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : He was asked if he would have an inquiry. After one is dismissed he cannot ask for an inquiry.

MR. TAYLOR : Yes ; after he is dismissed he can ask for an inquiry.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : No.

MR. TAYLOR : Did you dismiss him or suspend him ?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : I asked him if he would resign or have a commission of inquiry. He declined to do either, and I dismissed him, and after dismissal he had no opportunity of inquiry.

MR. TAYLOR : He had an opportunity before dismissal, of having an inquiry. I suppose the officer realised his position, and recognised that. So far we are all on common ground about the dismissal. It is purely a libel matter. Writs were not issued against the Minister for dismissing Warden Hicks, but for libelling Warden Hicks. He has been found guilty of the charge, and the only thing done is that the damages have been reduced from £2,750 to £1,000. I say the Minister had no right whatever to make any statement to the Press, to give in a written statement to the Press, libelling any person. If the Minister could have proved the allegation, there would have been no libel, but the Minister failed to prove ; hence the libel was there.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : You know it was proved.

MR. TAYLOR : I say you have not proved your case. When we were discussing this question last year, the Premier pointed out that there was some statement due to the Press. I would have liked to ask the Premier a question, if he had been in his place ; but he is absent, as he invariably is when any person is making an attack on his Government or any portion of his Government. Since he has been Premier he has invariably been absent, if he could possibly get away. I want to know if

the Minister handed in this written matter to the Cabinet ? I am satisfied that had it been read by the trained legal eye of the Premier, it would never have appeared in print. But the Minister carried it to Menzies to hand it in to the Press. If the Premier was so satisfied the Press should know something of the dismissal of a high and important officer, the article should have been read by Cabinet. The present Government have owned that they are responsible to the Press, by their actions, by supporting the Minister in this particular, and by farther supporting the Press which also appeared as litigants as the outcome of the publication of the same article. We find the two papers have been indemnified to the extent of £340 or £350. I believe that with the cost and one thing and another I am safe in saying Warden Hicks has received from the Government a Treasury cheque amounting to something like £1,340. Am I right or not ? Will the Minister deny that this is approximately about the amount of the cheque that Warden Hicks has received ? The expenses have to come yet, and I suppose this case will cost the State nearer £3,000 than £2,000.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : I do not think that.

MR. TAYLOR : I venture to say with my own small and limited experience of litigation the case will cost this State nearer £3,000 than £2,000. I have been told on the highest authority that the Treasurer has already sent a cheque along for £1,340. That goes a long way towards £2,000, and the expenses of the legal proceedings are yet to be brought. I am sure the amount will reach that sum. As the session proceeds we shall be able to find out by some means in this Chamber, I suppose, the actual cost to this State of the blunder of the Minister for Mines.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES : I believe the cost in the first case came to £240. I do not think that is exact.

MR. TAYLOR : We will find out before Parliament closes the exact amount the country has suffered from this blunder, and this malicious statement by the Minister for Mines on Warden Hicks. I want to go farther. If it were necessary for the Press of this State to have that article published or to have this in-

formation, what was the reason for taking it up to Menzies, to print it in the *North Coolgardie Herald* first? The only reason, I assume, is that the Minister supplied his own Press.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: It was published in two papers.

MR. TAYLOR: The editor of the *North Coolgardie Herald* said they were the first to publish that information.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: It is absolutely false.

MR. TAYLOR: The Coolgardie Press boasted of getting the information before any other paper had it. That is the position, and the inference is that the hon. gentleman supplied his own Press with the libellous matter first.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. H. Gregory): I wish to make an explanation. I happened to be at Menzies travelling, and I was interviewed with regard to this matter. I assured them I would give them information provided that information was telegraphed to the Perth papers the same day. The reason why it did not appear before was that the dismissal had not taken effect, and it was published in the *West Australian* and *Morning Herald* on the same day by an arrangement with the reporter of the Menzies paper.

MR. TAYLOR: We have heard the explanation of the Minister. Am I right in saying this libellous matter was written in the train on the road between here and Menzies?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes, and corrected at Menzies.

MR. TAYLOR: And then wired in the ordinary way to the Perth Press. I am right in saying that the *North Coolgardie Herald* was the first Press in the State to get the information, because it wired that to the metropolitan Press. Did the *North Coolgardie Herald* people wire it in the ordinary way as a Press message from one paper to another?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Yes.

MR. TAYLOR: Then the *North Coolgardie Herald* was accurate in saying for once in a while it was the first to get the information from the Minister. That is the point I want to make. The *North Coolgardie Herald* stated that it was the first to give this information to the public. It said so; and the Minister has borne it out by saying that he

handed the item to the Press at Menzies first, and that those people wired it second-hand to Perth. At that time the *North Coolgardie Herald* was a daily paper. Now, I think, it is tri-weekly. I want to know why the Minister, if he realised, as the Premier pointed out, that it was necessary the Press should know something about the dismissal of this officer, did not make the statement to the metropolitan Press, which claims to represent public opinion and which has the widest circulation in Western Australia. I am sure the Minister for Mines will not compare the circulation of his own paper, the *North Coolgardie Herald*, with that of the *West Australian*, or even with that of the *Morning Herald*, the other Government organ. It must be gratifying to the Government to be in the proud possession of two Ministers with a Press behind them, and a Press always supporting the Government.

MR. F. WILSON: They are in a "hard press" just now.

MR. TAYLOR: I remember when one of these papers was very hostile to the Government; but I notice that the *Morning Herald's* one-time hostility is quite the other way now; but this is quite easily accounted for. I say again that the Minister for Mines, if it was necessary by the argument of the Premier that the Press should know something of the dismissal of an important officer like the warden (admitting that the Government are run by the Press, and that the Government are responsible to the Press and not to Parliament and the people), should have given this information to the metropolitan Press, with their wide and vast circulation, and not to a small rag like the *North Coolgardie Herald*, which has only a circulation among the Mount Margaret electors who do not take any stock of it at all, for if they did so I should not be here. They are never tired of pointing out the vices of the member for Mount Margaret, but none of my virtues, if I have any. Notwithstanding that, the power of the Press, the power of the Ministry, and I suppose the power of the new Press gained by the Government, they have never hurt me among my electors. I emphasise the fact that the Premier pointed out that it was necessary that the Press should know something of the dismissal. Grant-

ing that, I want to know why that information was not given by the Minister to the metropolitan Press in the first instance, and why it was carried away to his own Press at Menzies, the *North Coolgardie Herald*. I have heard the opponents of the hon. gentleman say outside this Parliament that the Minister knew full well it was a libellous document, that he was interested in a Press, that he knew the Government would pay the damages, and that he wanted his own Press to secure the libellous damages. I have heard that charge against the Minister; but I know what partisans will say. There are grounds for such statements from people not unlike my friend the Minister for Works, with a journalistic turn of mind. It does not require a stretch of imagination, when we find that a Minister of the Crown located on the coast will carry a libellous document 500 or 600 miles to his own Press, knowing it to be libellous, it is quite within the scope of the imagination of an opponent of the Minister to say that he did it with the direct object of securing to his own Press libellous damages. I will not say that myself; I know the Minister too well for that. I know that the Minister will say things on the spur of the moment, even to a Press reporter, which in cold print he would be sorry for. Just imagine the member for Mt. Margaret being appointed a Press reporter, and going to the Minister for Mines for copy! Knowing the Minister as I do, I know what he would say in a moment of anger; but in this case I cannot excuse him in any way. The Government were not justified in supporting the Minister in his action. Any Minister of the Crown who will libel another person in the manner indicated, by writing him down coldly and coolly and libelling a man in a most humble position in the State, has forfeited his right to be a Minister of the Crown. I have no hesitation in saying that I believe it to be true, and I say so in consequence. I do not care if I stand alone in the belief. A man should have higher principles and nobler aspirations than to libel a man as the Minister libelled Warden Hicks. I do not hold a brief for Warden Hicks; I knew little of him; I know more of him since meeting him in Perth: but I will always support a man badly treated. There is no doubt in

my mind that the Minister had no right to libel any person. It is a crime that will ever remain with the Minister—an indelible stigma that will rest with him wherever he lives. The charge has never been disproved in the Court. The only thing disproved was the damages, which were excessive, and were reduced.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: Did I do right in dismissing him?

MR. TAYLOR: I never went into the case of dismissal farther than that I found out that the dismissal was warranted. Consequently there was nothing for me to bother about; but I went into the matter of the libel. The Minister was not charged before the Courts of his country with dismissing the warden; he was charged with maliciously libelling him; and I find that the Minister has not vindicated himself of the charge levelled against him. He has been found guilty of libelling Warden Hicks, and he stands convicted of that offence. Contradiction I defy. The only thing set up by counsel for the defence was that the damages were excessive, and a new trial was asked for on that ground. The Chief Justice then reduced the damages from £2,750 to £1,000. Mr. Hicks accepted, and the case rests there. The Government also indemnified the Press. In dealing with this matter I am rather longer on my feet than I anticipated when I rose; but when I find hon. gentlemen holding honourable positions prostituting their positions, while I am representing the people of Mt. Margaret I shall speak what I think right to protect people who should be protected in this Chamber, to protect the funds of the people of the State, and to insist on the removal of a Minister from the high position he holds after he has been found guilty of libelling one of our citizens. There are no grounds for the Government indemnifying the Press. What have the Press done? It was only, I suppose, for support during the election campaign. After successfully securing the support of the two leading journals of Perth through indemnifying them for the libellous matter, what has it brought the Government? It has brought them down from a Government to 17 or 18 members. They are not too sure about the number. I believe if they were counted through a hurdle they would only number 14. This indemnify-

ing the Press, and the supporting of the Minister in this libellous matter, have gone a long way towards reducing the Government's numbers. There is no doubt to my mind so far as the Premier is himself concerned, for I heard him in his last speech, delivered in the Queen's Hall, say that if he could cut himself into fifty pieces he could have put up a better battle, that he was the fighting man of the party. Every speech the Premier made lost a supporter to the Government. All he had to do was to go and deliver one speech in a constituency, and he lost a supporter. I am confident that the late member for Cue (Mr. Illingworth) owes his defeat to the speeches the Premier made at Cue in his support. I find from our people that our stocks went up by leaps and bounds after the Premier's speech, and that the Labour party became more favourable to the Cue electors. Every speech the Premier made lost him a supporter. The only thing I am sorry for is that he did not make six more speeches, for then he would have had six less Ministerial supporters, which would make this side of the House much stronger. Be that as it may, I am satisfied that the Government had no right to indemnify the Press, and they have no right, by whatever stretch of imagination, in supporting the Minister. There can be no justification advanced, even by the intellectual member for Greenough, one of the owners of the Press. I feel confident that if he were not an owner of a paper and if he were in Parliament, no man would raise his voice against this higher, longer, and louder, than the hon. member himself—that is when it did not affect himself.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It does not affect me. The other side offered not to take any action against the *Morning Herald* if we would allow our case to come on when they desired it.

MR. TAYLOR: It cost the Press £300.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: I would like now to make a personal explanation. While the hon. member is uttering his slanders, it is just as well that they should be contradicted. As regards the *Morning Herald* I know the circumstances of the case, as I happen to be the chairman of directors of Stirling Bros. and Co. Mr. Hicks came to

see me, and offered to hold us harmless in the action if we would help him against the Government, and if we would allow the case to come on when he wanted it. Believing the Minister for Mines had done his duty in the matter, and believing that the Press had done their duty in the matter in publishing the statement in the public interest, we brought the facts before the Government, and the Government being willing to indemnify us the matter went on. If we had wished to get out of it and disclaim responsibility and throw it all on the Minister for Mines, we could have done so and it would have been an easy matter. We did not care two pence in the matter; it did not affect us.

MR. TAYLOR: We have heard the explanation of the Minister. I will deal with another phase of the Government supporting the Press. I find that the printing of the electoral rolls was done by private firms, and the price for printing the rolls charged by the *Morning Herald* was 27s. 6d. per page, the *Kalgoorlie Miner* charged 19s. 6d. per page, the Geraldton Press 15s., and the Cue Press 12s. 6d. The Perth Press do their printing by machinery, and at Kalgoorlie it is done likewise. I want to know why 27s. 6d. was paid in Perth.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: It was not paid.

MR. TAYLOR: It was generally understood that that was the price paid.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: No; the matter went to arbitration. I believe 23s. or 24s. 6d. was paid.

MR. TAYLOR: That shows the necessity for a better administration of our departments. We find that the electoral rolls of the State were printed at the cost of 27s. 6d. in Perth, and the department had to go to arbitration over it. The Minister has owned up to 23s. or 24s. 6d., and if I had squeezed him a bit tighter he might have owned up to 27s. 6d. The Kalgoorlie Press did similar work for 19s. 6d.

MR. DAGLISH: And there was more on a page.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes, there was more on a page. We find the Geraldton Press did similar work for 15s. a page, and the Cue Press charged 12s. 6d. a page. Labour is cheaper in Perth than at Cue. It is generally accepted by typographical

people, who are supposed to know, that machine work can be done for about one-third of the cost of hand labour—the difference is one-third cheaper by machine than by hand work. The only rolls printed by the Geraldton Press were those for the Geraldton electorate; and the only rolls printed at Cue were for the Cue electorate, and those printed at Kalgoorlie were, I believe, for the Kalgoorlie district. I believe the *Morning Herald* printed the rest for the State.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES: A lot was done in the Government Printing Office, but they could not cope with the whole.

MR. TAYLOR: I recognise that the Government Printing Office was overworked.

MR. ANGWIN: Each page printed at the *Morning Herald* office only contained half as many names as were contained on the pages printed at other places.

MR. DAGLISH: A large number of the rolls were for the Legislative Council.

MR. TAYLOR: Assuming the same amount of work was on each page we find the *Morning Herald* received 24s. 6d. as against 19s. 6d. at Kalgoorlie, 15s. at Geraldton, 12s. 6d., at Cue, and I believe 10s. 6d. at Bunbury, but I cannot say that for a fact, although I am told that it is so.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Better have a select committee; that would be a good idea.

MR. TAYLOR: We have already had an arbitration case over the printing by the *Morning Herald*, and the gentleman who represents the *Morning Herald* in this House desires a select committee to be appointed. Does the hon. gentleman want some other means of advertising that wonderful journal of his?

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: He wants the fullest inquiry.

MR. TAYLOR: In many other things connected with the hon. gentleman we want the fullest inquiry.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: The fullest inquiry into anything you like.

MR. TAYLOR: We might have an inquiry into how the hon. member shifted his politics.

THE MINISTER FOR WORKS: Undoubtedly.

MR. TAYLOR: I would like to have a select committee to find out how long the hon. member's convictions are pledged for.

THE SPEAKER: I would like to point out that the hon. member for Greenough might listen in silence. He will have a chance of speaking, when he can rebut all statements made by the hon. member if he desires. If the hon. member continues this cross-firing across the House, we can never proceed with the debate.

MR. TAYLOR: I desire to point out that the *Morning Herald* has received 24s. 6d. per page as against 19s. 6d. per page paid at Kalgoorlie, where wages are higher, 15s. at Geraldton, and 12s. 6d. for Cue. This looks bad on the face of it. The hon. gentleman who is connected with the *Morning Herald* is a Minister of the Crown, and I think it looks bad on the face of it for that newspaper to receive so much more than other people for similar work done for the Government. I desire to say, so far as the printing is concerned, we had only a short time back a gentleman in the Government service supervising the printing and advertising, and I find he was receiving a salary of something like £350 a year. This officer saved a thousand pounds a year or more in the position which he held, supervising the advertising. He curtailed the advertising—I believe he had a fair knowledge of Western Australia, and knew both the coastal portion and the goldfields portion of the State—and when contracts were to be let and tenders called, and the advertising had to be done through the medium of the Press, this officer, with his knowledge, knew how to advertise and give information to contractors. In this way he saved a great deal of public money. We find on the last Estimates that the Colonial Treasurer, in whose department this officer was, reduced the salary to something like £150 a year, and so the officer who held the position had to resign. Since then the Metropolitan Press and some of the newspapers in the back country have received an immense amount of advertising; I think the advertising since that gentleman's departure has run into double or treble what it would have been under his supervision. I do not know whether this is another phase of the Government desiring to be well bolstered up by the Press. There is a general opinion that the Press is mightier than the sword, but that is played out, to my mind. Still a number

of people think that if they have the Press behind them they are safe. I charge the Government with having that idea. This officer was receiving a salary of £350 a year for supervising the advertising, and using his knowledge as a journalist to say exactly where the publication of advertisements should take place, also how to minimise the cost, so that instead of having large advertisements in the Press they could be narrowed down as is done by a private firm. But in doing this, the Government were losing prestige; therefore this officer had to be removed, so that the Government would have free play with the Press through the coffers of the State. If the officer had saved two or three thousand pounds in so many years he should have remained; why was he removed? I shall have an opportunity of knowing how it all came about. I shall have an opportunity of finding out what this State has paid for advertising during that gentleman's term of office, and what it has paid since then. I do not know if it were wise to remove this officer; perhaps the Government will claim that they did not remove him; but when the Government reduce an officer's salary from £350 to £150 that is tantamount to a dismissal. I will not detain the House much longer; but I would like to say in conclusion that I believe I am addressing a Ministry standing on the brink of the Ministerial grave. I believe the member for Boulder thinks that too, and I see that the member for Greenough is practically reconciled to the position. It is nothing new to that gentleman, who has sat on those Ministerial chairs once before for a short time, and I know that his sitting there will be short now. It is a bad omen for a Ministry when the hon. member for Greenough joins it. The funeral will soon follow. The amendment, I feel confident, will be carried, and I am sure that it is in the best interests of the country that it should be carried. Apart from members of Parliament, the electors of Western Australia have emphatically decided at the general elections that they have no farther use for the James Government. And they sent 22 Labour members to Parliament pledged to vote against that Government; and they sent other members who are on the Independent benches

pledged to vote against the Government. We heard the lecturette of the member for Claremont (Mr. Foulkes), pointing out to the Labour party the dangers of the cross-benches and the unreliability of the Independents. I say those Independent members were returned to Parliament to oust the James Government. When they have thrown out the James Government they have done what the electors told them to do; and having done that, I suppose they will have a free hand as to what they will do subsequently. But there is no possible use in denying, and I do not think the gentlemen I am speaking of will deny, that the Independents have been sent here by the electors to put out the James Government. I do not suppose they have a direct mandate to put the Labour party in power, but merely to throw the James Government out; and the Labour party also were sent here to oppose the James Government. I will say what some other members on this side of the House have not said of all the cackle we hear from the Government side about the members of the Labour party being governed by caucus, and our having to appeal to caucus before we can speak. I say that Labour members have as much freedom of speech as any in this House; and I will say what has not been said before. Opposition not only in Western Australia but throughout the Commonwealth, always say they do not want office; and the leader of the Labour party in this House has emphasised that point. Whether my leader desires office or not, I will tell this Chamber that the people of Western Australia desire the Labour party to take office. The people have no longer any use for the James Government, and have sent the Labour party here, being deeply seized of the fact that the party are capable of governing this State. And I will ask my leader whether the party can govern this country better by sitting on this side of the House or on the Government benches. While the Labour party are in a position to dictate every line, verse, and chapter of the Government policy by leaving the Government where they are, I say the proper place from which to dictate is the Treasury bench. I say the Labour party are not fulfilling the duties they were sent here

to fulfil if they place on the statute book laws they were sent here to pass, and yet remain on this side of the Chamber and allow the Premier the opportunity of saying to the electors, "This is what my Government did." We have had enough of that during the last electoral campaign, when the Government gave no credit to the Labour party for the work done in liberalising legislation in the last Parliament. The Government laid claim to every scrap of work; and they would do the same at the next elections if the Labour party took up the same stand by advocating liberal measures from this side and allowing Ministers to have the credit of passing them. The question is whether it is wise for the Labour party in Opposition to dictate the policy of the Government and allow Ministers to draw the emoluments of office. There is no mock modesty about me. I say the Labour party are not fulfilling their duty if they do not capture the Treasury bench. In so doing they will do nought but what the present and every other Government have done; and the people are not so blind or so dense as not to feel that the proper place for the democracy of this country is on the Government side of the House, advocating democratic measures as the Government and not as the Opposition. And if the emoluments of office are to be drawn, those who do the work should draw them; and I say the Labour party should draw those emoluments, and place on the statute book laws which they believe in. The day has gone by in Australian politics when the Labour party simply remain as a third party. They have now sufficient capacity to govern the country. The member for Toodyay (Mr. Quinlan) inquires about the capitalist. This State has had experience of the capitalist ever since the institution of Responsible Government, and has weighed capitalists at the last general election and found them wanting. I am not referring to the hon. member's being a capitalist. He asked me what about the capitalist. Australia has been governed by capitalists since we have had Responsible Government; hence the financial position we are in to-day. And I feel confident that with the advent of the Labour party as the Government, the condition of this State will be better for

the people who have to live in it. I feel sure neither this nor any other State has aught to fear from the Labour party. The party come here with clean hands; and I hope when they leave this Chamber, if they ever leave it, they will be able to go out with clean hands. I am sure the Labour members who have entered this Parliament have come with the highest intentions and to do the best they can for the country. They have no axes of their own to grind; they are not men with certain properties, to increase the value of which they intend to utilise their political power. They have come here with fixed principles, at the request of the majority of the electors. The principles of the party will stand the test of time, and when embodied in the statute book will make this country a freer and a better country for the workers and for the people generally. And I will say before I resume my seat that no matter what may be said to the contrary, the Labour movement in Australia is inspired with the highest intentions and the utmost nobility of purpose. That being so, the men who are sent here thus inspired the country has nothing to fear from; and I feel confident that once the Labour party take charge of the Treasury bench they will remain on it for all time. That is what the democracy of this country demands.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS (Hon. J. M. Hopkins): Mr. Speaker, may I offer you my congratulations on your elevation to the honourable position to which you have been raised by members of this Chamber? At the same time, may I congratulate the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Daglish) on his accession to the leadership of the party opposite? I hope I shall be pardoned for saying that I think it a position he is eminently fitted to occupy for a very extended period. I am rather at a loss to comprehend the purport of that alliance which seems to be hovering in the distance—an alliance which at the outset of this debate made me doubtful whether it would be my lot to congratulate the member for West Perth (Mr. Moran) on his being the leader of the Labour party. However, I have not the slightest doubt that such an alliance would cause to some members for Eastern Goldfields constituencies at least some trifling anxiety as to how they could

reconcile that state of affairs with their obligations to their constituents. The member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor), who has just preceded me, favoured the Assembly with much cry and precious little wool. Now as a fact, it is not long since that hon. member was elected as a pledged member of the Labour party in the preceding Parliament of this State; and it was not long before he was stumping the country and denouncing that party in precisely the same terms as we heard him denounce the present Government here to-night. Elected as a Labour nominee, only a brief period elapsed before he became his party's most vicious opponent; but now, with a prospect of the emoluments of office, we find him cheek by jowl on the same bench with the member for Kanowna (Mr. Hastie). In the last Parliament he scorned the thought of sitting on the same side of the House as that hon. member. The member for Kalgoorlie (Mr. Johnson), and some members for other Labour constituencies, will find food for thought in the remarks now falling from me. The member for Mt. Margaret, like myself, was elected to the last Parliament in opposition to the Throssell Government, of which Mr. Moran was a prominent member. I saw shades of the member for West Perth hovering round the sentiments which came from the member for Mt. Margaret to-night; and farther, when one checks the records of the last Parliament, one finds that although my position in this House was in opposition to the Throssell-Moran Government, and though I voted conscientiously against them from the beginning, the member for Mt. Margaret is found voting in 33 divisions with the remnants of that Government, while on only four occasions during the last Parliament did he vote against them. Perhaps he is able to look back on his three years' service in this House, and to realise now what he has done for humanity, what measures he brought forward, and which of the 43 Acts of Parliament placed on the statute book of this country by the James Government in the last Parliament was he responsible for, and over which one of those Acts did he exercise any influence. Judging by the diatribes we have listened to from that hon. member, there is no honesty either in this Parliament or this

Government. Those who know him are likely to reflect whether his is not the biased and prejudiced opinion of a man who has been already soured by failure and misfortune. The hon. member inflicts on the House a weary string of repetitions in which we find "crime, crime, crime," "the cost of political honour," "prostitution of political principles," standing out in every sentence and every paragraph which he utters. Truly, the word "crime" seems to ripple easily on the lips of the hon. member. "Methinks" that on this question "the lady doth protest too much." He should be the last to hold up his hand against the late Treasurer of this country (Mr. Gardiner). I do not hesitate to say that 50 years hence the name of Mr. Gardiner will be respected and honoured in the State when the name of Taylor is discarded and forgotten. Every member of the Government is attacked by the hon. member. We are told Mr. George was silenced, that everybody was silenced, by political bribes. Really, one has to listen to such as the hon. member to realise what a blackguard the average member of Parliament can easily become. He attacks Captain Laurie for occupying a position which he is highly capable of filling, and in which he receives the modest remuneration of £200 a year—the same salary as the hon. member opposite—a salary for which Captain Laurie gives much more valuable service to the State than is rendered by the hon. member; and yet Captain Laurie is attacked and the basest charges levelled against him; but those charges pass by him as they pass by me, "like the idle wind, which I respect not." The Hicks-Gregory case has been trotted out. One does not need to make passing reference to that case; but if there is any person at the present moment who feels he would be influenced by the despicable comments which fell from that hon. gentleman, I would ask him to read the comments of the Judges of our Courts, and I say the remarks of my colleague the Minister for Mines were modestly itself in comparison with the strictures that fell from those hon. gentlemen. The member for Kimberley (Mr. Connor) takes his place in the House and allies himself with a party which I believe is foreign to the policy of the constituency he represents.

MR. CONNOR: That is not so.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I think the hon. member has always been noted more for his exuberance than his wisdom. He represents a constituency which is large in area but small in population.

MR. HOLMAN: It always will be, if you have the same opportunities.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I have not the slightest doubt that even he would concede to me that the bulk of the people living in that constituency are of the coloured race.

MR. CONNOR: That is not so.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: May I congratulate him on being an admirable reflex of his constituency.

MR. CONNOR: What colour are you?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: If I owed my election so much to my relations as he does, I should assume some degree of modesty. The member for Coolgardie (Dr. Ellis), prior to his being engulfed in a perfect maelstrom of figures and wild deductions which have been moth-eaten since bequeathed to this Assembly some time ago by the hon. member who represents Dundas (Mr. Thomas), made certain assertions relative to the prosperity of this State, and on that problem which concerns every nation, the better utilisation of its unemployed. I think there is a clear issue here. I understand from Dr. Ellis that the Labour party consider an increase in population undesirable.

DR. ELLIS: I never spoke of the Labour party.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: He said that immigration should not be encouraged because there is no work; and I am rather at a loss to understand any sensible member of the community, especially one elected to represent what ought to be a liberal constituency in this House, trotting out a tarradiddle which can be so easily exploded. The hon. member should have considered the unique position we in Western Australia represent to-day; our large area of idle, undeveloped, unused Crown lands, the large importations of farm produce—£78,000 worth introduced for the year ending 30th June last, and valued at over one million sterling—and in addition that population crying out for a cheaper food supply; yet the hon.

member says we have no room for farther immigration.

MR. DAGLISH: Who says it?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member who represents Coolgardie.

DR. ELLIS: You made a blunder, but that does not count in your case.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I may say that prior to my assuming control of the Lands Department I found arrivals surging into the capital and on to the Eastern Goldfields. I have on previous occasions said here, and I have said it on the public platform, that I know of no sadder sight than that of bodies of strong men seeking the privilege of work; and for my own part I can conceive of no position in this world to cause a man more anxiety, or anything that is more desolating, than to be denied every coveted position, to find every door slammed in his face, and to go probably to glance at the lists of advertisements in a newspaper. I myself decided some time ago to take steps with a view of solving that problem, and what I have done on the question I will deal with later on. What I want to bring under notice is that the new arrivals coming into Western Australia to-day are no longer surging into the big capitals of our Eastern Goldfields.

MR. DAGLISH: A great many of them are.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I understand that the difference between the hon. gentlemen who sit opposite and the Government is this, that they are satisfied to bring the people into cities, whilst the policy of the Government is to put them on the land. Recently it was reported to me that 1,250 people were unemployed on the goldfields, and I had urgent solicitations from the political Labour party, the mayor and councillors of the municipality, the A.M.A., and the A.W.A. I went there and spent days to fully investigate this question and deal with it on its merits. The 1,250 was made up by members on the rolls of the A.U.A., the A.W.A., the local Labour Bureau, the Trades Hall, and various other institutions, so that the duplication of names must be plainly manifest. The most gratifying subject brought under my notice was a statement made by Mr. Jeff Dodd, whose word I would take in

place of that of most men who are capable of expressing an opinion on that question. The statement made on that deputation was, "It is not the new arrivals, but it is the reducing of the working costs, and the older men are being shoved to one side. It is only the strongest and most vigorous who can find a place in the mines to-day." And what, I may ask, have my friends on the other side done to alleviate the position of the man who is being pushed aside? After due publicity was given, and after time spent, I found under 40 persons who came to personally interview me. In addition to that, I inquired from the representatives of the local charitable institutions, benevolent societies, and ministers of religion, and as a result of my own personal interviews I have every assurance of those capable of expressing an opinion, that the difficulty existing or said then to exist was not nearly so keen as it was 12 months ago. To-day our population is 236,000. Our population 12 months ago was 220,000; therefore in that instance history repeats itself—population is bringing with it prosperity. To follow the opinions of the hon. member for Coolgardie I should say that Robinson Crusoe must have been a most prosperous community.

DR. ELLIS: Well, he had no rent to pay.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is plainly manifest that Western Australia to-day, with a population of 236,000 people, is a more prosperous State than it was when it had a population of 220,000; and this is the State which the hon. member for Coolgardie thought fit to decry; this is the State which has been kinder to him than the land of his nativity; this is the State which we find imposing greatness on some persons, yet those persons cannot find anything bad enough to say about it; this State which in its infancy can boast a better external trade per unit of its population than any other country in the world.

DR. ELLIS: Quite right.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: This is not a State which the member for Coolgardie should decry as being practically on the verge of bankruptcy—a State with an external trade per unit of its population which is four times greater than that of France, three times greater

than that of Canada, and twice as great as that of the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand. Surely a State of that kind, whose total trade in the past decade has grown from two and a quarter million to over 17 million sterling, and which in the same period has witnessed a growth of its population from 65,000 to 236,000 people, is not a country for the hon. member opposite to decry in the manner in which he described this State. I believe myself in Western Australia.

DR. ELLIS: So do I.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is a pity you do not admit it in your remarks. She is a State that is great in territory, is rich in minerals, and has the finest pastoral area in the world. To-day the South-Western District alone has 31 million acres of agricultural lands available for settlement, all within a splendid rainfall, and of which one-third at least is estimated to be first-class agricultural land, the counterpart of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland; yet an insignificant population of 236,000 people is said to be all that Western Australia can command. The State has from the time when population started to come to its shores grown and developed, she has shown her capacity to absorb that population as it arrived, and I believe that if the policy which has been promulgated by the Government is carried out either by this Government or by hon. members opposite, we may regard the previous years as a reasonable assurance of the prosperity which we in the immediate future will enjoy. The member who represents Murchison (Mr. Holman), in the course of his meanderings around the State, had occasion to intimate that when I joined the Government my electors had been bribed by a grant of £500 for fire brigade purposes.

MR. HOLMAN: You are saying what is absolutely untrue.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must withdraw that remark. It is unparliamentary.

MR. HOLMAN: I desire to withdraw the remark, and I say the statement is incorrect.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must not qualify it.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am glad to have the hon. member's assurance that the statement published in the

Press and in numerous papers throughout the State is untrue; and as apparently he never made that charge, it is now unnecessary for me to recount the details which would have been the means of upsetting the theory that had been raised.

MR. HOLMAN: You can do that.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I will not bother about that. The hon. member says the assertions in the papers are not true. I was opposed in my electorate, and the present member for Murchison (Mr. Holman) made it his business to come to Boulder and deliver a speech, after which my return was never in doubt. The member for Brown Hill (Mr. Bath) in the course of his remarks made reference to our proposals for the taxation of land and the breaking up of big estates. I want to be perfectly clear on this, because it is very evident that my friend did not follow the policy initiated by the Government, or he would not have fallen into the blunder he did.

MR. BATH: I have not spoken yet.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: What he said across the table is quite sufficient for me, and if I am wrong, he can correct me when I have finished. The hon. member seems to be under the impression that our proposal was to provide a tax on the unimproved values of lands for municipal purposes. The Labour party never seem to get beyond the bounds of some municipality. That is not the proposal of the Government, although when a new Municipalities Bill is introduced I have not the slightest doubt every member of this Government would be found voting for such a provision. The Government did not propose any new taxation. We thought that over three millions of money drawn from the pockets of 236,000 people was almost without parallel in Australia. I want, if possible, hon. members to realise that our proposal to break up big estates was a thing entirely apart from local government. It was not a local imposition; and to gain this end we did not say, as was done by the Upper Houses of the Eastern States, "No; if you are going to apply it against the bigger estates, you must apply it to the quarter-acre lot," because by that means they brought in under their banner all the holders of quarter-acre allotments. I can go to this extent and say that the

quarter-acre allotment holder in West Australia is a very desirable citizen, and and we want him; but we say that the State has upon its credit borrowed large sums of money, that the taxes collected from the pockets of the people have been expended to provide railways and public facilities, and that these railways and public facilities are not availed of because large areas of valuable land are locked up in close proximity to them: so we invite all sections of the community to come in under our banner and help us to impose a tax to break up these big estates, and to force their owners, who are mainly absentees, to make the land available. After making these proposals in my constituency, I was opposed by a delegate of the political Labour party, and I found there was nothing but hostility to the proposals. The Labour party say, "No; you must not tax the absentee. You must not tax the monopolist."

MR. BATH: Who said that?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I was speaking of one of the Labour delegates. It seems every one of the Labour party has his own policy. They say we must not impose a tax unless we tax the quarter-acre holder also. Our proposal was that the revenue derived from the breaking up of these big estates, or the tax we contemplated imposing, would be reimbursed in the districts where it was collected. I might direct the attention of hon. members opposite to a paragraph in the Governor's Speech, wherein we say:—

During the recent general elections my advisers placed their policy very clearly before the electors, and there are many items in that policy to which the attention of Parliament should be devoted as early as possible. The franchise of electors to the Legislative Council should be broadened and the Council brought more closely into touch with the householders throughout the State.

May I ask what is the policy of our friends opposite on this question?

MR. TROY: Adult suffrage.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Oh! they are not going to abolish the Upper House. It is adult suffrage. Why? We get a new idea every time a member on this side asks a question. We are not going to abolish that Chamber. The people of this State want to know, and will know before those gentlemen come back from their constituencies to adorn this bench, what their views are. No

doubt we shall have a number of views. Not only will the member for West Perth come under the banner, but the member for Kimberley also; and the latter will be able to tell us what he is going to do in regard to the abolition of the Upper Chamber, the Esperance Railway question, and the question of influx of immigration and its effect on the land policy of this Government. Of course the leader of the Opposition is making no attack, and consequently he anticipates no reply.

MR. DAGLISH: The country's attack was made before.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: In true American style, he thought we were going to stand down and say "Come right in." I think before the elections are over some of them will be "right in." We want to know what reasons there are that have all of a sudden induced my hon. friends opposite, more particularly the member for Mount Margaret, to become cheek by jowl with those against whom he could not say anything bad enough, in the rush for the emoluments of office. The Government have a good record for their administration. They rescued the great Coolgardie Water Scheme. We have witnessed during our period the greatest output of gold on record. We have stimulated the pastoral industry, and organised the greatest agricultural development that has ever been seen in any portion of Australia. We have closed the year with a surplus of £83,000, and placed 43 Acts on the statute-book of the country during last session. Many of those Acts are condemned by our friends opposite. Which of our laws are they going to repeal? I do not suppose the member for Kimberley can name one Act passed last session. I would not like to tax his intelligence to quote two of them. These were laws that were introduced by the Government and placed on the statute-book of the State, and they will stand for ever as a record of liberalism which will never be outclassed by our friends opposite. The records of the last session—the liberal laws that have been initiated and perfected—are measures that have been introduced by this Government, uninfluenced by the hon. members opposite, who feel quite justified in trotting round the country taking credit for everything the Government did, and condemning

it, no matter whether there is any reason for it or not. I had anticipated to have heard something which might have added interest to this debate, instead of allowing it to flag along in the manner in which it has; and if my effort does nothing else than shake up some of those who are yet to speak, it will not be wasted. The hon. member for Leonora has treated us to a few of his views to-night. He is a member who fluked his election by a walk-over. He gave us, like one or two members that preceded him, a disquisition on trade unionism. He told us that Sir John Forrest was a great man because he initiated the Coolgardie Water Scheme. At the same time he did not say—perhaps he did not know—that there remained for this Government to stand the drudgery, to raise the funds, to save it from chaos and corruption and to carry it to a successful completion, and place it in the successful position it occupies to-day. The hon. member said that Sir John Forrest did great things in introducing an Arbitration Bill. Will he tell us how many cases were cited before the Court, how many awards were made and how many enforced? This is the gentleman who represents trade unionism, and who knows all about it. Recently a letter appeared in one of the papers stating that a person who had been resident in this State for something like seven years was going home because he could not select a block of land of 160 acres. Strange as it may seem, during the last year the area of land and leases selected totalled one million acres in excess of the total area of England, and that man was going home!

MR. ANGWYN: It is a good job for the country that he went.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is a great pity that the member for Northam (Mr. Watts) did not go with him. Many people have said, "Yes, you have put up a record in land selection; but what is going to happen to the young men going on to this sour and virgin country—young inexperienced men?" The answer is well exemplified by the yield of wheat, which rose from 985,000 bushels in the previous year to 1,899,000 last year. The wheat yield for last year was not only doubled, but the average increased from 10 bushels to 14 bushels.

MR. WATTS: How much from new settlers?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: A very large amount from new settlers. We have still within the South-West Division 31,000,000 acres available; and I am most strongly convinced that even my hon. friends opposite, a solid party of twenty-two, the solidarity of which will be farther considered after the portfolios are allotted, if they do not carry out the continuation of the land settlement policy we have introduced, will not be able to keep the Treasury bench in this Parliament. I should have liked to have quoted some figures on the wheat yields of the Eastern States for the particular edification of the member for Coolgardie, who is said to revel in things of that description. I should have liked to have told him how New South Wales and Victoria came out with one bushel per acre—[Dr. ELLIS: They had a drought]—while Western Australia had an average production of 10·54; and the hon. member, conscious of his greatness, says "They had a drought." Western Australia has never had a drought; and for his information I shall give him the figures for five years. [Dr. ELLIS: I know them.] Then if the hon. member knows them, he should never have made the assertion he made just now that there was a drought in the East. For the last five years the average yield in South Australia was five bushels, and for New South Wales seven bushels per acre. [Dr. ELLIS: I thought the Minister said one bushel.] That was for 1902. When it comes to ten years, the average for South Australia was four bushels per acre, for Victoria seven bushels, for New South Wales eight bushels, and Western Australia 14 bushels per acre. We claim that our administration has been liberal. Surveys which were allowed to accumulate to the detriment of settlement have been removed. We spent £12,000 in 1902. The survey work is done by contract, or at schedule rates. In 1903 we doubled the amount, and spent £24,000. For the four months of this year we have spent £12,721, and to meet the current requirements of this year it is estimated that the expenditure will be £40,000 sterling. These figures go to show that although the member for Northam is able to find one or two

people who are dissatisfied, there are very many who have been highly pleased.

MR. WATTS: Surveys do not show they are satisfied.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The surveys show that the people are satisfied in continuing the payment of rents, and that the land is not forfeited, as was alleged by the hon. member last night. The question of selection before survey is perhaps putting the cart before the horse, and there is not the slightest doubt that the member for Northam will concede that whilst we have people waiting to get on their blocks, it is not desirable to survey through virgin country. The past teaches us that the agriculturist must not expect too much from the Labour party, a party which, at least in every Parliament in Eastern Australia, has shown very little sympathy for the isolation and difficulties of the agricultural industry. The Labour party seem to think that the workers are only to be found in cities, that the only people deserving of help are those to be found in the cities or towns, or in our mines. That is not the policy I take up. The member for Northam stated that no effort was made to help a man to improve his holding gradually whilst engaged in another industry, so that ultimately he can live on the land. I think I quote the hon. member rightly?

MR. WATTS: Certainly not; I said you compelled persons who took up homestead blocks to carry out double improvements if they lived away from their land.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: As I find an Act of Parliament so I administer it. It is a great pity that before the hon. member set himself up as an authority on these things, he did not find time to read the legislation that controlled them.

MR. WATTS: Why did you not alter the law?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: That is one of the privileges of Parliament: our consolidation Land Bill would have done it. I have found cases of hardship in country districts. I know of cases in which men have selected free farms, and have been compelled to live on land which for years could not be productive. I found one instance in which a man with his wife and three

children left the Eastern Goldfields to live on 160 acres of land. In a short period his resources ran out. He was 40 miles away from a railway, and the man had to go back to work, leaving his wife on the property. His eldest child was six years of age. Every drop of water had to be carted $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Whilst the man was away the wife burnt the timber from 20 acres of land; she invited tenders for ploughing, and the lowest price was £20. She bought horses, ploughed the land herself, and that woman holds a degree from the Sydney University. I was proud to meet a woman of that kind, and I took the opportunity of extending to her every favourable consideration that was in my power. What I have done to make known the possibilities of the agricultural resources of the State to every portion of the world is well known. At the present time I have a very satisfactory report, which I received this mail, from Mr. Wilbur, who is lecturing in the Eastern States. At Hamel I have introduced a departure which is the most liberal ever introduced by any Government in Australia, and it has no parallel in any country in the world. I think I have been able to improve on that in what is known as the Nangeenan Settlement. We had there wheat land which was idle and unoccupied while men were seeking to make homes in these agricultural districts without the means of doing it. We think nothing of spending money in the repurchase of big estates. I felt that while we have Crown lands we might give money to men to improve portions of the Crown lands, whilst improving their own property. At Nangeenan I cut up the land into blocks of 250 acres. I gave to the successful men at the ballot a contract to ringbark 200 acres, and to grub the other 50 acres. Payments are made on the first of each month, and we allow no man to draw more than £10. It is not a grubbing contract, but a burning one, and if a man has children every one is as good as himself in that business. Instead of being forced into bankruptcy in striving to buy horses and plant to work his land, a man can say to his men in the middle of the settlement: "Send your team over and plough the land, and put a crop in; there are my

progress payments to pay for it." That is the system I have introduced, and I have extended that system to Baining. It is a system which I believe is destined practically to remain in Western Australia. [Mr. WATTS interjected.] The hon. member never opens his mouth unless he puts his foot into it. There is no need for assistance from the Agricultural Bank on lands of that description. I know only one instance in which a settler in that portion of the State has mentioned such a thing to me. One would think we had myriads of settlers in the Eastern Districts crying out for assistance from the Agricultural Bank. I would not have had this one case brought under my notice were it not for the fact that I went into that district to make inquiries myself. The only complaint was made by a settler at my invitation. He said that he would like to have sufficient money to stock his land with sheep. That is the only case that came under my notice. If the Government remained in power for a longer period we would have been able not only to supply to these settlers, but to the farmers of this country, sheep to stock their holdings with. I do not refer to freehold lands, but to small C.P. holders who wish some stock to breed from. On the Nangeenan Settlement 29 contracts have been let, which represents a population of 112 people who have been transferred from a position of idleness to a position where they can go on land which was unused previously and build their own homes on the land. Such a system gives a man a show to establish a home for his wife and children, at the same time reducing the number of the unemployed. Now if there are unemployed in Western Australia to-day, how many more would there be but for the vigorous land policy the present Government introduced? If 8,000 people have been transferred to our agricultural districts, what would have been the position had they remained in the centres of Kalgoorlie and Boulder? Moreover, not a week goes by in which I do not interview persons from the Eastern States, men with £2,000, £3,000, £5,000, and up to £10,000, who come here dissatisfied with their prospects in Eastern Australia, and who are settling here. Every time I have gone to the seaport to meet an intercolonial steamer, I have seen

men bringing with them their wives and children, many of them bringing 10 or 15 cart horses and all their agricultural implements, ready to start work upon the lands which only a few months before they had to my knowledge selected. There is one feature which from the beginning of my connection with the Lands Office has caused me considerable anxiety. A man will apply for a block of land, and before his application reaches the head office some other person forestals him. Well, I cannot remedy that. The Act must be amended. It was one of the Government proposals to amend the Act to provide for decentralisation, so that the priority of an application might date from the time it was handed in at the local office. Another difficulty was that our agencies were not satisfactory. I appointed Mr. Ranford to take charge of them — an excellent officer who unfortunately broke down under a continuous strain of service extending over 36 years, during which he had, I think, six weeks' leave. The result is, I have had to make arrangements for another officer to take up those duties, which duties Mr. Ranford will re-assume in due course, at the expiry of the extended leave I have given him. He will then take up his quarters at Katanning, where I think the strain on him will be less severe. However, I have had to take strong action as to some of the agencies; and whether I shall remain in office long enough to complete my plans is perhaps a matter of little concern, inasmuch as the way is clearly blazed so that the gentleman who will fill this position may follow on the lines which I have laid down.

LABOUR MEMBER: The difficulties have been found out rather late.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: They have been found out probably 5,000 times quicker than they would have been by a man of the hon. member's capacity. When I took office I found a man and his wife mopping up 16,000 acres of country. I put a stop to that. I found large areas of land being applied for in all directions; and when a classification was made which did not suit the applicants, they wanted their money back. I put a stop to that business. The limit of first-class lands granted to-day is 2,000

acres; and that area has to suffice for a man and his wife.

MR. WATTS: State robbery in the matter of second and third-class lands.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is most remarkable that land agents and people trading in land in various agricultural centres are the only men who make these violent protests against the conservation of the interests of the State.

MR. SCADDEN: What about the mallet bark industry?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know that industry has recently assumed large proportions, and I believe it will become a valuable industry. Any person has a right to embark in that industry. The member for Ivanhoe (Mr. Scadden) needs nothing but an axe in order to go into it to-morrow morning.

MR. SCADDEN: An applicant secured 5,000 acres in order to cut the bark.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member says some persons applied for a grazing lease, and secured it simply for the purpose of cutting bark. Will he kindly tell us when he addresses this House how he can fathom the minds of the applicants for 5,000-acre leases of inferior lands, to ascertain whether the lands will be used for grazing or for mallet bark-cutting? For my own part, I think it would be most difficult to discriminate between Smith and Brown. The Act is clear: and all we can do is to frame regulations to control the stripping of that bark. I have already issued written instructions that such regulations should be framed; and I am now in possession of an official statement. I had occasion to shake up the Forestry Department to know why the regulations were not ready; the secretary informed me that he had them in readiness, but was desirous of visiting the scene of the industry before finally asking for approval of the regulations. The hon. member will now realise that he is not the only man taking any interest in the bark industry. I was interested to see in an old *Gazette* that the land revenue of this State for the last quarter of 1838 comes under the head of "Casual, £7 15s. 0d." On the 1st March last the officers of my department took over the counters in hard cash a sum exceeding £25,000. The revenue for 1902 was £150,000, for 1903 £164,000, and for the first six months of

this year within a fraction of £100,000; and this not for the sale of freehold blocks, but principally for land rents and selection in progress. In 1902 the area classified was only 326,600 acres; the area classified at the end of last year was 1,137,000 acres; and the inspectors making that classification had to travel over 60,000 miles of roads. Those figures clearly disprove the assertions of the member for Northam (Mr. Watts). He started out last night with the intention of attacking the Lands Department; and it seems to me astounding that a man should live so long in an agricultural district, should become its representative in this Assembly, and should still be so entirely ignorant of those departments which have contributed so much to the prosperity of the district he represents. He says the Agricultural Bank should be removed from political control; and strange to say, it has never been under political control. I suppose he will now tell us that it ought to be under political control so that he and his friends may have the right to dive in whenever it suits them. He tells us also that we did nothing in the way of water supply for agricultural settlers. He did not realise that some of the country he was talking about—Cowcowie and other areas to which he referred when he spoke of country north of Grass Valley—

MR. WATTS: That is a long way north.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: All the more reason for water supply, I say.

MR. WATTS: I did not want it a hundred miles away.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I see. You want it in the town of Northam only. Last year I had a vote placed on the Estimates, for the first time in the history of this Parliament, for the purpose of providing water supply in agricultural districts—providing wells, bores, and dams to help on agricultural settlement. For the purpose of enabling people to get out to where the agricultural lands are situated bores or dams have been provided in a number of places, and I may say that a series of wells is being sunk at the present time extending on both sides more or less of the Great Southern Railway from Greenhills right down to Mt. Barker, yet we have an

agricultural member standing up and telling us nothing is done. His great desire seems to centre round an imaginary bricklayer or draper. [MEMBER: Auctioneer.] I am neither, but I would prefer to be a good bricklayer at any time as against a bad politician.

MR. WATTS: I said a grocer or a draper.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I know what you said. Probably you did not understand it. I think we need only look at the history of America. Garfield at one time was a driver of mules; later on he chopped wood; and still later he was President of the United States, and it was as easy for Garfield to be President of the United States as it was to drive mules. [Interjection by Mr. WATTS.] What I am I owe to my own industry and my own integrity. What the member for Northam has he owes to his associations. It is said there are not chances on the land in Western Australia. May I instance a case just brought under my notice where the manager of a large farm in Western Australia recently secured an appointment in Victoria. He writes to me: "My 46 cows that I milked on inferior country in Western Australia returned to me £8 per week in excess of the return which I draw from 96 cows in Victoria." There are many other instances to which I might have made reference. But I do not wish at this late hour of the night to weary members, although I think that probably such information as this is of more interest even than that of hon. members opposite. There was a long and useless diatribe from the member for Mt. Margaret (Mr. Taylor). I had occasion to pass some remarks upon the member who represents Kimberley (Mr. Connor), and at the same time the member who represents West Perth (Mr. Moran). Seeing that I usually speak as I feel, it is not to be wondered at that these members are absent before my remarks are finished. The member who represents West Perth by a majority of 16 votes, the one-time member for Kalgoorlie, at a later date a discarded Minister, a disciple of black labour in the Kimberleys, and to-day said to be the guiding influence in the Western Australian Labour party—

DR. ELLIS: The Government say that.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Is it not so? I spoke of the member for West Perth as the guiding influence of the Labour party, and it is indignantly denied by the hon. member opposite. Is that so?

MR. DAGLISH: I asked you who said it.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I thought that, if such an alliance existed, it foreboded some strange eruptions to the Labour party of Western Australia.

MR. MORAN: It means some terrible difference to you.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: There are other constituencies that would probably like to make some inquiries. The member for West Perth may be termed the one egregious blunder of Western Australian politics; the man who wishes to lead any party, and is willing to join any party which holds out an invitation.

MR. THOMAS: Don't you say too much.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Ostracised by all, and no doubt to-day as a result more or less of intrigue and playing the game, he finds himself left high and dry on the sands of desolation.

MR. THOMAS: What about your saying that the Constitution Bill or the Redistribution of Seats Bill was a rag of a Bill?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Unlike the member for Dundas, I cannot deal with more than one question at one and the same time. I am coming to the Constitution and Redistribution of Seats Bills, which I understand he, at the moment, is particularly interested in. Since I have had the privilege of being a member of Parliament I have thought that, if nothing could be done to increase the earnings of this community, at least a lot could be done to reduce the cost of living.

MR. MORAN: Perhaps you want a steamer to New Zealand.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Perhaps that would have its use. A cheaper supply should carry to the people advantages which they are denied to-day, and no person more than the member for Kimberley can appreciate the irony of the position when we find that in this State, with 139,000,000 acres of pastoral country held under pastoral lease, people are paying 1s. 4d. per lb. for beef.

MR. CONNOR: What sop from you at the last moment?

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: The hon. member had no sop from me.

MR. CONNOR: I had.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I would like to explain to the House again that we have 139,000,000 acres of pastoral country held in Western Australia and beef is up to 1s. 4d. per pound. Had the Government remained in office, we were going to rectify that state of affairs by insisting on these pastoral areas being stocked, not nominally but stocked to meet the requirements of this country; and not only would there be the stock to be grazed on these areas, but there are all the other conditional purchase lands and all the other freehold lands which are held, more particularly in the South-Western division of the State, which have to be taken into consideration in connection with the output of beef and mutton for Western Australia. Only recently I found bread selling at 1s. per loaf on the Eastern Goldfields. I took the opportunity of pointing out to the people that the wheat yield has so increased that to-day at Northam flour is sold for £8 per ton.

MR. BURGESS: Less than that.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I pointed out that a bag of flour could be landed on the goldfields for £1, whilst the baker was dealing it out at 1s. for a 4lb. loaf, the price being £3 12s. for what cost £1 plus labour of doing it. That being so I suggested that if those people were desirous of studying economy they could not do better than make their own bread and save £2 10s. on a bag of flour. I pointed out that beef could be reduced at least 3d. per pound. There is no person in the State who could deny that. If with 286,000 people we take 100,000 as consuming a pound of beef each per day, and effect a saving of 3d. a pound upon it, that represents in round numbers a saving of very nearly half a million a year.

MR. CONNOR: You don't know what you are talking about.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It is only a very simple sum, and, perhaps, that is too much to expect the member for Kimberley to work out. I can understand that the member for Kimberley does not like the remedy applied too

suddenly. I once heard of a lady who was greatly disturbed at her husband coming home in a more or less wobbly condition in the small hours of the morning, and she thought it would be a good thing to try and apply a speedy remedy. She dressed herself in most astonishing garb, and sallied forth on a most stormy night. This has a bearing on the liquor law reform. Seeing her husband coming along, she stepped out into the darkness, and said, "Hold! I am the devil!" He said, "Oh, that is all right, old chap; you can come home with me; I married your sister." I can quite understand that she was more or less dissatisfied with the remedy she had applied; and I can quite understand that the member for Kimberley is more or less disturbed at the prospect of the Government continuing in office, the Government whose principal function would have been the breaking up of some of those big monopolies which are pressing so heavily on the people of the State.

MR. THOMAS: The Government have had three years to do it in.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: Of course members were determined before I had an opportunity of speaking, and if the alliance has been made—[MR. MORAN: We are absolutely unpledged]—it is not to be expected that my friends on the cross-benches will be susceptible to argument. The mining industry is one that has brought the elements of prosperity to this State; that has raised the arts of agriculture from drudgery to progress; and consequently is one in which every member of the community, whether living in an agricultural, city, or mining district, is deeply interested. That mining industry is in a sound condition, despite the actions of certain English directors; and I emphasise that statement. I represent a goldfields constituency, and the obligation is upon me, at the first opportunity I have of speaking in Parliament, to speak on the question of that mining industry, which in 1901 produced £6,000,000 worth of gold and in 1903 gave an output worth £9,000,000. Such an industry the representatives of all portions of the State are called upon to zealously guard and conserve. The yield for first four months of the year was highly satisfactory. Since that time we find the most astonish-

ing market-rigging and actions on the part of English directors ever brought before public gaze. In our gold belt which is 1,400 miles long by 300 miles wide, who says that the only mines have been discovered? Great credit is due to the Minister for Mines that Commissioners have been appointed to deal with the extraordinary proceedings that are going on to-day. I want to direct public attention to the action of these English directors. Not long since we found that one company, to avoid paying the dividend duty, issued two balance sheets, one in England showing a profit of £4,000, and the other in Western Australia showing a loss of £16,000. The Treasurer fined that company in the sum of £2,000. As a result of the close and keen administration of the Companies Duty Act, over £40,000 has been collected from these companies and spent on public works in Western Australia. I mention these things because they are matters that concern the public very deeply. The methods of some of these directors admit of no other term than corruption, and that of the deepest type. We find that the developments in the Boulder Perseverance are first cabled privately to the chairman of directors, and in 24 hours the chairman is cabled officially. The Deep Levels I do not wish to deal with, as it is subject to a Royal Commission at present; but any person will see from the evidence that has been published that this Commission has been amply justified. I am more than satisfied that the action I took in helping the Minister for Mines to bring that Commission into existence was amply justified. The chairman of the Perseverance gets 24 hours' start to sell or buy, bull or bear, to run the share market of London according to the opportunity the market presents. In March last the directorate of that company told the people that the ore reserves represented 401,000 tons, worth 500,000 ounces, representing in cash £1,750,000. That was equal, according to the dividends they were paying, to four years' reserves and four years' dividends. Inside of three months what took place? The ore reserves were announced, and surely there can be no question as to what they are; but we find that they are reduced from 401,000 tons to 139,000 tons—a

reduction in value of nearly half a million sterling. In the same period the shares fell from 25s. to 12s. 6d.

MR. THOMAS: One is an optimistic statement and the other unduly pessimistic.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: It represents to the shareholders of that mine a total loss in market values of £2,250,000. The mine has been seriously hampered, and the incident is having a bad influence on the mining industry of the State. I believe to-day that, despite the perilous position of the Perseverance, it is one of the best mines in the country; but unfortunately, by that process of picking the eyes out of the property, it will take another year before the work of development can put the mine in its proper place.

MR. THOMAS: I shall give the hon. gentleman some particulars before he ends.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I had heard that the hon. members on the cross-benches were not going to speak. I am now glad that I have electrified them.

MR. THOMAS: No; I shall give the hon. gentleman the figures.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: I am very glad of it. Those representatives of goldfields constituencies, particularly the member for Mt. Margaret who found time to trot out all the ancient history of the last five years, could not find time to devote one syllable to the greatest menace that has menaced the mining industry of the country from its inception. Whether the Government remain in office, or whether my friends opposite come into office, there is an obligation to perform, and that is to carry out the legislation forecast by the Minister for Mines last night. I have no doubt sufficient interest will be taken in the question to see that the methods that the English people have laid at the doors of the people of Western Australia should be laid at the doors of those responsible, the stock-jobbers in London. I may be pardoned for directing a passing notice to the finances of this country. We have in a measure been attacked because we contemplated borrowing £500,000 in the ordinary financial year, and farther that that sum, as the Premier said in his policy speech, would

be regulated according to the market. If the party that attacks us to-day over a contemplated loan expenditure of half a million of money had come into office when there was borrowing to the extent of two millions, three millions and up to five millions pounds in one year, they might have called themselves reformers, if in three years they reduced the amount to a contemplated £500,000. Our loans are not left to posterity; we have a sinking fund of £1,012,000 to-day, and our accumulations to the sinking fund have been utilised to purchase £100 bonds in the market in London which to-day stand at £86. There is a sinking fund in connection with the Coolgardie Water Scheme, a fund not contributed by the Eastern Goldfields but from the consolidated revenue of the State, which has been expended in the purchase of Western Australian debentures, and in that transaction alone for one year a profit is shown of £11,000. I have felt there was an obligation on me, from the time I entered the House, to do the best I could, either by alliance with a party that was presenting a constructive programme or backing a party that was doing so. It is a very simple thing for members to take up a position of a penny-in-the-slot hostility—always on tap. I cannot recall an action of either this or any other Government that did not call for the condemnation of the member for Kimberley. I was severely attacked in my constituency by the delegate of the political Labour party because some loan expenditure was spent on telegraphs. This gentleman pointed to the fact that in England the telegraphs were built out of revenue.

MR. DAGLISH: I did not talk about the Government candidate who stood against me at the election.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: As your platform is printed there can be no going back on it. I was going on to say that there was a difference between England and Australia. In England money is borrowed and spent sometimes in powder and shot: we have borrowed money and spent it in valuable securities, and if those securities were placed on the London market to-morrow, bad as it is, they would realise more than their face value.

MR. DAGLISH: Another man of straw knocked down.

THE MINISTER FOR LANDS: As I understand there are hon. members who want to get away to catch their trains, and as my speaking late is more attributable to the member for Mt. Margaret than myself, I shall be too pleased if it is the wish of hon. members to continue my remarks on Tuesday. If members are desirous of catching their various trains, I shall be very pleased, with the consent of the Speaker and the House, to continue my remarks when the House meets on Tuesday afternoon. It will be some considerable time before I can finish, and I think members can appreciate the position inasmuch as there is an obligation, at least on Ministers, to answer the very extended arguments which have been made by members who have criticised the Government. I ask for leave to continue my remarks on Tuesday.

THE SPEAKER: This practice is new to the House. It is followed where there is a stated time for closing the business of the House; but as far as the present occasion is concerned, if it is the desire of the House that the wish of the Minister shall be carried into effect, I have no objection. I will put the motion to the House. The question is that leave be granted to the Minister for Lands to resume his speech at the next sitting of the House.

Motion passed and leave granted accordingly.

THE PREMIER: I hope members will come on Tuesday with a desire to close the debate. So far as the Ministry are concerned, we desire to finish the debate, and I think members too would like to see the debate closed on Tuesday.

MR. THOMAS: That is a question for members to decide.

THE PREMIER: Yes; with humble submission to the hon. member I hope members will come on Tuesday with a desire to close the debate that night.

ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 20 minutes past 11 o'clock, until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 9th August, 1904.

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

PRAYERS.

MEMBER SWORN.

HON. V. HAMERSLEY, elected for the East Province, took the oath and subscribed the roll.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the **COLONIAL SECRETARY:** 1, "The Land Act, 1898"—Regulations restricting the cutting of timber on State Forests at Greenbushes, Port Hedland, Marradong, Greenmount, Broad Arrow, Nannine. 2, Amendment of boundaries of the State Forests of Balgarri, Greenmount, Mulgarrie, Broad Arrow. 3, "The Cemeteries Act, 1897 and 1899"—By-laws of the Cemeteries of Midland Junction, Cookernup, Menzies, Kookynie, Mount Morgans, Cue, Day Dawn, Karra-katta, Pinjarra. 4, "The Stock Diseases Act, 1805"—Regulations and Quarantine Stations. 5, "The Parks and Reserves Act, 1895"—By-laws of the Recreation Grounds of Bardoc and Katanning.

QUESTION—RAILWAY BRIDGES (FREMANTLE), SAFETY.

HON. M. L. MOSS asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, The date of the last examination of the foundations of the two railway bridges at Fremantle. 2, Whether the scour of the river is affecting the safety of the structures?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, 8th August, 1904. 2, No.

STRANGERS' GALLERY, STANDING ORDER.

On motion by **HON. M. L. MOSS**, resolved:

That Standing Order 34 be amended by striking out the words "and each member may issue one ticket of admission to without the Bar of the House," and inserting in lieu thereof, "and every member may admit three